



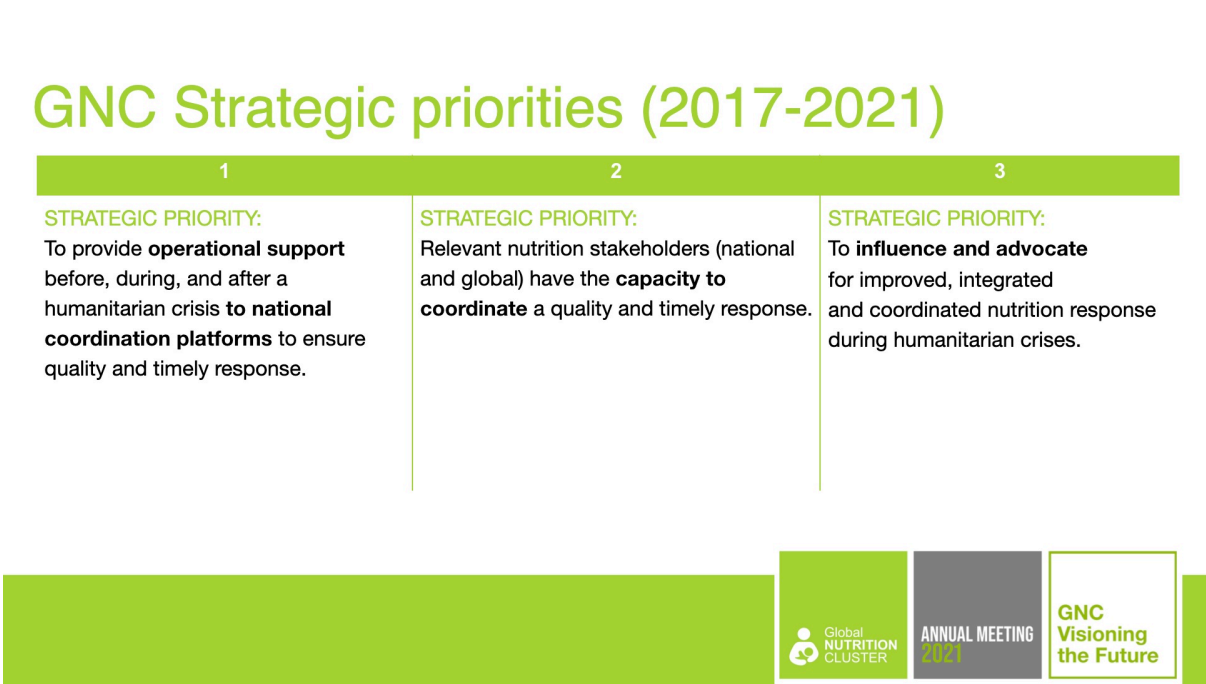
Review of the GNC's work (2017-2021) + Summary of findings from UNICEF's Humanitarian Review & Cluster Lead Agency Review Evaluation

October 2021

Review of the GNC's work from 2017–2021

The previous GNC Strategy (2017-2021) contained three strategic priorities: to provide operational support to national coordination platforms; capacity building; and influencing and advocacy.

Figure 1: GNC Strategic priorities from previous strategy (2017-2021)



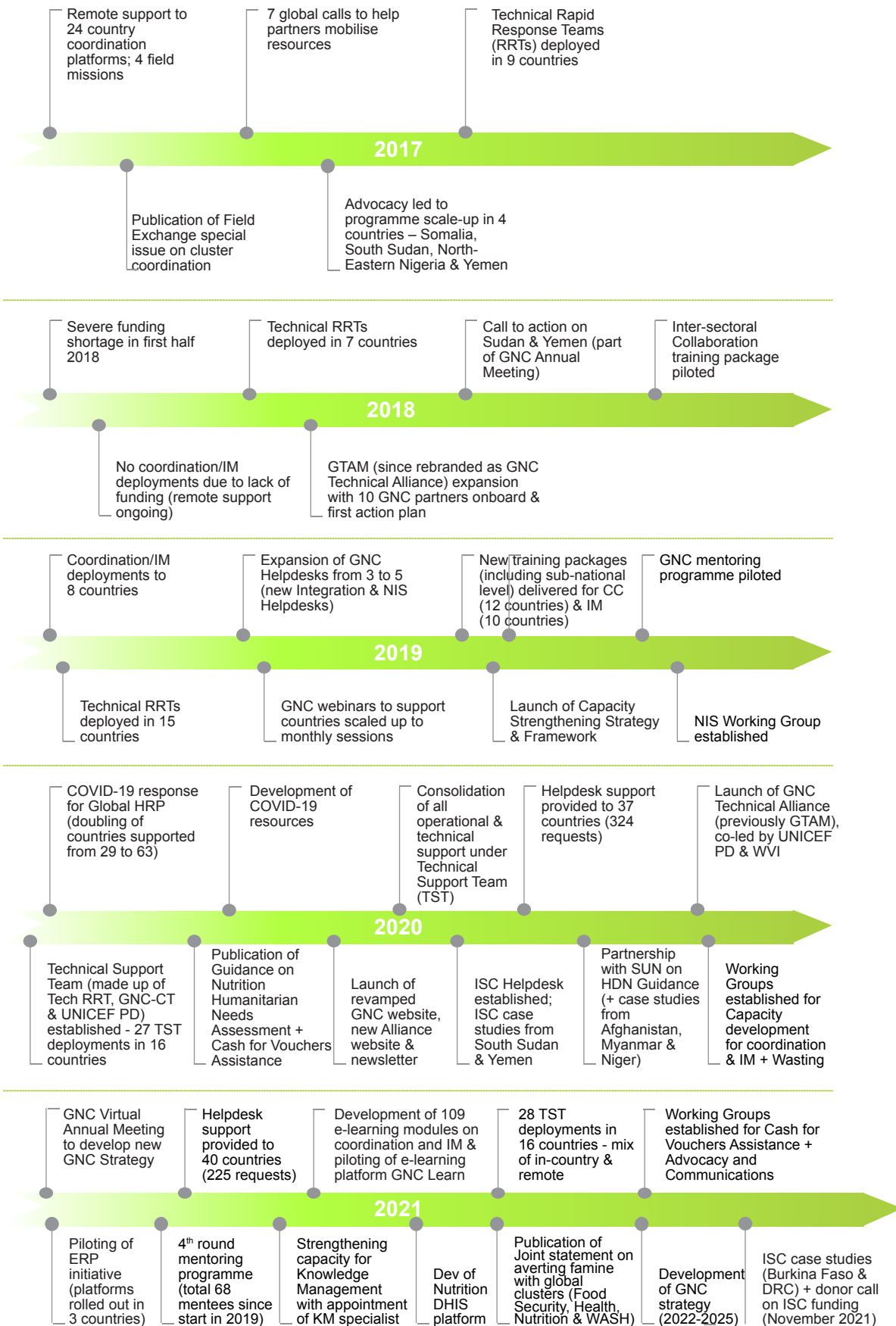
Progress towards these strategic objectives has been steady but uneven over the time period covered, mainly due to external challenges such as lack of continuous funding which has impacted availability of support, particularly at country level. However, by the end of the strategic period, the GNC was in a strong position with a number of key achievements under its belt (see Figure 2 GNC Timeline). These include: strengthening technical support for NiE with the establishment of the GNC Technical Alliance (see Box 1); additional operational support via both direct (GNC Helpdesks and deployments) and indirect (development of Guidance documents and communications’ activities) modalities; capacity strengthening for coordination, information management (IM) and NiE programming via webinars, and training and mentoring programmes, plus the roll-out of GNC competency frameworks and the e-learning platform; and developing relationships for common objectives with external partners such as the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement, other global clusters and the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Secretariat. The net result of these achievements can be seen in the GNC’s subsequent response to the huge surge in demand for coordination and technical support during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, which has continued into 2021.

Box 1: The GNC Technical Alliance

The [GNC Technical Alliance](#) (known as the Alliance) is an initiative for the mutual benefit of the nutrition community, and affected populations, to improve the quality of nutrition in emergency preparedness, response and recovery, by enabling and providing coordinated, accessible and timely technical support through multiple channels. The Alliance consists of two streams of work: 1) Provision of technical support and 2) Thought leadership. The Alliance Leadership Team oversees the implementation, strategic direction and resources of the Alliance and its parts. Currently this includes UNICEF as lead, World Vision International as NGO co-lead, the GNC Coordination Team, Action Against Hunger Canada (as co-lead Technical Support Team) and the Emergency Nutrition Network (as Thought Leadership lead).

The Alliance, originally endorsed by Cluster Partners in 2017 as the Global Technical Alliance Mechanism (GTAM), was then relaunched in December 2020 in its current form. It has a specific focus on providing services to practitioners to enable them to access information, new guidance, and technical support (either in-country or remote). As such, it is not designed to fulfil all the technical needs in NiE, and some of the NiE technical needs identified in the strategy are not within the direct scope of the Alliance. The Alliance demonstrated agility and value in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, bringing together expertise from country to global level.

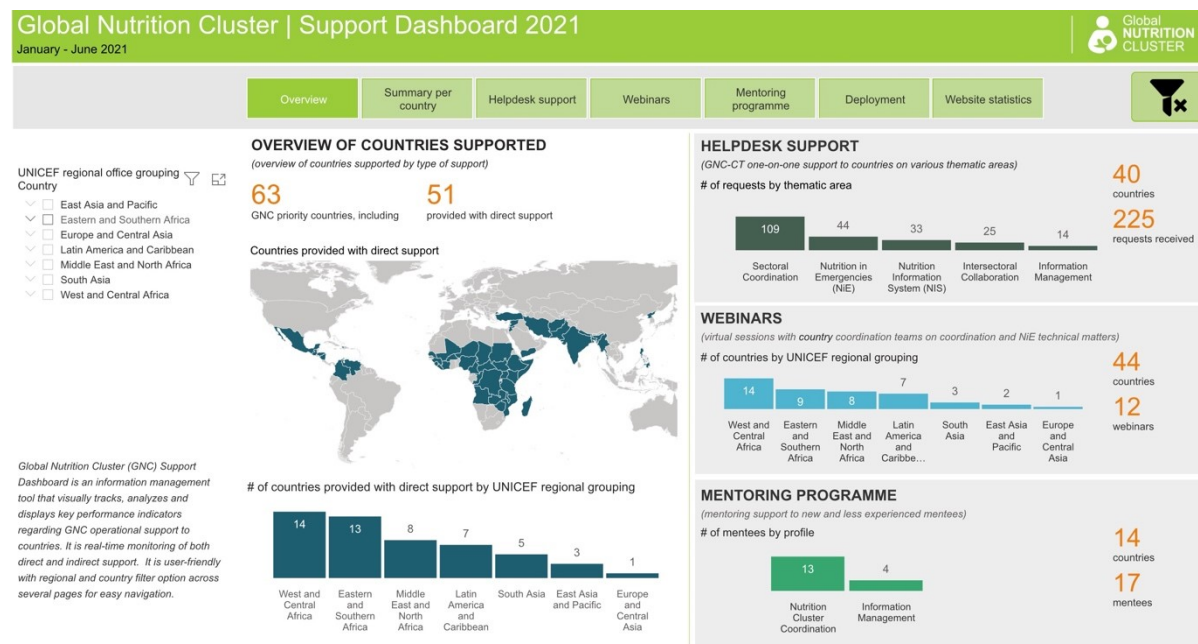
Figure 2: GNC Timeline (2017-2021)



Strategic Priority 1: **Operational support** – to provide operational support to national coordination platforms

The GNC currently has 63 priority countries, with 51 countries accessing direct support via Helpdesks, webinars and mentoring between January-June 2021 (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Overview of support to GNC priority countries (Jan-June 2021)



Global NiE response

The number of countries with nutrition Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs) reporting to the GNC more than doubled between 2017 to 2021, from 15 to 34 countries, respectively, including countries with activated clusters and sectoral coordination. Correspondingly, for those countries supported by the GNC, the Population in Need (PiN) increased from 36.7 million to 77.8 million (more than two-fold), with figures for the June 2021 PiN showing an even higher mid-year increase due to the ongoing social and economic impact of COVID-19 and other factors (see [GNC Mid-year Report](#)). GNC reporting data shows that the percentage of the population targeted for NiE interventions that was reached fell by 10% between 2019 and 2020. Similarly, funding has not kept pace with humanitarian needs for NiE, which peaked at 69% of funding requirements raised in 2019 only to nearly halve in 2020 at 35%. Funding raised between January-June 2021 reached 23% (\$599 USD) of funding requirements.

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. At least 18 countries applied the newly-developed GNC's Nutrition Humanitarian Needs Analysis Guidance following support from the GNC Helpdesks.

Figure 4: Data for countries reporting to the GNC

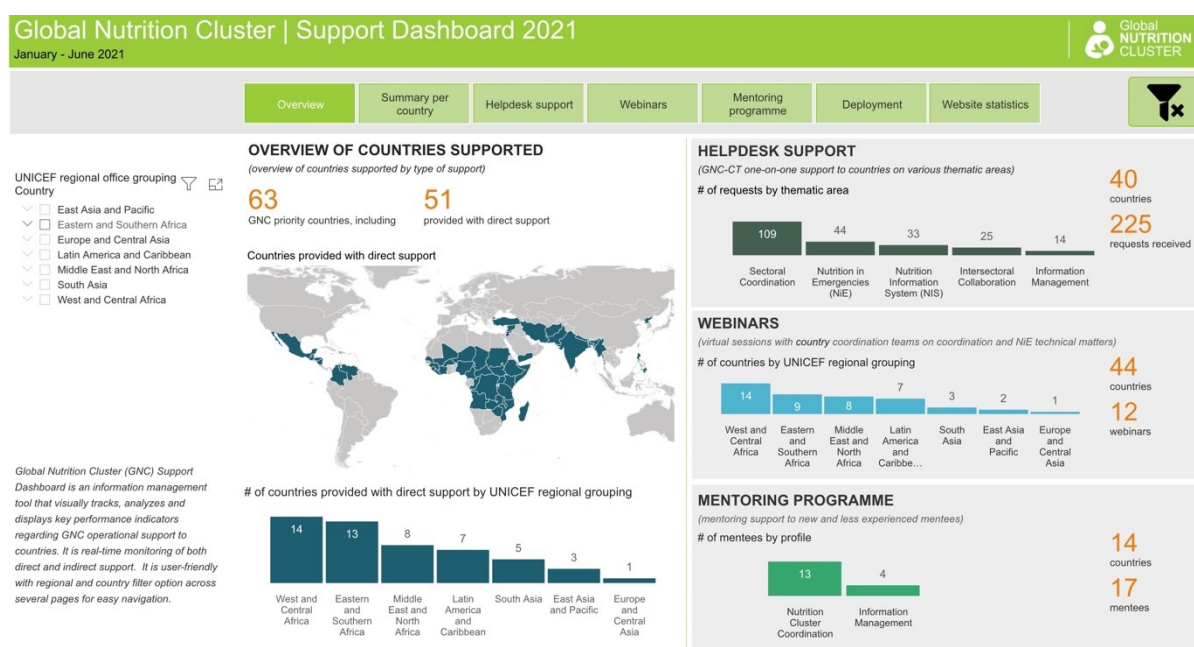
Year	Number of countries	Population in Need	Population Targeted	People Reached	Funding requirements (USD)	Funding Raised (USD)	%
2021*	34	71.6 M	40.8 M	no data	\$2.625 bn	\$0.6 bn	23%
2020	29	77.8 M	42 M	29 M (69%)	\$2.2 bn	\$0.8 bn	35%
2019	23	46.3 M	31.4 M	25 M (79%)	\$1.8 bn	\$1.2 bn	69%
2018	20	41.6 M	29.2 M	23.6 M (81%)	\$1.8 bn	\$0.9 bn	53%
2017	15	36.7 M	24.2 M	21.5 M (88%)	\$1.5 bn	\$0.8 bn	52%

* NOTE: Data only for Jan-June 2021

Overview of operational support

The [GNC Support Dashboard](#), launched in 2019, provides a visual overview of the various types of GNC operational support, such as requests to helpdesks, deployments and webinars

Figure 5: GNC Support Dashboard (January-June 2021)



(NOTE: data for some indicators is missing prior to 2019).

Helpdesk support

The GNC Helpdesks offer one-on-one support to countries via calls, emails or deployment (in-country or remote) on a range of specific areas that have varied over the previous strategic period, subject to demand and funding. In 2017, there were two Helpdesks (Cluster Coordination and Information Management). This number has steadily increased and now stands at five Helpdesks in 2021: Sectoral Coordination; Information Management (IM); Inter-sectoral Collaboration (ISC); Nutrition in Emergencies (NiE); and Nutrition Information Systems (NIS). There has been an exponential growth in country requests to Helpdesks, peaking in 324 requests from 37 countries during last year's response to specific support issues related to NiE during COVID-19. This year (January-June 2021) requests are also up on previous years, with 225 requests from 40 countries, showing continued demand for this service. Nearly half of Helpdesk requests in 2021 related to sectoral coordination.

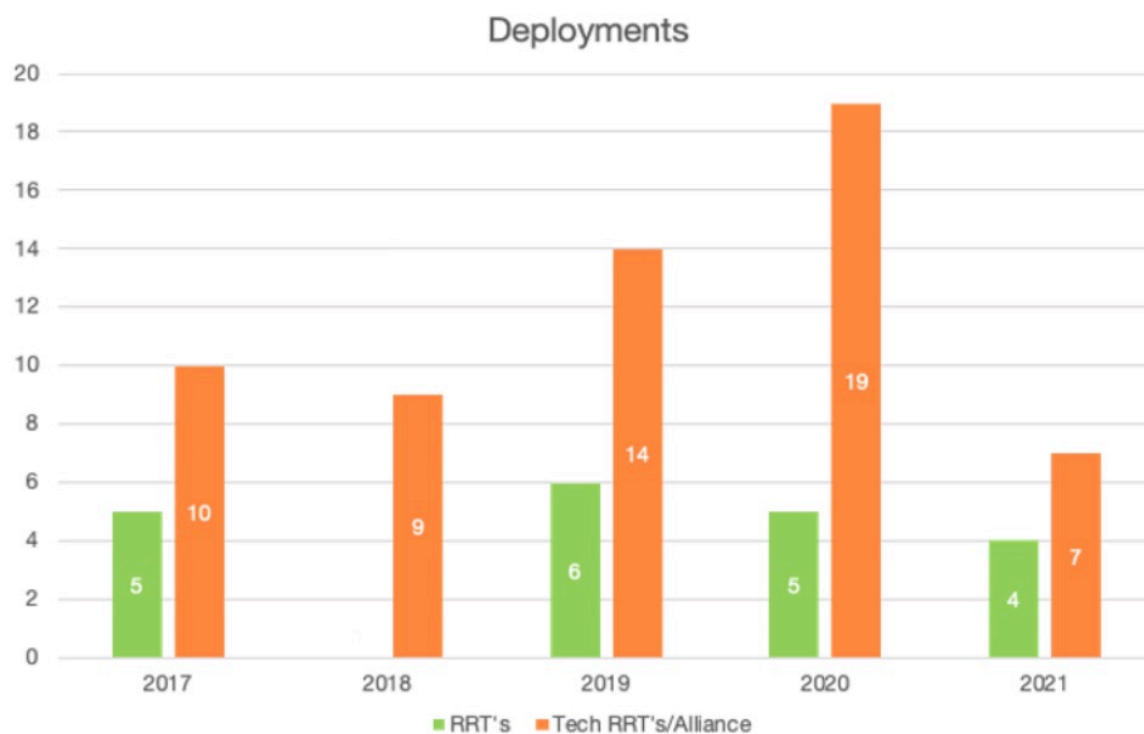
Box 2: Streamlining operational and programmatic/technical support

Countries can now access support for cluster/sectoral coordination, IM and NiE technical support via one team – the [Technical Support Team](#) (TST). Work is ongoing to align the one request support form for all requests to the TST. There are four types of technical support offered by the TST: 1) Quick remote support (for technical queries or signposting to relevant resources) via Helpdesks; 2) In-depth remote support (remote working with country-based partner for extended period) via Deployments; 3) In-country technical support via Deployments; and 4) Consultant recommendations.

Deployments (in-country and remote support)

Numbers of deployments for coordination and IM support (by the Rapid Response Team, or RRT) have remained consistent since 2017, apart from 2018 when no deployments took place due to insufficient funding. However, technical support deployments via the (former) Technical RRT mechanism were still ongoing during the strategic period and the number of requests peaked in 2020, although deployment days per year were higher in 2018.

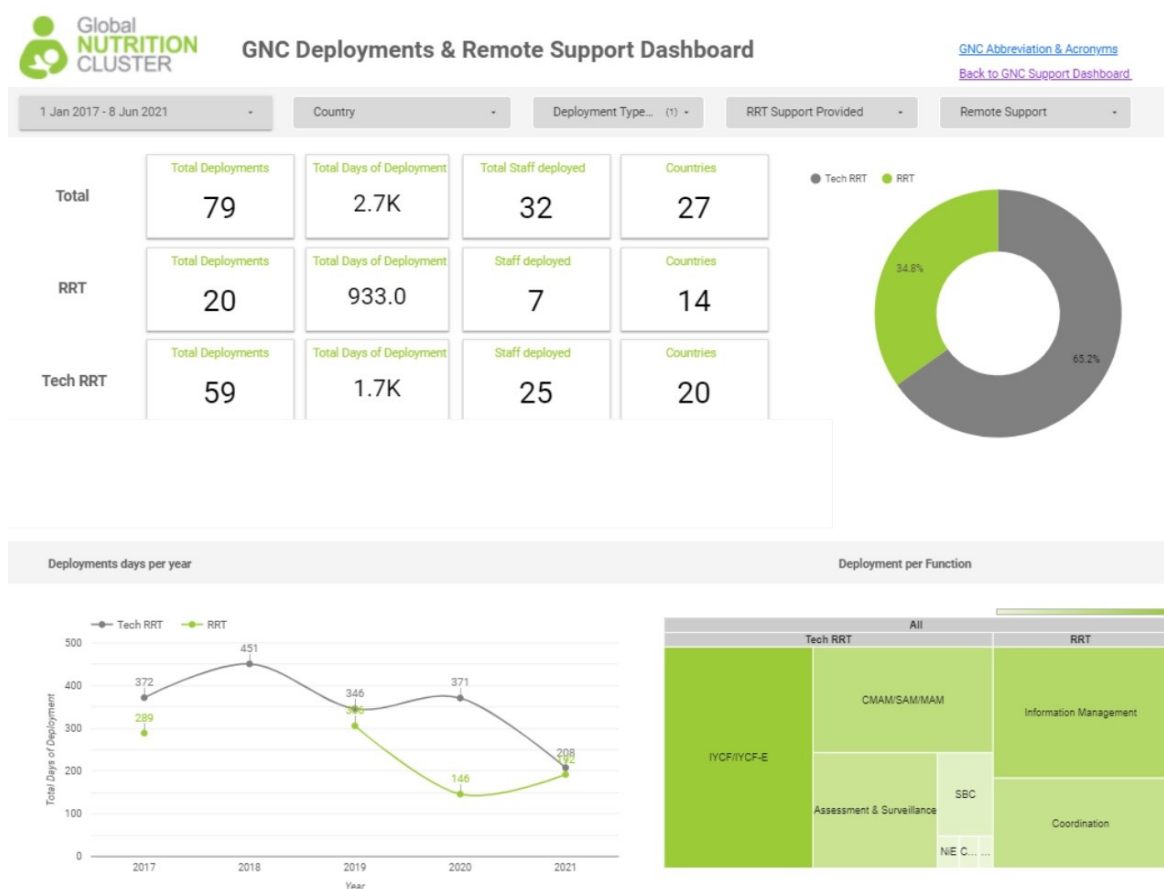
Figure 6: Number of deployments (2017-2021)



In 2020 there was a major shift from in-country deployment to remote/online support due to travel restrictions, and changes to streamline the GNC's support to countries by bringing together the Technical Rapid Response Team (Tech RRT), the GNC RRT and standby partners (SBP) (see Box 2). The GNC Technical Response Team (TST), which includes GNC Helpdesks and Deployments, now has over 20 specialists in a range of areas, including: Cluster Coordination and Information Management, Inter-sectoral Collaboration (ISC), Assessment, Social and Behavioural Change (SBC), Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM), Infant and Young Child Feeding in Emergencies (IYCF-E) and Management of At-Risk Mothers and Infants (MAMI).

Between January-June 2021, 22 pieces of in-depth technical support (for CMAM, IYCF-E, MAMI, NiE and SBC) were completed by the TST in 16 different contexts including: Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Palestine, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Turkey, Venezuela, Vietnam, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Figure 7: GNC Deployment days per year



GNC Guidance

The GNC has developed a number of tools to underpin its strategic objectives, particularly in response to the different stages of implementation of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC), including [Coordination](#) and [IM toolkits](#) that are available online. The process of replacing the GNC Handbook with a series of more user-friendly checklists began with the development of checklists for Coordination and IM, followed by the [YCF-E checklist](#). Further GNC checklists on Wasting and NIS are currently in the pipeline.

Much of guidance finalised in 2020 was the culmination of the GNC's focus on key priorities throughout the strategic period. This includes the guidelines on [Strengthening Emergency Response and Preparedness](#), work that began in 2017 to support countries prior to and during emergencies and which forms the basis for ongoing work in piloting preparedness platforms in 10 priority countries; [Nutrition Humanitarian Needs Analysis](#) (to support the HRP process), which was piloted and updated after input from countries in 2021; and the Guidance Note on [Cash for Vouchers Assistance \(CVA\) for Nutrition Outcomes in Emergencies](#), developed by experts in this area to build an evidence base on humanitarian cash transfers including case studies from [Nigeria](#) and [Somalia](#).

Following GNC support, Emergency Response Platforms (ERPs) have now been rolled out in three countries (Bangladesh, Myanmar and Somalia) in Phase 1 of the GNC's ERP initiative. In Myanmar, the TST's Nutrition Cluster Coordinator was deployed in-country for 12 weeks in 2021 to support nutrition partners build capacity in response to the growing political and humanitarian crisis, including spearheading the ERP plan.

The GNC's collaboration with the SUN Movement on the Humanitarian Development Nexus (HDN) produced a series of knowledge management (KM) products, including: three [HDN case studies](#) in English and French (Afghanistan, Myanmar and Niger) on strengthening cluster/sector links with SUN platforms; and a [global report on HDN](#) and [policy brief](#) with key recommendations, supported by webinars to roll out the guidance.

Box 3: Guidance developed in response to COVID-19

The Alliance led the GNC's technical response for NiE and COVID-19, establishing programmatic adaptation teams to compile, curate and present potential adaptations and related tools and resources, including [IYCF programming in the context of COVID-19](#); [Management of child wasting in the context of COVID-19](#); and [Protecting maternal diets and nutrition in the context of COVID-19](#). Similarly, the GNC-CT created [Operational guidance on nutrition sectoral/cluster coordination](#) and [Nutrition information management, surveillance and monitoring](#), both in the context of COVID-19. All guidance was translated into four languages (English, French, Arabic and Spanish) in response to high demand from countries. There is evidence from surveys conducted by the GNC that the COVID-19 guidance was widely used by countries for support to their nutrition response.

Communications' activities

Plans to strengthen the GNC's communications were accelerated during the start of the pandemic, with the launch of a revamped [GNC-CT website](#) and a new website for the [Technical Alliance](#). Both websites provided platforms for dedicated repositories of COVID-19 materials, which were further disseminated via webinars and social media (in particular, Twitter and LinkedIn). The GNC Dashboard, launched in 2020, also provides a visual tracking and real-time monitoring of both direct and indirect operational support to GNC-priority countries.

The [GNC newsletter](#) is open to all interested subscribers and was launched as a weekly publication in April 2020 to provide COVID-19 updates, news, events and job vacancies. After 30 editions, the newsletter was re-designed and changed to a monthly publication, with additional mail blasts on specific topics. It now has over 1900 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). Social media engagement has been strengthened recently with a 15% increase in

followers on Twitter since January 2021, and there was high engagement during the GNC Annual Meeting in June 2021. The GNC website was visited by 190 countries between January-June 2021, including stakeholders from 60 GNC priority countries.

Priority 2: **Capacity building** - relevant nutrition stakeholders (global and national) have the capacity to coordinate a quality and timely response.

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 key 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.

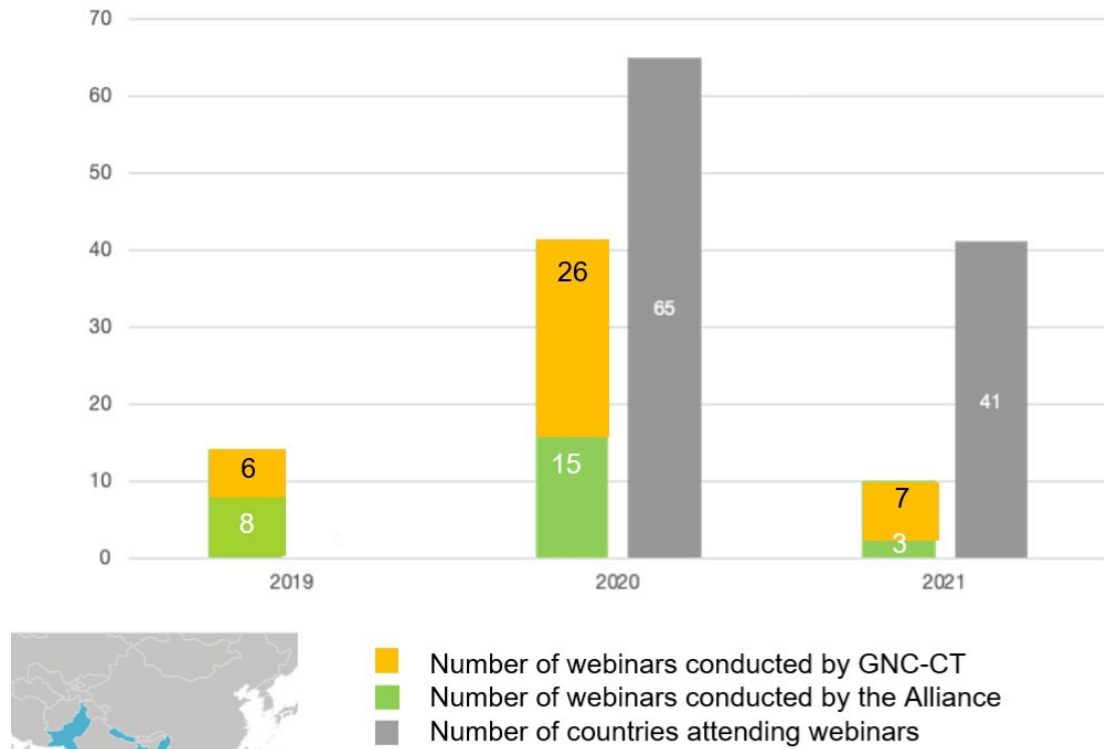
The launch of the GNC Technical Alliance (see Box 1) aims to ensure technical support is provided to countries systematically, to fill gaps in operational guidance and in the capacity of countries to implement NiE activities.

The impact from the fighting and conflict in [Mozambique](#) has stretched the ability of government and humanitarian actors to respond effectively to increasing needs since 2017. Nutrition Cluster partners were supported in 2020/2021 by the deployment of a UNICEF-hosted Nutrition Specialist with the TST, to help strengthen the UNICEF field office in Cabo Delgado by developing an HNO and a response plan, which aimed to plug a gap in nutrition data and replenish supplies.

Webinars

Webinars on a range of topics – from support for the HNO and HRP process, Emergency Response Preparedness and ISC – are an important feature of GNC support. They have only been tracked since 2019 when 14 webinars were held, but 2020 saw a massive spike in demand with 41 webinars of which over half were related to COVID-19 programming and coordination. In 2021, 12 webinars (about one a fortnight) were held between January to June attended by participants from 41 countries.

Figure 8: Webinars conducted by the GNC-CT and the Alliance



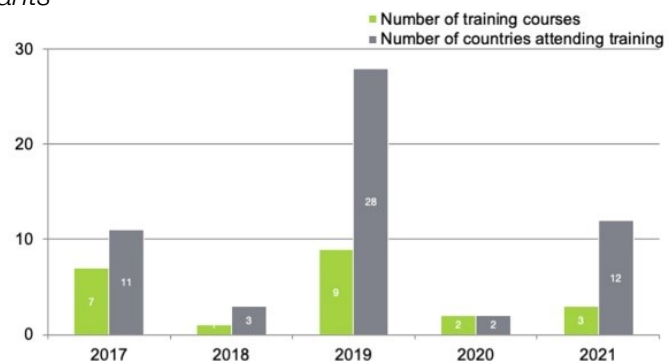
GNC-CT training

Five training packages (in English and some in French) were either created or updated during 2017-2021, covering national and sub-national cluster coordination, training for IMOs and on ISC. The GNC began delivery of online courses using a facilitator due to COVID-19 travel constraints but there are plans to continue virtual training, since in-person training is both resource and time-intensive, and travel restrictions are likely to continue in the future.

Figure 9: Training packages and participants

Packages developed*	EN	FR
NCC	2016	N/A
IMO	2018	N/A
Intersectoral collaboration	2019	2019
NCC - subnational	2019	2019
Cluster partners	2018	2017

*developed or undergone major update. Slight updates to incorporate the latest guidance are ongoing throughout the year

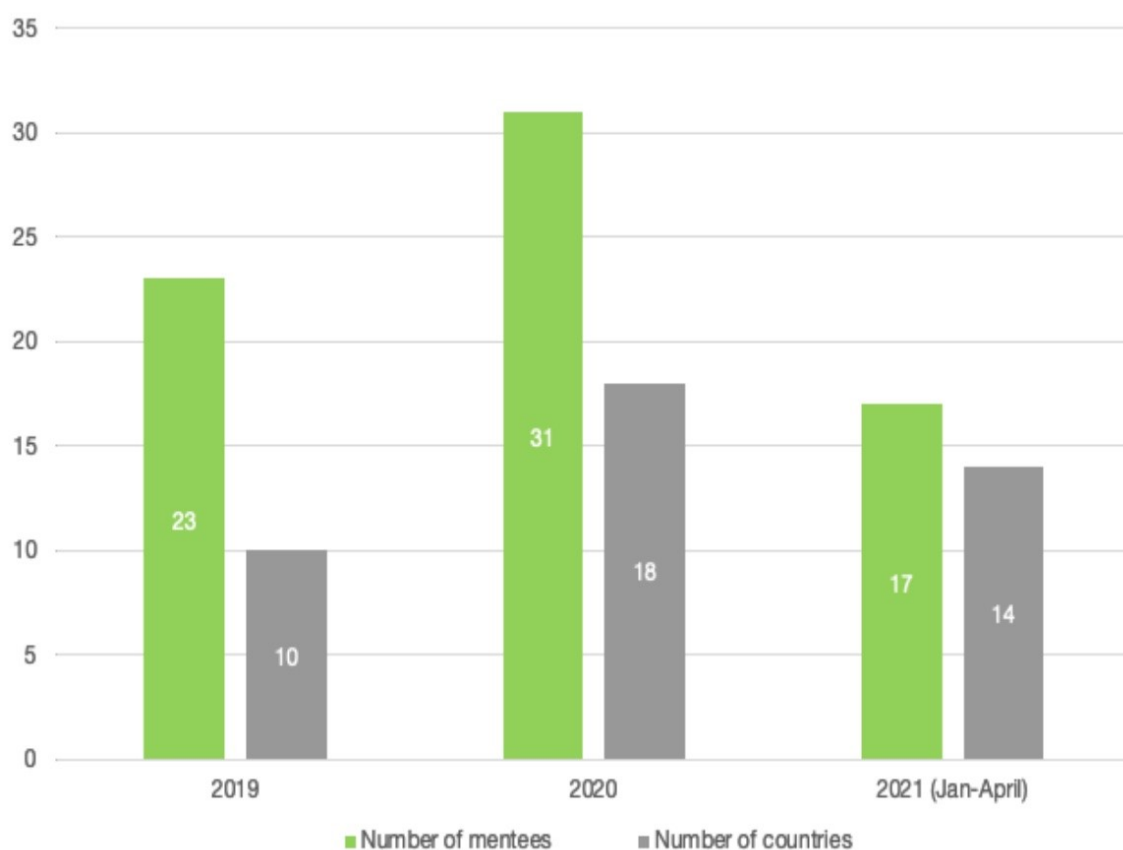


In 2019, the GNC conducted in-country training in emergency preparedness and response in Madagascar's Great South region. The 4.5 day package was designed for district-level coordination since localisation is very important due to the country's size, and participants attending were from Government departments responsible for nutrition coordination and programming.

Mentoring

The GNC's [mentoring programme](#) complements its other capacity-building initiatives, such as training sessions and in-country support. The scheme, which was designed in conjunction with external experts, matches experienced cluster coordinators and IMOs with new and less experienced mentees to provide individual support on specific areas of interest over several months. Since the start of the mentoring programme in 2019, 68 people have been mentored over the course of four rounds of recruitment. There are currently 17 mentees (13 NCCs and 4 IMOs) from 14 countries, and further expansion of the programme is planned during the next strategic period, following the evaluation of the current programme.

Figure 10: GNC mentoring programme participants & country representation



Capacity strengthening & competency frameworks

The GNC launched its Capacity Strengthening Framework in 2019, following extensive consultation. To enable its implementation, further competency frameworks were developed for [Cluster Coordination](#), [Information Management](#) and [Nutrition in Humanitarian Contexts](#), outlining the required skills and attributes for these positions. These competency frameworks will underpin recruitment and capacity-strengthening initiatives in the new strategic period, and work has already begun with the GNC and other UNICEF-led clusters updating generic Job Descriptions for Coordinators and Information Managers to reflect the new competency frameworks. Along with the other UNICEF-led clusters, the GNC is also developing guidance on the minimum structure for coordination teams at national and sub-national levels, which should further strengthen coordination capacity in the field.

E-learning platform

As part of its focus on creating a career pathway for nutrition cluster personnel, the GNC has developed a broad programme of e-learning with the design of a special platform ([GNC Learn](#)) and online training materials in partnership with e-learning specialists. More than 100 e-learning modules are currently being piloted on the e-platform with a full launch planned for the end of 2021. This GNC initiative is now being adopted by the other UNICEF-led clusters (Child Protection, Education and WASH) to support cluster learning objectives.

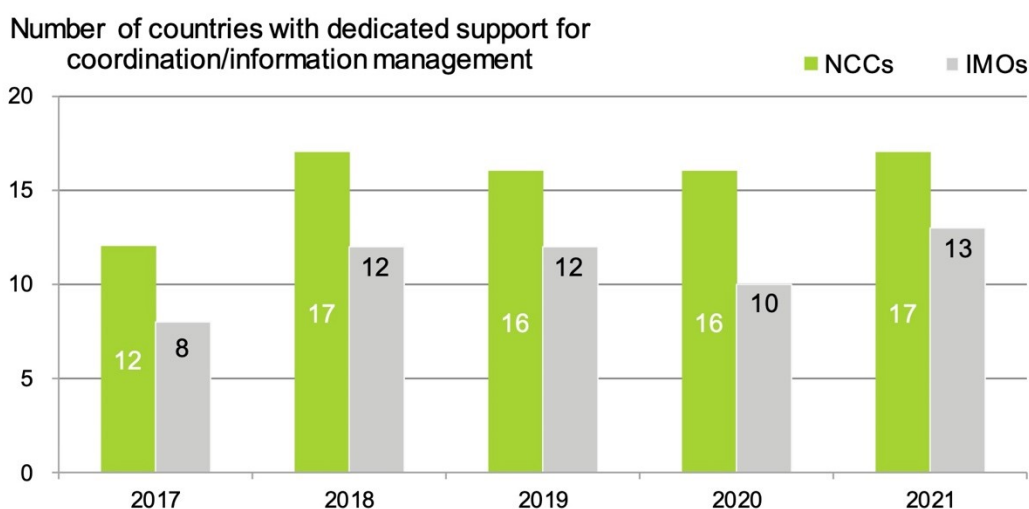
Priority 3: **Influencing and advocacy** – for improved, integrated, and coordinated nutrition response during humanitarian crises

During the last strategic period, the GNC has worked with a number of different nutrition actors at both global and country levels to influence and advocate for nutrition in emergencies (NiE). At the global level, there are currently 35 partners and 17 observers comprising International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs), research and development groups, academic institutions, UN agencies, resource partners and individuals. Country-level partners are integral to each Nutrition Cluster, and include, among others, local authorities, national NGOs and community-based organisations.

Advocacy to the Cluster Lead Agency

Advocacy efforts to UNICEF country offices are also focused on the need to avoid gaps in recruitment to cluster roles and to raise the profile of coordination and IM posts, including promoting cross fertilization between coordination and programming roles. Since 2017 the number of countries with dedicated support teams has remained stable, with the GNC working to increase these numbers in the next strategic period. This will be achieved via development of guidance, together with the other UNICEF-led clusters, on the minimum composition of the coordination teams, capacity strengthening initiatives such as the GNC's e-learning platform (GNC Learn), maximising the opportunities for coordination leadership by NGOs, and advocacy with UNICEF to lead the support of national and subnational capacity for sectoral coordination and intersectoral collaboration, both at times of crisis (as per its CLA mandate) but also prior to and after a crisis, as part of its support of improved governance under the UNICEF Core Commitments to Children. UNICEF has indicated strong commitment to scaling up the coordination and IM human resources in L2 and L3 emergencies.

Figure 11: Dedicated support for nutrition coordination/IM



Advocacy efforts in 2018 resulted in establishing a stand-alone nutrition cluster in Cameroon, in place of the original recommendation to merge Nutrition with the Health cluster, which would have undermined the prioritization of nutrition issues in the HNO and HRP.

The GNC-CT has strengthened its engagement with UNICEF Nutrition Programme Division and UNICEF regional offices, resulting in a more coherent and coordinated approach in supporting nutrition coordination platforms. Integral to this is the launch of the Alliance, which ensures that the technical needs of cluster partners are being met (see Box 1). Additionally, the GNC is an active contributor to the work of other UNICEF-led clusters through internal coordination mechanisms. This has resulted in some GNC initiatives being adopted by other clusters, such as the expansion of COVID-19 support to the 63 GHRP countries, the GNC competency frameworks and e-learning platform.

Inter-sectoral Collaboration

Work in this area has grown over the last five years. In 2017, the GNC and the Global Food Security cluster worked together to promote an [Integrated Famine Prevention Package](#) to break bottlenecks, based on a review of inter-cluster operational responses in South Sudan, Somalia, Yemen and Nigeria. The GNC established an Inter-sectoral Collaboration (ISC) Helpdesk in 2019 to lead on work to generate knowledge on inter-sectoral collaboration, particularly among the Nutrition, WASH, Health and Food Security clusters. The group supported the GNC-CT in developing the first inter-sectoral training, that is now being adapted to e-learning. Two case studies on ISC implementation were published in 2020: an [Inter-cluster Strategy to Prevent Famine in Yemen](#); and an [Inter-cluster Famine Response Strategy in South Sudan](#), with two more planned for 2021 from Burkina Faso and the Democratic Republic of Congo. A-GNC ISC Working Group was relaunched in 2021 to provide strategic and technical support at country and global level, and to support the GNC in maximizing opportunities for more effective and efficient collaborations across sectors to achieve commonly agreed objectives with other clusters. The GNC approach was adopted as a positive model by the WASH and Health Global Clusters, which together with the Food Security Cluster are joining forces to develop joint situation analysis, advocacy and convergence of programme implementation to achieve greater and longer lasting impact.

The GNC NIS Helpdesk supports development of the [Joint Inter-sectoral Analysis Framework](#) (JIAF) which is intended as a joint inter-cluster framework for analysis to inform HNOs. GNC participation in the process has ensured inclusion and prominence of nutrition in the JIAF.

External Collaboration

As part of its objective to strengthen collaboration in priority areas, the GNC has worked with several external partners during the last strategic phase. The GNC-CT is a partner of the [Integrated Phase Classification \(IPC\) collective](#), represented at all levels including as a member of the IPC Steering Committee. In 2020, the GNC-CT supported conducting IPC Acute Malnutrition analysis in countries and together with UNICEF, WFP and ACF, advocated for stronger inclusion and focus on nutrition in the work of the IPC Secretariat, resulting in the development of the 2021-2022 IPC Acute Malnutrition Roadmap.

Work with the [Scaling Up Nutrition \(SUN\) Movement](#) has sought to bring together humanitarian and development actors at both global and country levels, a GNC partnership that began with nutrition advocacy for humanitarian coordinators between UN agencies and the SUN Movement in 2017. More recently, in 2020 the GNC collaborated with SUN Movement Secretariat to develop HDN case studies (from Afghanistan, Myanmar and Niger) and guidance for strengthening joint engagement between SUN platforms and nutrition clusters at country level. The GNC-CT is now working with the SUN Movement to develop joint training materials. The GNC was part of the governance review working group for developing the SUN Movement strategy, which is aligned with the GNC's strategic objectives.

Advocacy Materials

The GNC has engaged with various organisations to develop advocacy materials on different themes during the strategic period. These include: an [ENN Special Issue of Field Exchange](#) in 2017 that focused on cluster coordination (with 18 case studies, many of them written by NCCs with editorial support); Inter-sectoral Collaboration (ISC) Case studies; and HDN Guidance and case studies.

In-2020, the GNC and the Technical Alliance played a crucial role in formulating and delivering information on nutrition and COVID-19. Joint statements with the IFE core group on [Infant and Young Child Feeding \(IYCF\) in the context of COVID-19](#) 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.

Summary & Findings from UNICEF's Humanitarian Review & Cluster Lead Agency Review Evaluation

The GNC's new strategy has also been informed by two timely and relevant external evaluations from UNICEF: the [Humanitarian Review](#) (2020), which assessed the effectiveness of UNICEF's current business model in responding to the rapidly evolving 'crisis' landscape; and the second Cluster Lead Agency Review Evaluation (CLARE) II (awaiting final publication) into how UNICEF is currently – and can be – best equipped to exercise high-quality cluster (co-)leadership. Both reviews involved interviews with key sector, cluster and GNC

stakeholders, with 173 interviews participating in the Humanitarian Review. Data collection for CLARE II reached 1100 people through key informant interviews and survey responses, of which 19% and 25% respectively were respondents from nutrition coordination mechanisms.

Findings from the UNICEF [Humanitarian Review](#) highlight that UNICEF needs to do more to ensure consistent quality in its cluster lead positions and other coordination mechanisms. This includes ensuring that a dedicated cluster team is permanently in place where appropriate, and developing a career path for cluster coordinators to attract talent, as well as adding cluster performance to country office leadership assessments. The GNC, with other UNICEF-led clusters, is working to address these areas under a number of joint initiatives, including development of generic job descriptions and cluster staffing strategy. Other areas that were highlighted in the review include the financing of global cluster leadership using core UNICEF funding and staffing cluster coordinator positions with UNICEF personnel; and prioritizing investment in cluster coordinators and national co-leads, through a pool of coordinators or by ensuring that programme and emergency staff are trained to cover cluster functions.

Global findings from CLARE II are that the clusters have 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 (including SAGs and other sub WGs), a range of cluster products (guidance materials, such as support to countries in addressing COVID-19), 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 of particular relevance, interviewees confirmed that nutrition sometimes faces challenges in activation as an IASC stand-alone cluster. There was a general appreciation for the clusters' ways of working that allowed space for others to contribute, as well as an appreciation for dedicated cluster coordinators (no double hatting) at senior level and/or individuals fulfilling cluster coordinator positions. However, leadership style and the cluster's focus/priorities are (still) perceived as personality driven and dependent on the individual in the coordinator's position. Moreover, cluster leadership is not well understood and often confused with cluster performance – accountability becomes difficult if leadership is unclear. Efforts are being made to strengthen inter-cluster work, although there is a recognition that more needs to be done at the global level. The CLARE II evaluation is still ongoing and the GNC will be working with the other clusters to address key recommendations when it is published, although findings from the draft version were already taken into account in the development of the strategy.

The strategy development process (see Figure 1) was informed by a number of different sources, including an internal evaluation of the GNC's progress towards its previous strategy (2017-2021) and two external evaluations, the Humanitarian Review and CLAIRE II. Views of the various GNC partners and stakeholders at global and country level were sought through two surveys with high response rates, to elicit responses on the GNC's current strengths and

what could be improved, as well priorities for the NiE sector. These findings formed the basis of focused group work at the GNC's well-attended Virtual Annual Meeting dedicated to 'Visioning the Future' and for the new strategy. Further consultations with partners and the SAG have shaped the final strategic direction.

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appreciation for the clusters' ways of working that allowed space for others to contribute, as well as an appreciation for dedicated cluster coordinators (no double hatting) at senior level and/or individuals fulfilling cluster coordinator positions. However, leadership style and the cluster's focus/priorities are (still) perceived as personality driven and dependent on the individual in the coordinator's position.

Moreover, cluster leadership is not well understood and often confused with cluster performance – accountability becomes difficult if leadership is unclear. Efforts are being made to strengthen inter-cluster work, although there is a recognition that more needs to be done at the global level. The CLARE II evaluation is still ongoing and the GNC will be working with the other clusters to address key recommendations when it is published, although findings from the draft version were already taken into account in the development of the strategy.

The strategy development process (see Figure 1) was informed by a number of different sources, including an internal evaluation of the GNC's progress towards its previous strategy (2017-2021) and two external evaluations, the Humanitarian Review and CLAIRE II. Views of the various GNC partners and stakeholders at global and country level were sought through two surveys with high response rates, to elicit responses on the GNC's current strengths and what could be improved, as well priorities for the NiE sector. These findings formed the basis of focused group work at the GNC's well-attended Virtual Annual Meeting dedicated to 'Visioning the Future' and for the new strategy. Further consultations with partners and the SAG have shaped the final strategic direction.