



## Terms of References (ToRs)

### Infant and Young Child Feeding in Emergencies (IYCF-E) and specialized supplementary food and MNs supplementation TWG

#### BACKGROUND

Children in the State of Palestine are facing a humanitarian catastrophe. The nutrition situation is dire, as infants, young children, pregnant and breastfeeding women face extreme shock, stress and deteriorating access to food, essential life-saving services and positive feeding practices. Malnutrition is projected to soar in the State of Palestine in the fallout of the current crisis, Maternal and child malnutrition were already pressing concerns before the current conflict, 65,000 children under 5 were stunted – of these 30,000 stunted children live in [Gaza](#). These stunted children never attain their full potential in terms of physical growth, cognitive capacity, school performance and productivity later in life. In SoP, 1 in 3 women aged 15-49 years were anemic – approx. 131,252 women. Anemia in pregnancy can increase the risk of having a preterm delivery and preterm births and having a low-birth-weight child. Preterm birth is one of the main causes of infant mortality in developing countries. (49,316 women with anemia in Gaza). Maternal and child malnutrition in SoP is driven by families and children's access to nutritious food and feeding practices. In SoP, 1 in 2 children -- approx. 124,500 young children (6 – 23 months) – were living in food poverty and ate less than five of the eight recommended food groups<sup>1</sup>. So half of the children in the early years were not fed the foods they need to grow and develop to their full potential. [In Gaza](#), 56,000 children 6-23 months were living in food poverty before the conflict. The crisis has disrupted access to essential prevention, early detection, and treatment of malnutrition services to about 337,057 children under 5 years and 155,858 pregnant and lactating women in Gaza. Given the suspension of services in Gaza, these children and women face an increased risk of malnutrition, disease and death.<sup>2</sup> Approximately 134,823 children 0-23 months in Gaza are not receiving the support and services from the health system and NGO partners on life-saving breastfeeding and age-appropriate complementary feeding practices including micronutrient supplementation that are critical for their growth and development.

Severe shortages of food, clean drinking water, nutrition and health supplies, fuel and electricity are leaving children and women vulnerable to malnutrition and disease. Food insecurity and food shortages stand to worsen as bakeries and other food producers are destroyed and those remaining run out of fuel, cutting off a critical food source for vulnerable children and families.

For all what have been mentioned above it was necessary to establish a standalone Nutrition cluster in the SoP early November 2023 to be able to provide dedicated support to partners and coordinate partners led nutrition interventions to be able to respond to the need to the most affected children and mothers.

#### PURPOSE

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<sup>1</sup> Child Food Poverty: A Nutrition Crisis in Early Childhood, October 2022

<sup>2</sup>



The IYCF-E and specialized supplementary food and MNs supplementation TWG is a sub-group of the Nutrition Cluster. The primary objective of this group is to reduce mortality and morbidity from suboptimal infants and young child feeding practices in the affected areas by improving the quality and coverage of the IYCF-E and supplementary feeding programs implemented by cluster partners.

The specific objectives of the IYCF-E and specialized supplementary food and MNs supplementation TWG are:

- 1- Ensure that the IYCF-E and specialized supplementary food and MNs supplementation quality and coverage is adequate and responds to the needs in the affected zone
- 2- Improve the humanitarian development transition and preparedness in IYCF-E

### MAIN TASKS AND RESPONSABILITIES

- 1- Provide technical support and guidance in IYCF-E and specialized supplementary food and MNs supplementation to the cluster partners
- 2- Make available IYCF-E and specialized supplementary food and MNs supplementation guidelines, toolboxes, multimedia and other tools necessary for a quality implementation of IYCF-E programs and specialized supplementary food and MNs supplementation by cluster partners
- 3- Facilitate the operationalization of the IYCF-E guidelines through capacity development activities and supportive supervision
- 4- Jointly evaluate the cluster IYCF-E and specialized supplementary food and MNs supplementation programs and develop and oversee implementation of a joint response strategy and action plan
- 5- Map IYCF-E and specialized supplementary food and MNs supplementation related activities, identify gaps in coverage and inform the cluster partners and UNICEF as a provider of last resort to take action in filling the gaps
- 6- Assess whether the national nutrition guidelines and policies include the latest recommendation in IYCF-E and specialized supplementary food and MNs supplementation and put together an action plan in light of the results of the assessment
- 7- Ensure that there is a joint statement endorsed by nutrition cluster members on appropriate infant and young child feeding practices and contribute in monitoring the compliance to the Code and reporting violations to the relevant national authorities in the Ministry of Health.
- 8- Promote integration of the IYCF-E and specialized supplementary food and MNs supplementation activities to the health system
- 9- Promote partners compliance to national IYCF and specialized supplementary food and MNs supplementation policy and their integration into relevant partner's work plans.

### LIFESPAN

IYCF-E and specialized supplementary food and MNs supplementation TWG will be functional as long as there is a need for the objectives and tasks to be addressed in country. If the need is still present, yet the group is dormant, it is the responsibility of the Nutrition Cluster Coordinator (NCC) to request a change in leadership in order to reactivate the group. If the IYCF-E and specialized supplementary food and MNs supplementation TWG is no longer needed, the NCC is the one to decide to close this group after consulting with the cluster partners.

### MEMBERSHIP

Cluster Coordinator  
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ToRs IYCF and  
supplementary feeding TWG-  
SoP  
Revised on 12<sup>th</sup> Dec. 23



Membership is granted to organizations implementing IYCF-E and supplementary feeding activities rather than individuals. Each organization selected to be a member of the group is kindly requested to nominate one focal person to ensure consistency in representation and to facilitate communication. The NCC is responsible to reach out to agencies implementing IYCF-E and supplementary feeding programs. The TWG is also responsible to invite government institutions, researchers and academics, pediatric associations, national or local development actors, other sector colleagues who are involved in IYCF and supplementary feeding to be members of the IYCF-E and specialized supplementary food and MNs supplementation TWG to enrich the subject matter. If those institutions are not members, then they would need to be kept informed of the group work and invited to participate to certain meetings. The TWG is not meant to be a large group, less than 10 members is optimal.

Individuals chosen as focal points of their organizations need to be knowledgeable about IYCF-E and specialized supplementary food and MNs supplementation programming. If a member is not, then he or she would need to commit to build his or her own capacity. The technical capacity in IYCF-E and supplementary feeding can be improved by reading the resources which titles are provided in the guiding documents section below and undergoing trainings made available in the subject matter.

Members will be expected to attend at least 70% of meetings. There will also be an expectation that members undertake additional activities as outlined in the TOR above. It is essential that the agencies and individuals who take up these positions are committed to fulfilling the responsibilities. Where a member is not actively participating in the IYCF-E and supplementary feeding WG meetings and supporting activity; they may be asked to step down from the group.

Members that do not attend three consecutives may be asked to step down from the group. Members that do not perform the task requested by the group after three consecutive times it is extended may be asked to step down from the group.

It is recommended to have a fixed one-year membership that can be evaluated at the end of the term.

## LEADERSHIP

The IYCF-E and specialized supplementary food and MNs supplementation TWG has two co-chairs chosen on rotational basis for a year, each chair is responsible for leading the group for 6 months. Every 6 months, the chairs will rotate in order to keep the group active. The chairs are chosen upon an interview with the NCC whereby the technical knowledge, leadership skills and the time commitment to the TWG needs to be assessed.

A ToR with the tasks of the chair will be agreed upon and shared with the chair agency supervisor. The ToR should include engaging partners, calling for the meeting, setting the agenda, preparing or consolidating the documents that need to be reviewed, ensuring minutes are taken at every meeting, following up on the action points, reminding deliverables, engage with the NCC on the IYCF-E and specialized supplementary food and MNs supplementation TWG deliverables. The role of the chair is also to ensure impartiality, identify challenges and request for support. The chair is responsible to report back to the nutrition cluster on an agreed basis and to provide a handover report before leaving the group or the position.

An evaluation of the lead work would need to take place every 6 months- this could include but is not limited to an online survey sent to the TWG members on the deliverables and the governance of the group.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

The chairs of the TWG would need to ensure the group develops a renewable 1 year work plan. The work plan should be shared with the cluster partners and the leads would need to report on the progress to the nutrition cluster partners on a monthly basis or as agreed. A self-evaluation of the group work against the set targets in the plan is to be done once a year with the results and action plan for improvements being coordinated to nutrition cluster partners.



## SoP Nutrition Cluster

### [Occupied Palestinian Territory: Nutrition | ReliefWeb Response](#)

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The IYCF and supplementary feeding WG is accountable to the cluster partners. The IYCF and specialized supplementary food and MNs supplementation WG will share decisions/endorsements to the cluster partners periodically through the cluster coordinator and/or co-chairs.

#### **WORKING METHODS**

The decisions will be taken by general consensus. In case a consensus cannot be reached, TWG leads will have to seek support from the NCC on the way forward, and a consultation with the SAG or a broader cluster partnership. If the technical issue is not resolved in country, the NCC can seek guidance from the GNC-CT on behalf of the cluster partners.

#### **MEETINGS**

The meetings are held virtually on a biweekly/Monthly basis. The chair of the TWG will send out the invite and the agenda of the meeting to all TWG members at least 48 hours before the meeting date. The topics on the agenda will need to be generated based on the previous meeting outcomes, the workplan deliverables and the suggestions of the members, as well as suggestions from the NCC following cluster partners' meetings.

One of the two leads will be responsible for:

- Circulating draft minutes to group members no later than 2 days after the meeting
- Incorporating comments and feedback from group members
- Circulating final minutes as soon as possible thereafter (before the next meeting)
- Uploading the minutes on the online platform

#### **SHARING INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

The online platform [[Occupied Palestinian Territory: Nutrition | ReliefWeb Response](#)] is available for sharing information and resources of the IYCF-E and specialized supplementary food and MNs supplementation TWG. The agenda, minutes, deliverables, handover reports and other documents relevant to the group's work will be uploaded on [[Occupied Palestinian Territory: Nutrition | ReliefWeb Response](#)]. Additionally, main resources, tools and guidance will be available from the Global Nutrition Cluster website (the chair should inform NCC to do so once a document is finalized)