



Website: <http://www.imtf.org>

IMTF

**International Malnutrition Task Force
Equipe Speciale sur la Malnutrition
Grupo de Trabajo de Malnutrición**

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INTERNATIONAL MALNUTRITION TASK FORCE (IMTF) ACTIVITIES DURING 2014-15

Report to IUNS prepared by Ann Ashworth and Alan Jackson, September 2015

1. Building capacity

a) Technical Meetings

i) Papers from the session ‘Capacity-building in the management of moderate acute malnutrition’, which IMTF helped organise for the Technical Meeting on Understanding Moderate Malnutrition in Children for Effective Interventions (IAEA May 2014), were published in the 2015 March Supplement of the Food and Nutrition Bulletin (pp.47S-52S).

ii) A Technical Meeting focusing on capacity building in clinical and community nutrition was held jointly with IAEA in Vienna, 24-26 November 2014. Three workshops were organised focusing on pre-service training; service delivery; and information and quality assurance. IMTF and IAEA agreed to work together to contribute technical support to establish Communities of Practice and assist countries to reduce acute malnutrition as a key part of the wider SUN goal of reducing stunting.

iii) A joint WHO/IMTF symposium ‘Prevention and treatment of acute malnutrition: What we know, and what challenges remain for effective interventions’ will be held at the XVII Congress of the Latin American Society of Nutrition (SLAN), Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, 8-12 November 2015.

b) Training

eLearning course ‘Caring for infants and children with acute malnutrition’: We have updated the Course to match the new WHO guideline. Uptake of the three competency-based eLearning modules for the identification, treatment and prevention of malnutrition continues at a rapid rate with more than 10,000 users in 140 countries. Many users are health professionals updating their knowledge and skills as well as academics using the material for teaching students. UNICEF (Bangladesh) has been using the Course to train their Nutrition Consultants. The modules were developed by IMTF and the University of Southampton.

c) Two new IMTF working groups

An IMTF Body Composition Group (chair Lena Davidsson) and an IMTF Food Technology Group (chair Jeya Henry) have been set up. The focus of the Body Composition working group is to raise awareness about the usefulness of body composition assessment during early life to better define ‘healthy growth’. The focus of the Food Technology Group is to share experiences and provide technical support regarding the local production of ready-to-use therapeutic foods for treating malnutrition.

d) Strengthening research

Following the successful workshop in Morocco held jointly in 2014 by IMTF, University of Southampton, Ibn Tofail University, Centre National pour la Recherche Scientifique et Technique, and the British Council,

follow-up activities have included a Neuroscience and Nutrition Symposium at the University of Southampton and a proposal to host the 7th African Nutrition Epidemiology Conference (ANEC 7) in Morocco.

e) Action Contre la Faim

IMTF and Action Contre la Faim have agreed to have a closer working relationship through which IMTF will provide technical advice and support to strengthen capabilities in the 40 or so countries where ACF has a strong presence, especially for francophone countries.

2. Research project

NEEP Award: The effectiveness of the eLearning Malnutrition Course (see above) is being evaluated in a 2-year research project funded by the UK Department for International Development (Nutrition Embedding Evaluation Programme). The first phase has been completed and comprised a survey and interviews of those who had enrolled and explored the outcomes and benefits the users had gained from the course. The second phase is taking place in Ethiopia, Ghana and Central America (Guatemala, El Salvador and Colombia) to investigate the application of knowledge gained and the impact the training is having on treatment practices.

3. IMTF website

This continues to provide information about resources, training, evidence-base for treatment guidelines, current events, recent research, and answers to frequently asked questions, as well as information about the Task Force and its activities.

4. Case-management guidelines

- developed and disseminated job aids, wall charts, monitoring tools in relation to implementation of case-management guidelines, and provided technical support including the Department of Health. South Africa.

5. Policy and planning

- supported the scaling-up and integration of community- and facility-based management of moderate and severe malnutrition as a member of the CMAM Forum Steering Committee
- participated in the UNICEF/WHO Task Force on Integration of the treatment of SAM into health systems.