Evidence Collection on Moderate and Severe Acute Malnutrition: A Multi-organisation Collaboration
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Background: Linked evidence collections on the Evidence Aid and Cochrane websites aim to increase the uptake of robust evidence in the humanitarian and disaster risk reduction (DRR) sectors by providing a convenient overview of relevant synthesised evidence. The two collections are linked to provide a comprehensive compilation of systematic reviews and other synthesised evidence on a specific topic, such as Zika and refugee health as published on http://www.evidenceaid.org/resources/. This collection will address nutrition issues in emergencies as a priority in the sector, and as identified in the Evidence Aid priority setting exercise.

Methods: A multi-stakeholder collaboration ensures an inclusive process that is crucial to safeguard the relevance and quality of the final collection, and the practical use and feasibility of the collection. Those involved will use their communications channels to promote the collection. The initial group consists of Cochrane and Cochrane Nutrition, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Save the Children, Action Against Hunger, Emergency Nutrition Network, UN World Food Programme, CHAIN, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and Evidence Aid. The linked collections aim to highlight the most relevant high quality synthesised evidence on management and prevention of malnutrition within the limits of an agreed scope. These parameters guide the search strategy, including eligibility criteria, to identify resources that will be assessed on relevance and quality by multiple authors. All the reviews will be made available through the Evidence Aid website or the Cochrane Library.

Results: Several meetings have been convened to define key aspects such as the topic, scope and process. The group now agreed on a PICO and search strategy and started with the screening of the search results. Initially, some members of the group ‘pre-screen’ the search results, while Cochrane will focus with help of others on the results from the Cochrane Library. The aim is to launch this year with an editorial by Jay Berkeley. The final results and conclusions will be available on the EvidenceAid website later this year.

Conclusions: Evidence Aid has shown, through previous collections, that compiling comprehensive and concise evidence in an easily accessible way makes it freely available to a wider audience in order to inform evidence-based decision making on intervention strategies in the field, evidence-based protocol development, and identification of gaps for further research.

Photo Credit: Top: Kathleen Prior for Action Against Hunger Left: Jean Luc Luyssen for Action Against Hunger Right: Jean Luc Luyssen for Action Against Hunger