



2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Marlborough House, 69 High Street, Kidlington, Oxfordshire,  
OX5 2DN, UK t: +44 (0)1 865 372 340, [www.ennonline.net](http://www.ennonline.net)

## Wasting and Stunting Technical Interest Group Membership and Governance Updated July 2020<sup>1</sup>

### Background

In 2014, ENN published a review of the financing architecture underpinning the scale up of CMAM programming and within this, called into question the marked separation between how wasting and stunted are understood and approached globally (Dolan, C and Khara, T et al<sup>2</sup>) across policy, programmes, research and financing.

To explore whether the separation was justified by physiological and programmatic evidence, ENN established a small Wasting-Stunting (WaSt) Technical Interest Group (TIG) in 2014 which comprises experts in the field of child growth, health and nutrition, epidemiology, research and from the policy and programme arenas. The WaSt TIG has grown since this time to a membership of 40+ experts who are the creative and driving force behind the WaSt work. The WaSt TIG have been coordinated by the same two ENN technical staff throughout its 6-year history<sup>3</sup> whose main role has been to harness the skills and enthusiasm of the TIG and facilitate a large number of influential project workstreams. The backbone of the expert group is the maintenance of a creative, transparent forum to scrutinise and explore the relationship between wasting and stunting, allowing it to serve the nutrition and wider humanitarian and development sectors as a hub for evidence and expert opinion which is *free from organisational agendas*.

The WaSt TIG is entering its fourth phase of work which will run between June 2020 and July 2022. As with previous phases, the priorities and workstreams have been defined through engagement at the bi-annual WaSt TIG meeting (held in May 2020) and builds on previous phases of work. A two-year workplan provides the framework under which the WaSt TIG is supported by ENN to make progress on agreed areas of focus. This document sets out the guiding principles for members of the WaSt TIG and has been updated for Phase Four and to take account of a narrative based evaluation of WaSt undertaken in early 2020 ([Shakar Berbari 2020](#)).

---

<sup>1</sup> To be reviewed annually to reflect any changes to membership and governance

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ennonline.net/cmamgovernmentlessons>

<sup>3</sup> Carmel Dolan and Tanya Khara

## Guiding Principles

There are no formal criteria for being a WaSt TIG member, rather, throughout the past 6 years, we have been guided by evolving core principles that over the years, have served the WaSt work very well and are summarised below;

- Bringing technically creative ideas and academic rigour to the group
- Ensuring the technical focus of the work has relevance to policies and programmes
- Being open to and respecting a wide range of thinking and ideas
- Maintaining objectivity and being evidence led
- Supporting dissemination and uptake of the outputs of the group to influence policy, research and programme change
- Avoiding representation of a particular agency or institutional perspective

## Terms of engagement

The way we work in the WaSt TIG has also avoided a very formal based structure. Instead, we have relied on broad terms of engagement which support our ability to function well and deliver high quality outputs as summarised below;

- Being responsive to a particular time and task limited area of focus
- Providing timely comments on draft documents and peer review papers
- Being part of face-to-face and virtual meetings to discuss technical issues or developments
- Attend WaSt TIG annual, bi-annual or other meetings where possible
- Sign off on key documents/papers as a co-author or supporting author
- Represent the WaSt TIG at various fora where we can have influence

## Defining the groups direction

The nature of the work of the group is exploratory therefore direction has been defined iteratively, so that questions emerging as a result of the work can be further explored and so that opportunities in the wider context (such as related research initiatives) can be capitalised on. Every 2 years the group take stock of the work (during a face-to-face meeting) and determine the directions and workplan for the next 2 years. ENN drive the implementation of that workplan in their coordination role.

## Membership

Membership of the WaSt TIG is based on the premise that individual member engagement respects their capacity to contribute in terms of time and specific area of expertise. For members who are not allied to an institution or organisation ENN seeks to provide to facilitate their engagement in WaSt TIG activities. Having more than 1 person from any individual organisation or institution has been avoided in order to keep the WaSt TIG to a manageable number of members whilst ensuring a good range of backgrounds and experience.

Currently, the TIG is made up of 42 people <https://www.ennonline.net/ourwork/researchandreviews/wast/wasttigmembers> and draws on a wide range of experts from academia and policy and programme development. Some members have been part of the TIG since the beginning as there is no limit on the length of time members can engage. When members leave, typically they will suggest an alternative replacement. New members are announced when the ENN WaSt TIG Coordinator sends the quarterly WaSt TIG email updates.

The membership so far is comprised of experts from both wasting and stunting communities international organisations, institutions and individuals. In this fourth phase, and based on the recommendation from the SoC, ENN will actively seek membership from regional or national institutions to help strengthen the WaSt work and to disseminate/ground truth the growing evidence and policy and programme implications of the work. To make progress on this, the existing membership will be called upon to recommend or nominate candidates for membership in the near future. We anticipate a cohort of up to 5 new members from the global south.

### **WaSt TIG Workstreams**

A key way of working which has been immensely successful over the years has been the organisation of members of the WaSt TIG into sub-working groups (SWGs) to enable an energy and focus on specific themes/technical issues. These SWGs are typically small (4-8 members) and time/output bound so once work is completed, they disband. The SWG membership is voluntary, based on areas of expertise, availability and interest. In most cases a chair for the SWG is assigned or the role taken on by one of the ENN coordinators. Where a SWG member is not in a paid role in their organisation/institution and thereby able to dedicate time to engage in a SWG, ENN seeks to find the financial resources to cover their time and thereby, ensure their inclusion. To date, the WaSt TIG has had experience of SWGs which have for example, overseen the Lancet Viewpoint publication, work on the SMART data analysis and related publications and on girl/boy differences in malnutrition. In Phase Four, we will continue to operate this way of working as it helps ensure we deliver quality and timely outputs.

### **Acknowledging contributions**

The WaSt TIG works on the basis that whenever a member has contributed to an output, be it signing off on a collective published technical review, a peer review publication or any other output, they are fully acknowledged as a contributor. This can be as the main author, as a co-author or, as a WaSt TIG member where the output is representing the entire WaSt TIG (such as the Lancet Viewpoint.) We will always ensure anyone's contribution is fairly and openly acknowledged as this is one of the significant strengths of the group. The outputs are not ENNs but represent the WaSt TIG members.

### **ENNs role and commitment**

ENNs approach to coordinating the WaSt TIG is to be respectful and mindful of people's time, expertise and interests whilst facilitating the WaSt agenda so that the work is visible and relevant and to ensure progress in this critical subject area is being made.

ENN is responsible for raising the funds for coordination, for meetings and for specific areas of work including data analysis and interpretation, writing papers, preparing policy and programme briefs and in influencing through attendance at global events and meetings. ENN is directly accountable to the donors who support the WaSt TIG work and reports to them on deliverables and achievements. However, this ENN role does not preclude other members from seeking finances to support the WaSt TIG agenda or specific activities.

ENN plans, convenes and facilitates meetings with the WaSt TIG which are held F2F where feasible, shares email updates every 2-3 months on developments within the TIG and sets up and coordinates the work of the different WaSt TIG sub-working groups. In Phase Four, ENN commits to continuing to ensure we do not overload members with information but find the right balance between keeping members connected and respecting the time and energy members can bring given demanding professional jobs.

Beyond actively coordinating the WaSt TIG through regular email updates, convening and facilitating workstreams and wider technical meetings and representing the WaSt work to donors to secure financing to support critical workstreams, publications and influencing opportunities, ENNs overriding commitment to the WaSt TIG is to be responsive, inclusive, respectful and supportive.