

# Summer 2022

## Contributions

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Over the summer period (June–August 2022), 35 questions were posted on en-net, generating 98 responses. Thirty-three vacancy notices and announcements were posted, which have accumulated 18,612 views on the website.

In the **Management of wasting/acute malnutrition** area, a discussion took place focusing on how to treat moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) cases presenting with medical complications, debating whether it was appropriate to admit them as inpatients and treat them as severe acute malnutrition (SAM) with all the accompanying nutritional and medical treatment. There are currently no WHO guidelines concerning the management of moderate wasting in children, although guidance for this area is anticipated in 2023, as a result of the current WHO guidelines review process. Discussants noted that there is great variation in the clinical presentation and progress of MAM patients with medical complications. To date, treatment has had to follow a pragmatic approach supported by comprehensive clinical evaluation.

To read more or to join this discussion, go to <https://www.en-net.org/question/4632.aspx>

In the **Infant and young child feeding interventions** area, discussions included topics such as disparities in guidelines regarding the duration of boiling to ensure that the water used for infant formula is safe and that teats/bottles are sterilised, and whether this varies in different contexts; whether generic guidelines and tools for infant and young child feeding in emergencies (IYCF-E) social behaviour change communication are adequately adapted to different contexts and informed by locally specific formative research; how infant and young child feeding (IYCF) counsellors can respond to requests for infant formula from emergency-affected mothers/caregivers who are not eligible to receive it according to pre-established eligibility criteria; a search for examples of cash and IYCF messaging; and what distinguishes counselling from education in complementary feeding, and what good counselling looks like.

The forum area also hosted announcements to alert people to new resources, including the IYCF-E Hub, “a global portal to the most relevant resources related to infant and young child nutrition in humanitarian contexts!”, which offers the opportunity to filter search results by language including French and Spanish: <https://iycfehub.org/>

You can subscribe to receive email updates on new research here: <https://www.enonline.net/ife/iycferepository>

To read more or join any of these discussions, visit the Infant and young child feeding interventions area: <https://www.en-net.org/forum/4.aspx>

To join any discussion on en-net, to share your experience or to post a question, visit [www.en-net.org.uk](http://www.en-net.org.uk) or [www.fr.en-net.org](http://www.fr.en-net.org)

For any feedback on the site, please write to [post@en-net.org](mailto:post@en-net.org)

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Siblings eating ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF) with the support of a caregiver

## A decision-making tool for the use of simplified approaches in exceptional circumstances

Approximately 13.6 million children under five years of age suffer from severe wasting globally with cases continuing to rise in areas affected by conflict and climate shocks, precisely where the risk of child mortality is already highest. While treatment services are now available in over 75 countries, only a third of all children will receive treatment due to limited access and coverage. Further compounding the situation are several impending food crises in regions already affected by child wasting and the fact that the cost of ready-to-use therapeutic food is projected to increase by up to 16% over the six months from May 2022 (UNICEF, 2022), potentially reducing access to this life-saving treatment.

To support implementers in adapting wasting treatment services to ensure both continuity and availability, the Global Simplified Approaches Working Group has developed a decision-making tool for use in exceptional circumstances – defined as complex and/or challenging contexts resulting in negative effects on treatment services or the target population, such as health system closure/collapse or a break within the food pipeline. Aimed at national level implementers – including Ministry of Health workers, United Nations (UN) and other non-governmental organisation staff – this tool seeks to facilitate the decision-making process as to which modifications to implement based on the context. This new *Decision Making Tool for the use of Simplified Approaches in Exceptional Circumstances* includes a Briefing Paper (Simplified Approaches Working Group, 2022a) that provides the background to the simplified approaches and frames the use of these approaches in the context of exceptional circumstances. This briefing paper is accompanied by Decision

Making Guidance (Simplified Approaches Working Group, 2022b) which walks the user through the considerations for which simplified approaches should be used in exceptional circumstances based on barriers specific to their context.

The term ‘simplified approaches’ refers to several modifications and simplifications to the existing national and global protocols for the treatment of child wasting. These modifications have been designed to improve effectiveness, quality and coverage and to reduce the costs of caring for children with uncomplicated wasting. The simplified approaches have also been used to maintain service availability and continuity in exceptional circumstances until standard programming can resume. As of 2021, the World Health Organization (WHO) is in the process of revising the current treatment protocols and several of the simplified approaches are being evaluated by the Guideline Development Group for possible inclusion in the new WHO wasting guidelines. The use of simplified approaches is already deemed appropriate by UN agencies in exceptional circumstances, where warranted.

## References

- Simplified Approaches Working Group (2022a) Using simplified approaches in exceptional circumstances. [https://www.simplifiedapproaches.org/\\_file/ugd/2bbe40\\_4d267de66e5d4af3a43cb799fc2b466d.pdf](https://www.simplifiedapproaches.org/_file/ugd/2bbe40_4d267de66e5d4af3a43cb799fc2b466d.pdf)
- Simplified Approaches Working Group (2022b) Implementing Simplified Approaches: Decision Making Guidance. [https://www.simplifiedapproaches.org/\\_file/ugd/2bbe40\\_8c181c7c429e47b69f51da399473e20.pdf](https://www.simplifiedapproaches.org/_file/ugd/2bbe40_8c181c7c429e47b69f51da399473e20.pdf)
- UNICEF (2022) Severe wasting: An overlooked child survival emergency. UNICEF Child Alert, May 22. <https://www.unicef.org/media/120346/file/Wasting%20child%20alert.pdf>