

Meeting of UNICEF and WFP on partnering for nutrition in emergencies

On 6 October 2017, the global and regional nutrition teams of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP) met to discuss how to enhance partnership in order to improve nutrition outcomes for children and populations affected by emergencies and humanitarian crises.

As the first of its kind at the global level since the 2011 UNICEF-WFP Memorandum of Understanding, the meeting was a significant milestone in the ongoing partnership. The one-day meeting focused on how to improve the nutrition response in emergency settings as a first step in a larger discussion about how to strengthen UNICEF-WFP partnership in all contexts. The session was participatory and productive, with engaging dialogue between the teams that was at the same time candid and good-humoured.

The meeting began with presentations of each agency's nutrition strategies, which both align to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Sustainable Development Goals, aiming to support national governments and their humanitarian and development partners in ending all forms of malnutrition.

Participants next reflected on individual and shared strengths of both agencies as well as the key attributes of a successful partnership between UNICEF and WFP for nutrition in emergencies. Chief among the discussion points was the need to coordinate better at all levels prior to and throughout an emergency. Doing so would enable better use of each agency's nutrition strengths in a particular response. Widespread adoption of best partnership practice is needed to collaborate more consistently and completely at country-level.

Participants later considered the main issues related to four priority areas of joint work for nutrition in emergencies: nutrition assessments and information systems; infant and young child feeding; care for children and women with acute malnutrition; and addressing the underlying causes of undernutrition. Actions to overcome the identified challenges and improve country-level operations were discussed for each of these four priority areas.

Looking ahead, members of the partnership steering committee will set up task teams to develop action plans around each of the four priority areas. The teams will also outline steps for greater engagement on the priority areas between the two agencies and with other nutrition partners. We will proactively seek opportunities and support to implement our enhanced partnership in response to several humanitarian crises in 2018.

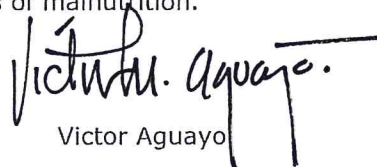
The October meeting is the first of a series of engagements that will continue in the coming years. Forthcoming partnership meetings will build on the first meeting's good spirit of camaraderie, advance technical discussions and cover additional challenges and opportunities to work better together in all contexts. We continue to see the instrumental value in working together on nutrition and believe that an enhanced partnership is critical to our collective efforts to end all forms of malnutrition.



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