

Technical Advisory Meeting of the Mother and Newborn Information for Tracking Outcomes and Results (MONITOR) Group

**Meeting Report
1-2 May 2018**

Geneva



Executive Summary

The Mother and Newborn Information for Tracking Outcomes and Results (MoNITOR) group held its third meeting on 1-2 May 2018 in Geneva, Switzerland. This advisory group to WHO is tasked with providing clear, independent, harmonized, and strategic advice for global and country teams engaged in maternal and newborn measurement and accountability.

The meeting had the following objectives:

- To review new evidence on measurement for maternal and newborn health
- To review ongoing MoNITOR work, including development of indicator reference sheets, call for additional research, and synthesis of validation work
- To plan for the next grant including activities, timelines, and administrative issues

The expected outcomes of the meeting were as follows:

- To develop a workplan for the new grant, including next steps on current work
- Other areas of work identified

Presentations

A number of presentations were shared, and each presentation was followed by a session of questions and discussions amongst the participants.

Group Discussions: Country Case Studies

During the second day of the meeting, a group exercise was held.

- Members of the MoNITOR Advisory Group were divided into two different groups, with the task of discussing how to proceed with the planning and implementation of the future country case studies, in order to develop a concept note for this project, which is planned to be completed by the end of 2018. More specifically, the two groups were asked to:
 - Refine the purpose of the country case studies;
 - Refine the research questions for the country case studies;
 - Suggest criteria for country selection.

Group Discussions: Indicators

External observers were given the task of reviewing indicators, and more specifically to:

- Review the core Health Management Information System (HMIS) indicator list and make suggestions/provide feedback
- Review the five indicator reference sheets that have been developed.

Recommendations

Country case studies

It was concluded that considering the role of MoNITOR and what country case studies can bring, as well as the increased country focus at the WHO, the MoNITOR group will proceed with the plan established in June 2017, to initiate country case studies by the end of 2018.

Development of country case studies should be based on considerations of:

- Existing tools and guidance
- Focus on gaps in maternal and newborn measurement
- The situation on the ground in countries
- Usability and the actual needs of countries
- What countries can gain from the country case studies, and how MoNITOR can assist countries in doing so
- Linking to existing regional workshop for capacity building
- Exploring the needs of countries in terms of translations of products, and potential issues related to translations of indicators.

Maternal and Newborn Indicator Validation

It was concluded that we should not expand to the field of indicator testing, as this would be beyond the scope of this work. Instead, we the focus should be on synthesising existing validation to provide guidance.

It has been established that the term validation is widely used but in different ways and with different interpretation. It was suggested that the MoNITOR Advisory Group could aim to develop a definition of validation that the group can recommend to be used consistently by different stakeholders. One important next step is to develop criteria for indicator validation to assess existing maternal and newborn indicators.

Indicator Reference Sheets

It was decided that a number of indicator reference sheets may be tested within the country case studies, in order to receive country feedback on factors such as usability, relevance and format. It is recommended to develop approximately 20 different reference sheets.

Health Management Information Systems (HMIS) indicators

The group reviewed the five suggested indicators for routine collection in HMIS systems and provided feedback on the need to include what can be measured now and what can be measured in a few years for global/national monitoring as well as national/sub-national monitoring.

Action items

Country case studies

- Develop a concept note and protocol for the country case studies.
- Review the term “country case studies” and explore alternative terms that better reflect the content and purpose.

Validation of indicators

- Finalise interviews with key informants.
- Develop a concept note for publishing the results of this work.
- Conduct a systematic search and cross reference five indicators in order to identify whether all indicators need a specific search. For this purpose, we will use the five core indicators from the visual that was developed for the purpose of indicator mapping manuscript. For the next MoNITOR meeting: continue the discussion on criteria for what constitutes an indicator that is good enough for now.
- Develop a definition of how we define validation and apply this to different types of indicators.

Indicator Reference Sheets

- Expand the list of indicators to 20, and have these reviewed by the MoNITOR members as well as tested within the country case studies. The criteria for indicator selection include those in the HMIS short list.

Future involvement in the MoNITOR Advisory Group

As MoNITOR is approaching its third year, members of the Advisory Group were advised to inform whether they would like to remain active in the Advisory Group for the third year through December 2019.

Next Technical Advisory Meeting of the MoNITOR Group

The next meeting is planned to take place during the week commencing 26 November 2018.