



***Response to the WHO Consultation on a proposed set of indicators for the Global Monitoring Framework for Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition***  
**Submitted by World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF) International and the International Association for the Study of Obesity, October 10 2013**

**About WCRF International**

World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF) International and its network of four charities are dedicated to the prevention of cancer through healthy diets, nutrition, physical activity, and healthy body weight. We finance cutting-edge research and collate and interpret the scientific research on food, nutrition, body weight, alcohol, physical activity and cancer. We communicate this evidence to scientists, health professionals and policymakers around the world, as well providing science-based information about healthy eating through our four charities.

We also advocate for the wider implementation of more effective policies that enable people to follow our Recommendations for Cancer Prevention. The evidence shows this will reduce the chances of people developing cancer and other NCDs.

**About IASO**

The International Association for the Study of Obesity (IASO) is a not-for-profit organisation with over 40,000 professional members in scientific, medical and research organisations. It is an umbrella organisation for 53 national obesity associations, representing 56 countries, along with a policy analysis body, the International Obesity TaskForce (IOTF). The headquarters are in London, UK.

IASO is officially recognised as a non-governmental organisation by the World Health Organization. Our mission statement is "To improve global health by promoting the understanding of obesity and weight related diseases through scientific research and dialogue, whilst encouraging the development of effective policies for their prevention and management."

**General comments**

WCRF International and IASO welcome the opportunity to provide some brief comments in response to this consultation. We strongly support the decision made by WHO Member States to call for the development of a proposed set of indicators for the Global Monitoring Framework for Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition. As organisations concerned with nutrition, healthy diets, overweight and obesity – including during early life and childhood – we fully support monitoring as a key element in the effective implementation of the Plan for Maternal, Infant and Child Nutrition. We thus hope that Member States will continue to support this endeavour.

We see the monitoring of the framework as critical for nutrition and for NCDs more broadly. In this light, we would like to see it more explicitly stated where there is common ground between this indicator framework and the indicators in the Global Monitoring Framework (GMF) for NCDs adopted during the World Health Assembly in May 2013. We are aware that much is different, but

believe countries should be guided to use similar data sources, and take a complementary approach, where possible. For example, there is much common ground between the criteria for the indicators (paragraph 17). This should be clarified.

The draft indicators here improve upon the GMF for NCDs in that they are designed to monitor along the anticipated pathway of change. However, this is not well explained in the current draft. The language in paragraph 14 is likewise critical, but not clear. We thus see the potential for further development of this document in order to produce an effective and feasible monitoring framework.

We recognise that significant technical expertise is required to understand the pathway of indicators towards each target, and what is feasible, measurable and available. We would thus recommend that WHO convene a group of experts and Member States to progress this important document. This could take a form similar to the Technical Working Group established for the GMF process for NCDs.

In addition, we offer some specific comments on the obesity indicators.

#### **Comments on indicators for the obesity target**

##### **Primary outcome indicator (PO4):**

We welcome and support the proposed indicator to measure target 4, and urge the reporting of weights, heights and BMIs so that results can be compared with previous surveys.

##### **Intermediate outcome indicators (IO10-IO11):**

We are not sure how this is meant to be an intermediate outcome measure, and recommend that the target could refer explicitly to the weight status of women of reproductive age/pregnant women, recognising the impact that maternal weight status can have on child weight.

##### **Process indicator:**

We recommend the inclusion of further indicators that address the social and environmental drivers of childhood overweight and obesity, such as consumption of processed foods and sugar-sweetened soft drinks. For example, we would support indicators on soft drink consumption and regulations to restrict children's exposure to food and beverage marketing.

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