

## **A.22 Multiple micronutrient supplements during pregnancy**

MSF strongly supports the inclusion of multiple micronutrient supplements (MMS) for pregnant women in the WHO Model List of Essential Medicines, as an antenatal supplement, in order to improve health of both the mother and the infant.

Currently, three WHO guidelines are recommending MMS: “Preventing and controlling micronutrient deficiencies in populations affected by an emergency” (2007), “Micronutrient supplementation in individuals with active tuberculosis” (2013), WHO “antenatal care recommendations for a positive pregnancy experience - nutritional interventions update: multiple micronutrient supplements during pregnancy” (2020). Moreover, UNICEF and World Food Programme (WFP) include the use of MMS in their recent guidelines “Protecting Maternal Diets and Nutrition Services and Practices in the Context of COVID-19” (2020).

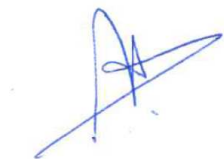
Recently, MMS including iron and folic acid versus iron and folic acid supplements (IFA) have been compared in 2 meta-analysis: a Cochrane review (2019) and an individual patient data (2017). The United Nations Multiple Micronutrient Antenatal Preparation (UNIMMAP) was the most used among various formulations. The administration of MMS during pregnancy shows benefits in reduction of low birth weight (LBW), preterm birth and the number of infants born small-for-gestational-age (SGA), in comparison to IFA supplementation. The tolerance of MMS and IFA are comparable and MMS is a cost-effective choice.

The National Essential Medicines Lists of 67 countries have already included MMS.

MSF has been using MMS in its programs since 2010.

In light of these elements, MSF urges the 23<sup>rd</sup> Expert Committee on the Selection and Use of Essential Medicines to include multiple micronutrient supplements in the WHO Model List of Essential Medicines.

For Médecins Sans Frontières



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