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

Meeting Report:

30 April - 1 May 2019

Geneva, Switzerland
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Mother and Newborn Information for Tracking Outcomes and Results (MoNITOR) Technical Advisory Group held its fifth meeting on 30 April-1 May 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland. This advisory group to WHO is tasked with providing clear, independent, harmonised, and strategic advice for global and country teams engaged in maternal and newborn measurement and accountability. During 30 April-1 May 2019, a group of external observers were invited to join the meeting. This report outlines the content of these sections of the meeting in which external observers were present.

Objectives of the meeting

• To review new evidence and metrics work for maternal and newborn health;
• To review ongoing MoNITOR work, including development of indicator reference sheets, recommendations for indicator validation, and the development of an online tool for prioritizing maternal and newborn indicators;
• To discuss dissemination of findings and documents.

Expected outcomes of the meeting

• Develop plans for next steps for current work;
• Other areas of work identified.

Summary of the topics discussed

The meeting consisted of three sections.

Presentations on updates

Presentations on the status of CHAT, GAMA, as well as the Effective Coverage Think Tank Series were given, in order to inform the external experts.

There were also presentations to update on the Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (EmONC) indicators; the QED Network; efforts to measure experience of care through the development of a person-centred maternity care scale; stillbirth and low birth weight estimates; definitions related to perinatal health; the development of a monitoring framework for SRMNCAH for humanitarian settings; efforts to implement and measure kangaroo mother care (KMC) in Malawi; and the EN-BIRTH study, which aimed at validating facility indicators.

New WHO resources and status of resources under development

The Secretariat then presented the status of a range of WHO resources related to maternal and newborn health, for which the MoNITOR Group has previously contributed with input: the maternal mortality calculator; the RMNCAH HMIS module; the antenatal care monitoring framework; and the recommendations to the DHS-8 revision. There was also an announcement with regards to nurses and midwives taskforce within WHO.
Workplan and next steps for the MoNITOR Group
The meeting was rounded off with a status update of the different products that are being developed as a result of the MoNITOR Group; as well as a summary of the future plans for MoNITOR, based on the discussions that had taken place within the Group during the first section of the meeting.

Update on products developed within MoNITOR

MoNITOR toolkit
The MoNITOR toolkit refers to the series of tools that has been developed by the MoNITOR Group during the past two and a half years, with the objective of improving the measurement and monitoring of maternal and newborn health. The toolkit consists of the following four components: indicator database; indicator reference sheets; indicator prioritisation tool; and manual for indicator validation.

1. Indicator database
Based on the initial indicator mapping conducted by MoNITOR.

2. Indicator reference sheets
Reference sheets for 30 indicators that were selected based on the indicator mapping. These sheets will include definitions using different data sources, as well as guidance on the interpretation and use.

At the time of the meeting, a consultant was reviewing, copy/editing and ensuring consistency in language between the different sheets. When all the 30 sheets have been edited, the Secretariat will share these with the MoNITOR Group.

Action item:
• If time permits, members are encouraged to review and provide feedback on the 30 sheets once they are edited and shared by the Secretariat.

Next steps:
• A decision needs to be taken on whether indicator reference sheets should be developed for all 130 selected indicators, as well as whether the sheets should be translated to other languages – taking into account the country feedback; future funding; as well the investment relative to the anticipated value.

3. Indicator prioritisation tool
Based on the indicator database. This will be a web-based tool that can be used on a computer, tablet as well as phone. This tool will allow users to filter based on certain criteria, and to retrieve a selection of recommended indicators to prioritise. Indicator reference sheets for the respective indicators will be featured in this tool.

A mock-up of the tool has been developed and was presented during the meeting. The functionality of this tool was discussed during the meeting and feedback from the MoNITOR Group
was collected, including the conclusions that the tool should: include the option to save a custom list; allow the user to export results in excel format; and show the date of the latest update of each indicator.

**Next steps:**
- It was suggested that once the live version of the tool is ready, there may be a webinar in order to collect more feedback, suggested for September 2019.
- In conjunction with the launch of the tool, a description should be developed, to guide users of the tool.

**4. Manual on indicator validation**

*A document with recommendations on methods for indicator testing, based on the validation work that Lenka Benova has conducted.*

The manual is currently under development with the help of consultant Linda Vesel. The outline of this manual was discussed during the meeting and feedback from the MoNITOR Group was collected.

**Action items:**
- MoNITOR members interested in being involved in the development of (specific sections of) the manual are encouraged to report this to the Secretariat;
- MoNITOR members are asked to flag other resources that may be useful for the development of this document.

**Next steps:**
- The outline of the document will be revised based on the Group’s comments, with particular focus on a more focused scope and purpose, including clearly defined target group(s);
- The final draft is planned to be completed by December 2019.

**Summary for the complete toolkit:**

**Action items:**
- Members interested in contributing to the dissemination/communications plan of the toolkit are encouraged to contact the Secretariat.

**Next steps:**
- The complete toolkit will be presented during the next MoNITOR meeting.
- A draft dissemination plan for the entire toolkit is planned for the next MoNITOR meeting. It was suggested that a brief is developed to guide users on the use of the different components of the toolkit, and of how these components complement each other. It was also proposed that interpretability, data use and decision making should be incorporated into the communications of each component of the toolkit.
MoNITOR papers

The following papers have been developed as a result of the work of MoNITOR, and have already been published:

- “What gets measured gets managed”: revisiting the indicators for maternal and newborn health programmes.
  - A commentary on the MoNITOR Group and the scope of its work.

  - A scoping of maternal and newborn health indicators, mapped against each of the major initiatives.

The following papers are planned to be published:

- Monitoring maternal and newborn health globally: a brief history of key events and initiatives.
  - A mapping of all initiatives related to maternal and newborn health since 1990, including a visualisation of at what point in time these initiatives have been initiated.

- “What gets measured better gets done better”: The landscape of validation of global maternal and newborn health indicators through key informant interviews.
  - Describing the validation work conducted by Lenka Benova.

- A conceptual perspective on studies assessing validity of maternal and newborn indicators.
  - Describing the validation work conducted by Lenka Benova.

Next Technical Advisory Meeting of the MoNITOR Group

The preliminary dates for the next MoNITOR meeting are 19-21 November 2019.

It was suggested that the meeting will start with a session for the MoNITOR Group only, followed by the inclusion of external participants, and then finished off with a session for the MoNITOR Group only. The content of the meeting will depend on whether MoNITOR will receive additional funding to continue MoNITOR during a second phase.

It is suggested that representatives from the GAMA and CHAT Groups join the next MoNITOR meeting.

Action items:

- MoNITOR members are asked to tentatively block 18-20 November 2019.