By Tamsin Walters, en-net moderator

As en-net enters its fifth year of operation, we thought it timely to reflect on how this relatively new resource is performing. Launched in February 2009, en-net has evolved from a forum with eight discussion areas to fourteen. While discussions are primarily peer-led so that experiences can be shared and advice provided by others working in similar situations, a team of 15 technical experts is on-call to respond to questions that receive no spontaneous answers or to clarify complex technical issues from an informed and balanced perspective. The forum is open for anyone to view and does not require registration to do so, though you can also sign up to an account to receive email alerts of new discussions or responses in your areas of interest or to post a question. Approximately 800 people currently have accounts.

The CMN was developed between 2011 and 2012 in response to three key issues. First, the need to roll-out newly available methods for assessing coverage of CMAM developed by FANTA/Valid International and their partners. Such methods include the Semi-Quantitative Evaluation of Access & Coverage (SQUEAC) and Simplified-LQAS Evaluation of Access & Coverage (SLEAC). Secondly, the need to make technical support more widely available, by addressing the human resource gap and shifting the financial burden away from individual programmes. Thirdly, the common desire of partners to use coverage assessments as a means of influencing nutrition policy and practice. The goals and structure of the CMN project are designed to address these issues.

How is the CMN organised?
The CMN is comprised of a team located around the world. The support team – including the Project Coordinator, Project Finance & Administration Coordinator, and Project Assistant – operate from ACF’s HQ in London. The support team coordinates the activities of six Regional Coverage Advisors (RECOs) hosted by CMN implementing organisations. RECOs also receive support from Technical Advisors in each of these agencies and are deployed on a needs-basis to any CMAM programme in any country. Additional technical oversight is provided by Valid International.

What does the CMN offer?
The CMN offers free technical support in the design, planning, implementation and analysis of coverage assessments of CMAM programmes. Regional workshops and on-the-job trainings have been organised in Kenya, Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Nepal, and additional learning events are planned for 2013. Throughout the year, the RECOs will continue to offer on-the-job, field and/or remote technical support to CMAM programmes around the world. The type and length of such support is specifically tailored to the needs and capacities of each programme. The CMN will also continue to coordinate a series of publications designed to capture emerging lessons, remaining challenges and future directions for improving access to treatment of malnutrition.

What has been the response to the CMN to date?
Since its launch in late 2012, the project has received a high response rate. To date, the project has already supported 13 different assessments with different partners. By the end of 2013, the project is expected to have supported over 55 coverage assessments in 28 countries. It is also expected to have supported over 11 different organisations and Ministries of Health around the world. The project has also served as a catalyst for national-level initiatives created and/or supported by the global CMN initiative, including platforms in Nigeria, Kenya and Pakistan.

How can organisations contact the CMN?
To discuss how the CMN can support your programme, please contact the team on cmnproject@actionagainsthunger.org.uk.

For the latest information, key resources, calendar of events, forum and news, visit the CMN website www.coverage-monitoring.org. The website includes a short, simple video that explains about coverage and the aims for the CMN. Access this online or directly at the link http://vimeo.com/57475304

To join any discussion on en-net, share your experience or post a question, visit www.en-net.org.uk