

MINUTES

Global Partners Meeting – 10th Anniversary

11 - 12 November 2020

Day 1

OPENING REMARKS

Angela Hinrichs, Emergency and Rehabilitation Officer, FAO and gFSC SAG Member

Angela welcomed over 200 participants to the 10th anniversary and Global Partner Meeting of the gFSC, before introducing the opening speakers and explaining the rest of the day's agenda.

FAO Director-General, QU Dongyu

QU opened by stating that the mission of the gFSC was even more relevant now as the COVID-19 pandemic upends other calamities, such as conflicts and pest outbreaks, tipping more people into the most severe levels of hunger.

"Today, as we face a crisis unlike any experienced in most of our lifetimes, as millions more people are pushed towards hunger and malnutrition, there has never been a greater need to break down silos," said Qu. "From the very outset of the pandemic, FAO and WFP ensured that food security became a cornerstone of the global response" said the FAO Director-General.

"We are deeply committed to partnership and our most impactful collaboration is at the country level," he added, underlining the importance of national ownership and strengthening local capacity. One such example is the desert locust response in East Africa, where governments, supported by FAO, led control operations while local partners and NGOs are raising awareness about the pest, flagging infestations, and supporting farmers to safeguard their livelihoods.

Bringing an average of 51 partners together in each of these contexts, last year the FSC cooperated with around 1,000 partners at country level. In many ways he said, "the Cluster represents three of my key principles as a leader: breaking down silos, increasing the exchange of expertise and sharing information."

The Cluster is also leading efforts to hold us all accountable, the FAO Director-General said, "to our Members, to our donors and above all, to the people we serve. Through strong monitoring and evaluation systems, data and information sharing, the Cluster plays a pivotal role in ensuring our joint delivery of assistance, without gaps, duplication, or time and money lost. In today's uncertain and fast-changing environment, the Cluster is helping to bridge immediate humanitarian response and longer-term resilience, including as an active member of the Global Network Against Food Crises."

He noted that the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are adding to conflict, extreme weather events, pest outbreaks, and economic turbulence to increase the number of people in high levels of acute

food insecurity. Maintaining the status quo is simply not viable, he stated, if we are to effectively address and prevent food crises and reduce the number of people in need.

“That is what our Members expect from us: to move forward and innovate, to produce results that show we are always adapting to new challenges. FAO is committed to continue its engagement with WFP and seek new ways to improve and refine the Cluster and its work to ensure that it remains fit for purpose in a fast-changing world.”

WFP Deputy-Executive Director, Amir Abdulla

Amir highlighted the Cluster's critical role in amplifying the voices and priorities of frontline responders, especially at a time of significant disruption for the world. He outlined “the three Cs facing us today: climate change, conflict and COVID-19. These challenges require a coordinated approach through the Cluster – meaning the 5Cs must be merged for food security.”

He stressed that WFP, as humanitarians, believe in addressing the impacts of the 3 Cs first and foremost in line with the IASC principles, and remain committed to the importance of clusters as a whole, “with the FSC at our heart: we co-lead this one with pride. Our operations are growing at a dizzying speed – today food and agriculture funding requirements account for over USD 9 billion, which is almost three times the amount appealed for when the Cluster was born.”

Having worked closely with FAO at the birth of the FSC, to only be celebrating its 10th anniversary when other clusters have been around a lot longer, he said was indicative of a gap in the system, highlighted by today’s generational combined health and food crisis.

As we mark 10 years, “ahead of us are new challenges and unprecedented needs. To face them we must continue to leverage our innovation, our technology, but above all our ability to coordinate our efforts,” the WFP Deputy-Executive Director remarked.

Abdulla also noted that WFP's 2020 Nobel Peace Prize is an award that is shared with many others and a recognition of the work done together. With the combined help of UN and NGO partners in the field, as well as governments across the world, WFP is committed to delivering the best it can to people in need.

He finished by recognizing a final C: celebrating this milestones: “There may be a huge hill of need and effort ahead of us, but we should nonetheless celebrate the creation of this cluster as a milestone of its own and ensure our commitment to its success.”

Baroness Valerie Amos, Master of University College of Oxford and former Undersecretary for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator

A video message from Valerie followed, in which she extended congratulations for the Cluster’s work over the last 10 years and “for all it will continue to do in ensuring a proper, coordinated response across national and global governments and NGOs, to ensure that people caught up in emergencies get food – an absolute priority in those times of crises.”

She said she had seen over the last few months that the FSC’s task will remain urgent. Recalling the establishment of the Cluster, she stated it was a pity that its work is as relevant and important now as it was then. “We should have made much better progress, but your contribution and work with partners is already making a difference.”

The FSC strategy to respond in an increasingly complex context -10th anniversary of the gFSC

Naouar Labidi, Senior Programme Officer with the gFSC

Naouar provided an overview on the current global food security situation, for which in 2019 an estimated 690 million people were undernourished. Naouar subsequently provided an overview of key numbers and trends in food security before focusing on the context of FSC and its development. The FSC encompasses a broad spectrum of partners, ranging from UN agencies, NGOs, INGOs, the ICRC/IFRC and National Red Cross/Crescent Society. The breakdown varies, with between 10 – 100 partners involved in any one context or country. However, over the last 10 years the number of partners has doubled, with Naouar stressing the need to therefore collaborate and coordinate effectively, especially given today's mounting challenges.

Naouar then focused on some of the major crises that the FSC has responded to, highlighting the types of response that have been undertaken in contexts ranging from protracted crises to sudden-onset natural disasters and conflict. The FSC has operated at a variety of levels, for instance with the Nepal earthquake in which there was coordinated response at district level that brought together FAO, WFP and partners, while in Haiti the FSC operated in challenging circumstances with very few partners involved. Finally, Naouar highlighted that the Cluster has responded to the new working condition under the COVID-19 pandemic by establishing a dedicated technical working group that comprises 48 organizations and has over 150 members.

Bruno Minjauw, Global Coordinator of the gFSC

Bruno presented the FSC Strategy for 2020-2023, stressing the need to consistently monitor and review progress on its aims and mission. Bruno noted a need to help with data collection and analysis, which requires the active participation of and close coordination with partners. The gFSC works with the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification system (IPC), which informs the where and when of the response, although this will be alongside the HPC, for which he noted the FSC needs to be more accountable. Bruno noted that there is a need for common databases and to improve partnership and localization to build capacity local partners and systems. He then presented the gFSC global funding dashboard, which sets out each specific country, its funding needs and progress as well as partner presence and activities ongoing. Bruno noted that the FSC is moving towards greater efficiency by using monitoring systems to track staff deployments, as well as recruiting P4 positions in the field, which is a step in the right direction to more long-term and stable response rather than short-term consultancy contracts.

SESSION 1: Towards the next decade

Jan Egeland, Secretary General of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)

Jan started by recalling that the Cluster system was established for clear reasons: to ensure predictability in terms of funding, leadership and response capacity in a humanitarian emergency and communicate with local people.

The original idea was to make sure that accountable leadership mechanisms in-country could be contacted as quickly as possible to understand the needs of each sector and enable action. For example, there was no contact for WASH or Shelter at the time of Darfur crisis, which in some way spurred the Cluster system.

However, he noted that the approach has since changed due mainly to the technology we have at hand to assist our response, although the Cluster system still plays a critical role which will only grow over the next ten years with the increasing challenges we will be facing. Yet the Cluster can help to identify where the gaps are, where people are not being reached and how to respond. Egeland said

there is a growing need for cash response in the Cluster system, that it should be prioritized as a means to empower people to make their own decisions, and “if not cash now, then when?”, should be the response if it is not already being used.

Today for the 10th anniversary, we have many things to celebrate: we see better response and coordination, lower mortality rates, higher outputs in terms of nutrition. In addition, there is a much better connection among and networks between UN agencies, NGOs and Red Cross societies, while cash coordination and technical teams are in place and empower the people that we serve. The common services that came out from the efforts of WFP – such as logistics and telecommunications – have also been very important for all humanitarian communities.

The next 10 years will be tough, considering climate change, conflict, COVID-19, injustice, inequalities, biodiversity crises, and more: enormous humanitarian needs are expected as well as gaps between available resources and needs rising further. We should concentrate on: needs assessment tools, which should become even more “real time” and increase their reach and access; better communication with communities, such as continuous feedback from people themselves, so they can tell us when and if something is wrong in real time; and localization, as bureaucratization is a real problem for local civil society organizations that we want to empower, meaning that many processes must be simplified. Will the future of the Cluster be geographically or thematically oriented? We cannot assume anything now; it could be that for certain crises no cluster will be activated, but an inter-sectorial approach can be brought forward. However, it’s too early to say for now. All of us working with the Cluster must realize that humanitarian needs always go together with protection issues and human rights (for example Rohingya people’s first need is not food but their right to return). Advocacy can become more sophisticated than what it is today. Today’s advocacy papers are focusing on needs such as food security and advocating for funds, but they should examine especially the main drivers: those who are causing conflicts and climate crises, and so on.

The relevance of coordination structure for food security

Marina Skurcic Prodanovic, chair of the Global Cluster Coordination Group (GCCG)

Marina explained that the aim of the GCCG is to support intercluster collaboration at global and country levels, with the aim of linking all clusters together. The coordination structure was created to provide a standardized, modular and predictable system in an environment that requires continuous adaptation and elasticity. She noted it also seems that working in the humanitarian sector requires more skills than before, as the work has become more complex.

The coordination structure emphasizes the value of collective engagement and broad partnership. The GCCG is an IASC associated entity since January 2019 and is composed of 11 global clusters, four areas of responsibility and the Information Management Working Group. The GCCG “translates” and promotes mainstreaming of normative policy into operational practice. It is also a tool for accountability to global CLAs and larger cluster partnership.

The GCCG is currently working more on anticipatory action, increasingly engaged in preparedness, supports greater use of cash (taking into account some contextual limitations), promotes support for cluster and non-cluster countries, and aims to improve coordination between national and regional structures (area-based coordination).

Needs assessments are critical and require collective improvement on joint analysis, which itself requires harmonizing analysis at the intercluster level but also actively liaison with other clusters. The JIAF was created to develop collective engagement and aims to promote sharing data and joint needs analysis.

She highlighted that the FSC is doing well compared to other clusters, with a dedicated capacity and staff (cluster coordinators and IMOs) and in deed one of the highest rates of coordinators (83 percent compared to an average of 59 percent across all clusters).

The GCCG will continue to advocate for cross-cutting themes such as localization, inclusivity, accountability to affected populations, gender balance, protection and PSEA. She concluded by saying that the cluster system must continue to evolve, improve and adapt to an ever-evolving situation.

Food Security within the economic and conflict prevailing situation - ICRC

Charlotte Bennborn, Head the Economic Security Unit at the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

Charlotte started by stating that we are still measuring the socio-economic impact of COVID-19, as the effects will be long-term. In recent months, the downturn had not been expected to be too bad, but the second wave is now in full swing, and its impacts could well be worse than the first wave. Much will depend on governments' policies as well as developing a vaccine, which would be a game changer.

The ten biggest food security crises are in countries with conflict. There has been an increase in armed conflicts, over the past decade, along with the multiplication of armed groups and criminal gangs. And now COVID-19 has increased vulnerability which then leads to increased instability.

As a conclusion, she emphasized the need to strengthen localization and encourage deep coordination between sectors, while working more with governments and the private sector.

SESSION 2: FAMINE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Daniel Maxwell, Tufts University and Director of the Food Security and Livelihoods in Complex Emergencies Research Program (Feinstein International Center)

Daniel gave a presentation on the recurrence of famine in our times. He started by reminding us that throughout the second half of the 20th century, famine declined significantly in both frequency and in the number of people it killed. While previously occurring mostly in Europe and Asia, recent trends have shifted to Africa and the Middle East, with warnings sounded in early 2020 due to several precarious situations that were now being aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, famine as we define it has not actually recurred, despite the number of acutely food-insecure people increasing even more due to factors such as the pandemic or desert locust outbreaks. While no famine has been declared in 2020, a WFP-FAO hotspot analysis shows four countries believed to be at risk: Yemen, South Sudan, Nigeria and Burkina Faso.

He recalled that while famine is generally thought of as increased hunger or general deprivation, the food security community has a very precise definition, using specific IPC indicators and thresholds. However, he expressed some concerns about how we define famine, and hence how we analyse, declare and respond to famine or the risk of it. Although the current definition includes a minimum population size, it is based almost entirely on the severity of the crisis. Yet crises at a slighter lower level of severity – but that nonetheless affect a greater number of people or last for longer periods of

time – can result in a much greater loss of lives and livelihoods. Daniel gave the example of Somalia in 2011, when 43 percent of the deaths attributed to the famine actually occurred before it was declared, and the majority of deaths happened outside famine-declared areas.

The second point he raised was on available safeguards in determining famine: strong safeguards exist against false positives (famine declarations when none exist), but not against false negatives (failing to find famine when it does exist), especially as it is difficult to have sufficient, reliable data in politically charged contexts. The humanitarian consequences of false negatives are much more serious than those of false positives; moreover, many analysts believe that few false negatives have occurred recently, not to mention the deliberate use of starvation tactics as a weapon of war.

Thirdly, Daniel mentioned the main drivers of famine, including climate shocks such as drought and floods, plant pests including desert locust, economic volatility, market failures, the COVID-19 pandemic and conflict. He also pointed out that there is always some kind of “x-factor” – a complicating element that leads to famine. And while the COVID-19 pandemic has a strong impact on food security and livelihoods, it is important to bear in mind that 9 of the 10 worst food security crises in 2020 had conflict as a common causal link, as was the case for every instance of famine in the 20th century. The correlation between violent conflict, hunger and famine has been widely recognized, but the specifics of conflict analysis, early warning and preparedness can be tricky, as conflicts are man-made disasters and do not follow the “laws of physics” like climatic conditions do. He showed that in South Sudan there was a strong temporal and spatial correlation between violent conflict and famine risk, with IPC classifications going up at time of conflicts, although the same was not true in Somalia – hence the need to base analysis not only on quantitative information but also on in-depth knowledge and understanding of context and other factors.

Daniel concluded with five recommendations to turn the tide against famine:

- 1) Learn from the pandemic experience, on how we can improve remote assessments, analysis, and implementation, as well as incorporating health and WASH issues in famine analysis and contingency planning.
- 2) Fight the politicization of famine assessment and analysis to protect lives and livelihoods.
- 3) Be better at working in conflict contexts, through stronger conflict analysis and negotiation skills and clear red lines about numerous issues, including diversion of aid and the consequences of this.
- 4) Become stronger at anticipatory action and resilience building. However, as not all drivers can be anticipated (and therefore lead to early action), there is a need for good contingency planning and capacity on the ground.
- 5) Most importantly we need to prioritize accountability, as famine will never be stopped until those who caused it are held accountable. There is strong international ethical consensus on accountability for famine and starvation, and we need to leverage this.

SESSION 3: CLIMATE VARIABILITY & FOOD SYSTEMS

Philip Thornton, Honorary Professor at the College of Science and Engineering, University of Edinburgh and member of the CGIAR Research Programme on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS)

Philip addressed how we are doing in relation to SDG2 and achieving zero hunger: although there has been impressive progress, things seem to be worsening and projections for the next decade are dire.

On global warming, he stated that numerous studies have linked CO₂ emission levels and rising global temperatures, reporting that even in a best-case scenario (low emissions) the overall temperature is

likely to rise by 2° by 2050 and nearly 3° by 2100. Due to long lags in the climate's adjustment system, emissions released today translating into degrees of warming in the future – so even if the temperature starts to decline in the 22nd century, we would still be facing serious climate issues.

Meanwhile the demography pyramid for Western Europe shows a standard distribution of population by age, there is an inverted pyramid for regions like West Africa, where the population is primarily made up of children and adolescents under the age of 15. In sub-Saharan Africa, the population is expected to grow from 800 million today to 2.1 billion by 2050 and 3.8 billion by 2100. These trends are accompanied by significant increases in urbanization, with urban populations expected to rise from 36 percent today to 50 percent by 2030.

So what will the situation look like by mid-century? Climate change is already impacting crop yields: we are already losing 10 percent more yields compared to a situation if there were no climate change. Natural disasters are increasing in scale and frequency across the world, with a huge impact on agricultural production and productivity. While some of these events are highly unpredictable, under a warming climate, extremes such as high temperatures and droughts are likely to become more frequent in the future. Migration is also expected to increase drastically by mid-century, with many drivers linked to climate change, weather extremes and consequent economic and livelihood-related losses.

Decreased forage and heat stress will also limit livestock production, with several countries in sub-Saharan Africa likely to lose one-quarter or more of their productivity, hindering household incomes and livelihoods. Increased temperatures will also have considerable effects on rural labour capacity, which in the Tropics is projected to lead to wide-scale loss of labour and production by 2050 and beyond. Extreme weather is also expected to lead to higher human morbidity and mortality due to heat stress and chronic kidney disease, while more erratic rainfall is also linked to increased violence and armed conflict over natural resources.

Major challenges therefore need to be addressed if we are to achieve SDG2 by 2030 – which is just 10 years away. The effects of interventions are difficult to predict, as socioeconomic and environmental outcomes interact in complex ways when dealing with a wide range of power, vested interests and fragmented governance. However, there are also some opportunities to hand. We are gaining a better understanding of the short- and long-term effects of climate change and where they will be felt. This will mean better targeting of interventions, with new, diverse and climate-resilient varieties of crops and livestock species, establishing early warning systems for early action and designing insurance products bundled with crop and other inputs.

We need to recognize that there are places where incremental changes won't be sufficient, and total transformation of food and livelihood systems may be needed. For example in Tigray in Ethiopia, semi-arid conditions and high rainfall variability have contributed to significant waves of famine in the past. But drastic positive change, such as increasing irrigated land area from 40 to 40,000 ha, has been made thanks to collective action and local leadership. In Langui in Peru, changes in climate and markets have reduced farmers' harvests but communities shifted from growing traditional staple crops to planting improved varieties of grass for dairy production, opening up access to a whole new dairy market. In Vietnam, diets have changed dramatically over the last few years to align with the national nutrition strategy, for which the 2012 goal was for 50 percent of Vietnamese households to achieve a dietary balance by 2015. By 2014, half of the population had a diet balance close to the ideal.

Philip finished with some suggestions on how best to address these challenges: make stronger links between the disaster risk community and agricultural research for development; continue managing

climate and other driving forces that affect development, combining flexibility, innovation and participative problem solving; improve targeting of interventions; and make better use of early warning systems, “next-gen” seasonal and weather forecasts, communication with communities and big data risk management tools.

Day 2

SESSION 4: UPDATE FROM THE GLOBAL NETWORK AGAINST FOOD CRISES

Lavinia Antonacci, Technical Coordinator of the GNAFC, FAO

Lavinia provided partners with a brief overview of the recent developments of the Global Network Against Food Crises (GNAFC), including:

- A GNAFC high-level side event on *Food Crises and COVID-19: emerging evidence and implications for action*.
- Briefing to the UNSC on conflict and hunger (UN resolution 2417).
- Mid-year update of the Global Report on Food Crises and note on impacts of COVID-19 on food systems.
- COVID-19 policy response analysis.
- Technical support at country level: Chad, DRC, Haiti and Mali.

Under the GNAFC, FAO and WFP issued a joint bulletin of acute food insecurity early warning analyses, in which they jointly identified hotspots and drivers underpinning these crises. The GNAFC is also working on a related analysis of humanitarian and development assistance in food crises settings.

The discussion then went on to identify opportunities for engagement and partnership with initiatives at global initiatives and country level, with global opportunities noted particularly for advocacy and joint research. At country level, opportunities for collaboration are more solid as the GNAFC aims to work in-country systematically with the Cluster. This can include: partner project cycle alignment (particularly in Mali, DRC, Chad and Haiti), supporting country-based leadership of the HDP, strengthening existing coordination and promoting the interaction of food security and nutrition objectives.

SESSION 5: VOICES FROM MAJOR FOOD CRISES: LOCALIZATION, COVID-19 AND COMPOUNDING EFFECTS

Focus on Nigeria

Leslieparker Odongkara, FSC Coordinator in Nigeria

Leslieparker began by explaining trends in the three most affected states in the northeast of Nigeria, where since June 2019 there has been a deterioration in food security. The situation has become more difficult with COVID-19 and a poor harvest is expected. He noted that there are physical constraints to accessing food, with partners in some cases having resources but not being able to purchase food. Nevertheless, a slight improvement in the food security situation is expected with the upcoming harvest. Some areas in the northeast are experiencing conflict, which is where the most severe food

security issues are noted. The projection is for higher levels of food insecurity to occur in the northeast, and that issues with access may arise.

Andrew Simbwa, Save the Children Nigeria

Andrew explained how COVID-19 has impacted the economy, with inflation at nearly 14 percent – far above recent years. Unemployment rates are high, leaving many households resorting to negative coping strategies. Food security workers are often denied access, unlike health workers, which he noted has created added challenges. However, the FSC has adapted and with cash programmes has integrated WASH and other sectors, thereby increasing inter-cluster collaboration. Localisation has been a key component of this, working with local partners and developing capacities, which other partners as well as the government are pushing for more and more, despite some funding challenges encountered by local partners.

Localization

Adriana Opromolla, Caritas Internationalis

Adriana presented some lessons learned from the field. Caritas is present in more than 150 countries and localization is therefore a key issue and focus for the organization. Adriana spoke about the need to further empower local NGOs, especially when it comes to protection and other sensitive topics, which can't be so successfully achieved through top-down approaches.

She recommended that international organizations promote longer-term partnerships with local NGOs, encourage more meaningful national NGO participation in decision making and strengthen local capacity through trainings.

She detailed the example of Venezuela, where there is a severe crisis ongoing. In 2019, WFP estimated 7 million people were in moderate food insecurity, 2.4 million in acute food insecurity, and one out of three people were in need of food aid. She went on to describe how a local NGO called TENGO had introduced a cash programme through Caritas Venezuela, which has helped provide a more diverse diet to beneficiaries. She then provided recommendations for the Food Security and Nutrition Cluster in Venezuela, including on the significant turnover of staff which Adriana said raises concerns regarding continuity. Caritas recommended that coordinators hold the position for longer time periods, noting that there is an increased push for local NGO integration on coordination and building on their work.

Adriana gave another example of Burkina Faso, where the focus is not on replacing existing structures but on promoting their proper use. There have been a number of recommendations for the Cluster based on suggestions from NGO partners actively working with the Cluster, for example on the use of English as the predominant language of Cluster presentations and discussions, which she said can limit participation from local NGOs.

SESSION 6: THE GFSC WORKING GROUPS - ACHIEVEMENTS AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR 2021

WG1: Cash and Markets

Corrie Sissons, Catholic Relief Services and Ruco Van Der Merwe, USAID

Co-chair Corrie presented this WG's results so far, which include finalizing the “Examples of best practices in the use of multipurpose cash in food security”. As the two co-chairs were new, they took this opportunity to review the TORs. A webinar on CVA and nutrition was initially organised on 4th November but due to some technical issues had been postponed to 16th November, while one on the change of modality had also been organized with the FSC and WG coordinators from Nigeria, Pakistan, Zimbabwe and Venezuela. Finally, she noted that some linkages had been made with the Agriculture WG on cash for seeds.

Over the course of the next six months, the WG would like to develop a technical support/help desk under the gFSC. This WG would develop links with Cash WGs from the other global clusters in order to share experiences. As proposed earlier, the WG will also look at hosting a webinar on stories from the field about cash and markets, with practical case studies from partners, as well as one on adopting CVA in the context of COVID-19.

Medium-term priorities include follow-up with the Grand Bargain and *State of the World's Cash in 2020* on coordination and new models emerging. The WG also wants to develop guidance on Cash and Social Protection with practical case studies (how food assistance has linked to existing social protection infrastructure through CVA).

WG2: Inter-Cluster Nutrition

Regine Kopplow, Concern and Darana Souza, FAO

Regine and Darana presented the three main achievements of the Cash and Nutrition WG. First was an inter-cluster training package for improved nutrition outcomes, which was delivered in Chad and Somalia although some questions still need to be resolved regarding delivery (face-to-face vs e-learning; ToT vs. full package) and whether this will be technical or on coordination. They then discussed the development of joint action plans in Ethiopia, DRC, Somalia and partially in South Sudan. Challenges encountered concerned the quality and feasibility of the plans and a lack of follow-up at country level due to not having any governance structure around the action plans. Finally, country case studies on COVID-19 impacts and mitigation have been developed for Sudan and Yemen.

This WG also conducted a strengths-weaknesses-opportunities-threats (SWOT) analysis and presented the results to partners. The main strengths identified were strong collaboration within the gFSC and high-level commitment from members, as well as technical expertise and capacity to support countries. However, it was noted that as some clusters (Health and WASH) are not engaged, the group's identity is unclear as are some of its procedures. The WG agreed to continue focusing on technical rather than strategic, develop / revise a shared vision for the group, develop clarity on the Tor, roles & responsibilities of members and (co-)chairs, identify main synergies with other sectors by reaching out to other Clusters, regularly up-date other Clusters about our work, be clearer on what the asks are & what the WG can offer to others, invite specialists from other sectors/ Clusters and clarify linkages to other global Clusters.

WG3: Agriculture

Jan Morrow, USAID

As the Chair of this new WG, Jan presented its key activities with the aim of establishing active engagement with the emergency standard teams of SEADS and LEGS. The WG has met with the Programme quality, Desert locust and Cash and markets WGs to determine potential avenues for collaboration.

Workplans have been developed for two workstreams – livestock and seeds and crops. The livestock workplan focuses on technical themes (three dimensions of security: environmental, human, and food) and One Health, supporting country FSC requests and sharing information on learning themes derived from studies and research.

The seeds and crops workplan focused on reviewing and testing rapid seed system security assessment tools and disseminating these to the FSC community; developing cash transfer guidelines for agricultural and seed interventions; conducting participatory impact assessments of emergency seed interventions; and understanding and improving farmer engagement and agricultural technical services in humanitarian agriculture.

WG4: Programme Quality

Matthew Day, REACH, Julie March, USAID and Stefano Battain, Warchild

Matthew presented this WG's achievements based on three sub-streams: dissemination of the indicators and monitoring handbook with a plan to organize a webinar to build members' capacity; establishing a protection task force which is now coordinating with a CP-FS reference group; and developing guidance on cooked meals, which has now been published and will be shared widely.

There is a threefold workplan for the WG for the next six months: 1) identify opportunities and gaps in Programme Quality that arise through surveys and communication with field teams; 2) clarify and elaborate on the scope of PQWG in coordination with other WGs; and 3) reinvigorate sharing of programme quality-related tools and webinars and communication within the PQWG.

Building on previous achievements, the WG also aims to link the JMF with the PQWG to support its implementation and guidance, develop TORs and a workplan for the protection taskforce, and encouraging collaboration, sharing lessons learned, case studies and good practices.

WG5: COVID-19

Cyril Lekiefs, Action Contre La Faim

Cyril as Chair of the WG presented this session with Matthew (REACH, Result 1, JMF), Lisa (gFSC, Result 3, joint advocacy) and Ann (Relief International, Result 5, information from the wider industry). Instead of focusing on the key achievements vs the workplan, this WG decided to present one key achievement.

Matthew presented the lessons learned and strengths of the JMF from the 2 areas it has been piloted in (Cox's Bazar and Northeast Syria). He also showed other products developed, such as training material, an information repository, factsheets, and JMF briefing.

Cyril presented the key achievements of the Result 2 on producing an urban targeting guidance note, which is almost complete.

Lisa mentioned that the Result 3 had developed key messages on COVID-19's impacts on food security, having worked closely with all partners and other clusters to integrate in particular nutrition and urban messaging. She showed the topline messages agreed and used at the IASC Principals meeting, High Level Political Forum, FAO's Committee on Food Security and gFSC & UN Humanitarian Communication Group.

Finally, Ann explained the research method and presented a summary report from 12 countries, which was conducted with six interns from two universities.

As the COVID-19 WG is meant to be a temporary group, two options were presented for moving forward: either continue for some time and then phase out until the remaining activities are closed,

or continue the WG but under new TORs, new leadership and with a clear workplan with tangible deliverables. The decision will be left to the WG members

SESSION 7: STRATEGIC ADVISORY GROUP (SAG) UPDATE

The gFSC SAG is composed of eight members, including four NGOs that rotate every other year. In 2020 the SAG increased the number of meetings held compared to last year, partly due to stronger engagement stemming from the COVID-19 crisis, but also due to a wider network and more collaboration with the GNAFC. Collaboration also increased with technical working groups (WGs): two new WGs were created upon request from partners and the field (Agriculture, COVID-19) and one was closed (Preparedness and Resilience) owing to prioritization issues. In the coming months the SAG's will continue to support the WGs, hold regular meeting with internal and external presenters, increase collaboration with different entities and agencies and support links with the field.

Alberto Bigi (FAO) and Ilaria Dettori (WFP) introduced themselves to the audience as new SAG members. Katie (outgoing SAG member) highlighted the critical role of NGOs in the field – particularly local actors – and within the SAG, as they allow for strategic direction with a view to one day enabling a national NGO to be part thanks to improved localization. There was an acknowledgment of the work done by the SAG and gFSC team in response to COVID-19, for example through the creation of the WG and the JMF.

ELECTION RESULTS

Add the graph with election results %

CLOSING REMARKS by the Directors of Emergencies

Margot van der Velden, WFP Director of Emergencies

Margot underlined how "increased conflict, climate change impacts and COVID-19 are making our work even more complex – the gFSC currently requires USD 9.2 billion to reach 100 million people. But new challenges mean we must be more robust, more collaborative, more innovative and advocate to serve the people most in need. We have improved our remote data monitoring and collection tools, which are vital to truly understand the needs of the communities we serve and to better adapt our response."

She underscored the need to build on these capacities to make the Cluster stronger. Partnerships are critical with all organizations, but especially local ones. The question is how we can best do this – there is a need to truly understand localized contexts, not only so we can do better but so we can also phase out and instigate early recovery processes.

"Once the critical phase of the pandemic has passed, we should seize the opportunity to adapt to our new environment and evolve our approach. We must advocate to ensure that these efforts become more anticipatory than reactive, investing further in preparedness and early action."

The FSC must strive through collective efforts to meet the needs of those in remote and conflict areas, for which analysis and mapping capacities are essential to ensure success. This is particularly true for rapid-onset emergencies and natural hazards. The years ahead will not be easy, and there won't necessarily be more resources available for increased operations, so working with local partners is

key. We must strive for the next 10 years to signify fighting hunger in the right direction and reversing the curve of food-insecure numbers.

She reaffirmed that WFP is absolutely committed to working with all its partners, for which coordination will be increasingly important. Driven by the FSC's core values of integrity, humanity and inclusion, to succeed in helping the hungry and vulnerable this partnership system must run smoothly. Through our collective efforts to improve our emergency response and expand our reach runs our commitment to the people affected by crises and conflict.

Daniele Donati, Deputy Director, Office of Emergencies and Resilience, FAO

Daniele thanked the gFSC and all its thousands of partners in the field around the world, for their unwavering commitment under harsh conditions to ensure food security response is coordinated, coherent and reaches those most in need when they need it most.

He said it was clear from what we have heard over these past two days that humanitarian assistance at scale is critical, but not enough. The FSC is striving to transform assistance into local capacity building and ownership, paving the way for longer-term resilience by incorporating early recovery from the outset.

“As agencies and organizations, none of us can complete this task alone or in silos. Trusted, consistent partnerships are crucial in evolving from a humanitarian to a development scenario and avoid any duplications, gaps or funds invested poorly. “

He noted that targeting twice the number of people for assistance since its inception, the Cluster now needs more than double the funds. Food security coordination saves lives, time and money, but to do so it must be able to rely on commitment across the board, from and with all local actors, governments, and UN agencies.

As such the unique role of the gFSC is strongly tied to the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus, with members creating an environment for understanding the root causes of food insecurity. Only in this way can we plan our response, using the most accurate data and analysis and with a view from the outset to reach early and sustained recovery.

The 10-year anniversary of the FSC is therefore a welcome opportunity to take stock of the achievements made by the Cluster, and perhaps more crucially to explore new approaches that unite partners towards our common cause.

He ended by reinforcing "the commitment to ensure humanitarian coordination not only continues, but goes hand in hand with developing a sustainable path to resilience and zero hunger."