



FOOD SECURITY CLUSTER

Strengthening Humanitarian Response



**Global Meeting of
Food Security Cluster Partners
24 to 25 October 2012
Geneva, Switzerland
DRAFT REPORT**

Contents

Executive Summary	3
Wednesday 24 October 2012	5
Opening and Welcome.....	5
Introduction from the Chair	5
Report back from Technical Working Groups.....	6
2. Assessment Working Group (Annex 5).....	6
Co-Chair: Vincent Annoni, ACTED.....	6
Co-Chair: Kathryn Ogden, WFP.....	6
Co-Chair: Caroline Abla, International Medical Corps.....	6
Co-Chair: Hilary Dhlwayo-Motsiri, IFRC.....	6
Advocacy Working Group.....	6
Assessment Working Group	7
Food Security and Nutrition Inter-cluster Working Group.....	9
Food Security and Livelihoods in Urban Settings Working Group.....	10
gFSC Working groups - next steps	11
Review of gFSC achievements 2012	11
Learning from country experience.....	14
Panel discussion	14
Mark Gordon, Somalia Food Security Cluster Co-Coordinator	14
Nicholas Hutchings, Afganaid, Afghanistan, Co-Chair, Food Security Cluster and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC).....	17
Line Rindebaek, Food Security Cluster, Consultant.....	18
Plenary discussion.....	19
Inter-related aspects of Quality Programming	22
Pierre Gentile, International Committee of the Red Cross	23
Rebecca Skovbye, World Food Programme	23
Plenary discussion.....	25
Thursday 25 October 2012.....	26
Development of the gFSC Strategic Plan January 2013 to December 2014	26
Plenary discussion.....	27
Priority gFSC Activities from November 2012 to April 2013	30

Meeting action points.....	31
Closure	32
Annex 1: Agenda	33
Annex 2: List of Participants	36
List of Participants to Working Group Face-to-Face Meetings 23 October 2012.....	38
Advocacy Working Group.....	38
Assessment Working Group	38
Food Security and Livelihoods in Urban Settings Working Group.....	39
Food Security and Nutrition Inter-cluster Working Group.....	39

Executive Summary

The global Food Security Cluster (gFSC) meeting of partners was held from 24 to 25 October 2012 in Geneva, Switzerland. The meeting brought together more than 60 participants and observers representing 28 different partner agencies. The meeting was chaired by Hilary Dhliwayo-Motsiri, International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

The overall purpose of the meeting was to review the work of the gFSC throughout 2012 and to identify the strategic direction for 2013-2014. The specific objectives of the two day meeting were to:

- Assess progress and provide direction for the global Food Security Cluster's four Working Groups
- Identify field support requirements
- Review the key priorities of the gFSC Strategic Plan January 2013 to December 2014
- Identify priority gFSC activities and responsible entities from November 2012 to April 2013.

These objectives were achieved with active and productive presentations and discussion leading to specific practical input to the gFSC moving forward.

The meeting had a special focus on country level clusters, drawing on direct input from the Afghanistan Food Security Cluster NGO co-chair, the Somalia cluster co-coordinator and the food security cluster information manager who worked in Libya, Bangladesh and Fiji. The three national cluster colleagues provided an introduction on key topics of concern, highlighting best practices and identifying areas of support / increased engagement needed from the gFSC. They drew directly from their work at the country level.

One of the most important messages provided from the country coordinators was the need for the increased engagement of partners at the national and sub-national levels. The role of the gFSC is to support the country clusters / coordination. This is a role which cannot be carried out solely by the lead agencies and the global support team.

Experience from Bangladesh, in particular, demonstrated the importance of having shared, clear objectives and ways of work to ensure smooth transitions into emergency responses by all partners. Established, agreed and strong information management systems as well as clear and transparent lines of communication and coordination can reduce confusion in times of crisis and contribute to a more effective overall response to an emergency. For this to happen, advance building of all the necessary tools for activation is essential and as part of an overall discussion on quality programming, participants were provided with examples from WFP and ICRC where protection tools have been mainstreamed in country food security operations, including lessons learned and best practices.

Essential, too, is full sensitization of stakeholders regarding their roles and what they can expect from the cluster coordination systems.

The importance of such approaches for the FSC and for effective overall humanitarian responses was stressed and reiterated strongly throughout plenary discussions.

It was also stressed that further guidance on dealing with governments is needed (recognising country differences). This needs to be specific to the Food Security Cluster to complement the generic IASC Guidance on working with National Authorities.

It was agreed that there is a need for more consistent engagement of the humanitarian community (including donors) in the funding of coordination and cluster management.

It was concluded that the discussions and recommendations from this meeting would form the basis of the two year global Food Security 2013-2014 strategic plan. The specific suggested areas of action and way forward for the gFSC in 2013 -2014 included the following:

- In order to ensure synergy between the Working Groups, specific meetings of all Co-chairs will be regularly scheduled. The Co-chairs will provide a brief overview of the work of the groups and discuss possible areas of synergy. The gFSC support team will provide the secretariat support to these meetings.
- The four gFSC Working Groups will revise plans-of-action for the period October 2012 – April 2013 based on the feedback and outcomes of discussions during this meeting. All minutes of the Working Groups will be shared with all gFSC partners.
- gFSC partners are encouraged to continue (and in some cases) increase their commitment to the technical working groups.
- Further guidance for countries dealing with government needs to be provided and should be specifically targeted for use by the Food Security Cluster, complementing the generic IASC Guidance on working with National Authorities. Such guidance must recognise differences in country situations.
- It was recognised that the extent of effectiveness of each country inter-cluster coordination group is very dependent on the personality and leadership abilities of the designated focal point within OCHA. Both the global and country food security clusters should advocate for and support the principle of NGO direct involvement in country inter-cluster forums. [NB. The OCHA representative at the meeting recognised the need to strengthen inter-cluster systems and leadership in all cluster countries.]
- In line with the commitments of the gFSC, all global partners need to ensure that their country teams become involved in/ support and understand their role and the added value of the FSC at the national level.
- The gFSC will explore the specific role of the gFSC and how to link / integrate with the existing CALP / CASH groups that already exist within organizations at global and national levels.

It was agreed that the next meeting of partners of the global Food Security Cluster would be hosted by the World Food Programme, Rome 17-18 April with the face-to-face technical meetings to be held on Tuesday 16 April 2012.

Wednesday 24 October 2012

Opening and Welcome

Jeff Tschirley, Service Chief, Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division, Food and Agriculture Organization

Jeff Tschirley officially opened the meeting on behalf of the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Food Programme and expressed on-going support and general directions for the meeting:

WFP and FAO continue to lead the gFSC cluster with one voice and fully support all national cluster colleagues and partners of the Food Security Cluster at national and global levels.

In line with the principle of the IASC Transformative Agenda, it is important that the gFSC keep the focus on the needs of the country clusters in order to support improved efficiency and response with increased accountability to affected populations. To achieve this, it is necessary to continue to adhere to the principles of partnership and ensure increased NGO participation at all levels of the cluster and coordination systems.

Partners were thanked for their continued commitment throughout the year and specifically during this meeting that aims to provide further guidance and support to Food Security Cluster partners at global and national levels. The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies were warmly thanked for the support provided with the meeting arrangements and logistics.

Introduction from the Chair

Chair: Hilary Dhliwayo-Motsiri, International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Hilary Dhliwayo-Motsiri welcomed participants to the meeting and provided an overview of the purpose, objectives and specific agenda items for the two days.

The overall purpose of the meeting was to review the work of the gFSC throughout 2012 and to identify the strategic direction for 2013-2015. The specific objectives of the two day meeting were to:

- Assess progress and provide direction for the global Food Security Cluster's four Working Groups
- Identify field support requirements
- Review the key priorities of the gFSC Strategic Plan January 2013 to December 2014
- Identify priority gFSC activities and responsible entities November 2012 to April 2013 (see Annex 3).

The discussions and recommendations from this meeting will form the basis of the two years global Food Security 2013-2014 strategic plan.

Report back from Technical Working Groups

As decided during the establishment of the gFSC technical working groups, the day prior to the Global Meetings of Partners was reserved for face-to-face meeting of current Working Groups. The four current gFSC Working Groups are:

1. Advocacy Working Group (Annex 4)
Chair: Larissa Pelham, Care International
2. Assessment Working Group (Annex 5)
Co-Chair: Vincent Annoni, ACTED
Co-Chair: Kathryn Ogden, WFP
3. Food Security and Nutrition Inter-cluster Working Group (Annex 6)
Co-Chair: Caroline Abla, International Medical Corps
Co-Chair: Hilary Dhliwayo-Motsiri, IFRC
4. Food Security and Livelihoods in Urban Settings Working Group (Annex 7)
Chair: Allister Clewlow, Samaritan's Purse

On Tuesday 23 October, the four gFSC technical groups met to review the work of each group throughout 2012 and to identify / reaffirm priority areas for 2013 and further develop the work plan as appropriate. Feedback from the chairs and co-chairs of the four working groups to the plenary aimed at providing an overview of the achievements to date and the strategic direction for the next six months. Please refer to Annexes 4-7 for the full meeting reports.

Advocacy Working Group

Chair: Larissa Pelham, Care International

It was agreed that advocacy and communications is core for the work of the global and country food security clusters. It was noted that the group needed to remain modest with the initial expectations, keeping the long term view. Therefore it was felt very strongly that the WG should continue to define the strategy over the next six months, with an aim to expand activities over the long term.

It was decided that by April 2013, the WG would develop a draft advocacy and communication strategy. The strategy will facilitate communications between internal national and global food security partners and between national food security clusters. The strategy will provide reference guidance:

- on existing tools to help highlighting areas such as entry points to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC).
- to country clusters advocacy and communications priorities (how to develop a advocacy plan etc).

The aim, expected outcomes of this strategy is to develop a food security cluster 'global voice' so that all gFSC partners' observers and colleagues speak consistently with a food security cluster voice.

Members of the WG discussed the possibility of requesting a six-month secondment of an Advocacy specialist to work full time on the development of the advocacy and communication strategy and related tools. It was suggested to open discussions with the Norwegian Refugee Council to see if there were suitable specialists available.

In response to this request, the members of the WG looked at the existing draft messages and circulate them to all gFSC partners for comments. After further discussions, it was decided that it was not appropriate for the gFSC to endorse in any way these messages. It is the responsibility of individual agencies and organizations. At this stage, neither the WG nor the gFSC can endorse messages on behalf of partners. The WG will respond to INFOSAID to inform them of this decision.

The most important call from the members of this group was to encourage other gFSC partners to nominate communications experts with a knowledge of food security issues and or food security experts with communication knowledge to join this group and contribute to the development of the strategy and related guidelines. Call to all gFSC partners.

Plenary discussion

It is important that partners become engaged in this working group. Currently there are only two NGOs, one lead agency and the gFSC support team involved. Partners agreed to explore possibilities of joining this working group.

The work of this group feeds into the work of all the other working groups so it is important that all information is shared. Also, in order to strengthen the connections, it was suggested that all of the co-chairs of the working groups meet on a regular basis in order to discuss priority areas and challenges.

Once gFSC strategic priorities for the next 2 years are set, it will be easier to develop an advocacy strategy in keeping with this and also allocate resources for i.e. early warning, assessment findings, IPC, preparedness.

Assessment Working Group

Co-Chair: Vincent Annoni, ACTED

Co-Chair: Kathryn Ogden, WFP

Situation Indicators

In April, 2012 an initial list of 30 indicators was derived from existing IASC, SPHERE, WFP, FAO, NGO indicators for food security responses in emergencies. This initial draft was circulated to all AWG members as well as the food security cluster country coordinators and information managers. Building on comments received, the list of situation indicators was refined with an attempt to ensure that they are relevant and SMART (Annex 3: Situation Indicators).

Participants decided to go through each of the indicators to see if there was agreement on the current wording of the indicators; disaggregation; IASC Phase; IPC link; Outcome /contributing tools/frequency; and if a baseline is needed for each of the indicators. However,

following in-depth discussions on the first two indicators, it was decided to focus purely on the wording at this stage and to continue the rest via email. The results of this discussion are summarized in

It was decided that this list should be finalised by the end November 2012. By the end January 2012, it is planned to have completed the gFSC situation indicator matrix specifying:

- Theme (access, availability, utilization)
- Indicator (as per agreed by 6 November)
- Disaggregation
- Outcome / contributing factors (IPC link)
- Tools
- Frequency / Baseline needed.
- IASC Phase

The next task of the AWG will be to look at the various IASC phases of an emergency as defined in the Operational Guidance for Coordinated Assessments in Humanitarian Crises, look at what could be appropriate indicators at each phase, where this information will come from and what decisions this information can help formulate.

A guidance note to explain the purpose, process of the core indicators will be developed by January 2013 to be circulated with the core list and matrix of the gFSC indicators.

A first draft of a FAQ /summary of existing tools highlighting the pros, cons, pitfalls of selected common tools will be developed by April 2013.

Performance indicators

It is recognised that there was a need for further discussion needed around the suggested performance indicators. The recently established Sahel indicator will be used to stimulate discussion among AWG members. It is planned to have the final list endorsed by January 2013.

Plenary discussion

Partners appreciated the work done so far on the indicators and looked forward to the final lists. The lists of core indicators will be aggregated by gFSC at global level but it will be managed at local level

The work on collating the various assessments was welcomed by the plenary and it was hoped that this activity will draw on existing guidance assessments from other clusters that have an impact on food security such as nutrition cluster assessments. It is also important for the working group to contact country clusters in order to gather the existing tools. The guidance on the use of the indicators with the information needed for gap analysis will be welcomed at the field level clusters.

The gFSC will not endorse the tools but will provide a summary of lessons-learned so far from established successful operations.

The close link with the NATF was recognised and it was suggested that this working group also establish links to similar initiatives – such as the cash transfer interventions and response analysis.

Food Security and Nutrition Inter-cluster Working Group

Co-Chair: Caroline Abla, International Medical Corps

Co-Chair: Hilary Dhliwayo-Motsiri, IFRC

The Inter-Cluster Working Group on Food Security and Nutrition was created with the intention of providing operational/coordination/technical direction and guidance to the gFSC on key areas of synergy between the Nutrition and Food Security Clusters in humanitarian responses. One of the objectives of the Working Group was the development of standard operating procedures between the gFSC and the GNC.

Since the April 2011 Global Meeting of Partners, the Working Group has worked on a series of key activities and tools. It has developed and conducted a field survey for cluster coordinators in order to identify the present coordination field practices between the Food Security and Nutrition Clusters. Upon careful analysis of the survey results and the dissemination of key findings, the Working Group identified principal synergies and complementarities, gaps and limitations, as well as best practices regarding existing coordination mechanisms between Food Security and Nutrition Clusters at field level.

A key deliverable that was identified during this meeting was the development of a Joint Guidance Note concerning fundamental synergies, complementarities, gaps and lessons learned that were discerned from the survey findings.

It was agreed to write a letter clearly defining mandates, roles and responsibilities of the two clusters. This would in turn be shared with cluster coordinators and partners at country as well as headquarter level. There will also be an additional letter signed by Global Nutrition & Food Security Coordinators and addressed to the field Coordinators of both clusters, as well as the field-level co-lead agencies, emphasizing the working principles and linkages between the FSC and GNC. A Joint Guidance Note will also be produced containing both concrete examples of how the Food Security and Nutrition coordination mechanisms look like and the existing coordination best practices. The latter will be collected after careful consultation with field coordinators.

Further action points include the creation of an online discussion group, either via email or via the gFSC website, where Food Security and Nutrition practitioners can ask questions, share information and solve problems. Joint Trainings for the cluster coordinators, as well as joint missions will be promoted. In addition, the working group will ensure that the joint trainings, support missions and assessments are also multi-cluster in nature and that there is sufficient national capacity to address coordination issues between the two clusters, especially when the international workforce retreats.

Plenary discussion

It was noted that the emphasis of this group is on the linkages – rather than on the different mandates of two clusters which can give the impression of diversion. Areas to increase collaboration at the field level were welcomed and partners looked forward to receiving the terms of reference and shared response domain guidance. It could be useful to develop a matrix highlighting different principles/ linkages.

A suggested possible next step of this group could be to enlarge to include other clusters such as WASH and Health, building on the common strategies as a platform. However, it is important to keep the focus on the group and not to create a parallel inter-cluster coordination group.

Food Security and Livelihoods in Urban Settings Working Group

Chair: Allister Clewlow, Samaritan's Purse

The group will continue being as inclusive as possible in its activities and welcomes the participation of NGOs, UN and other international organizations in any and all discussions. In particular, the chair stressed the importance of partnership in key decision-making activities and asserted that the WFP-NGO Partner Consultation Meeting in Rome, could be a good platform for enhancing urban and food security discussions.

It was suggested that the overall group split-into two-to-three focus or interest groups with the task of addressing different key issues such as: animal livelihood development, cash and vouchers, and programming in urban and peri-urban settings. Information could then be shared via a d-group e-mail list and teleconferences via "Webex" would only be scheduled every three months to discuss ways of executing concrete deliverables.

Mapping Exercise

There was general consensus that the Mapping Exercise is a very useful tool for determining who does what at both global and national level. The aim for 2013 is to develop a global interactive map to be placed on the gFSC Urban & Non-Agricultural Working Group webpage. The mapping could then be used as a gap analysis tool, an advocacy tool or even as a starting point to capture the best practices in each sector. The mapping will be updated on a yearly basis by the Working Group Chair, who will encourage participation and feedback from both global and national-level partners.

Guidelines

Participants agreed to develop material guidelines for urban food security assessments to ensure suitable and timely interventions during humanitarian crises. Concrete guidelines will also be created for data collection and assessment methodologies in urban settings. These guidelines will serve as standardized tools that will better assist programmers at field level in handling the emergency response.

As a second step, a lesson learned and good practices exercise will be conducted by partners to better understand key successes and challenges in the coordination of the urban food security response plan. These reports will also be posted on our website and disseminated to all partners.

Strategy Development

The meeting addressed the issue that to-date, there is no clear framework or strategy for dealing with crises in urban settings and country offices are usually left to their own devices on this front. It is therefore essential that a concerted effort be made to address strategy gaps regarding the scaling-up of national capacity and urban-specific programming.

A survey monkey will be developed, addressing issues pertaining to: technical support, capacity building, and analysis & assessments. Results acquired from the questionnaire, will

assist the group in formulating a strategy that counters urban poverty issues while providing opportunities for youth and income generation.

Plenary discussion

The work of this working group to provide a better understanding of what type of interventions are needed in emergency response in urban and peri-urban areas settings was welcomed by the partners.

Many of the gFSC partners have already developed some guidance and it is important for the working group to strengthen and establish linkages with existing coordination networks such as the Food for Cities network, and the ALNAP work in Nairobi in conjunction with UN HABITAT.

It is important to also include the animal livelihoods in urban settings within the scope and mandate of this group.

gFSC Working groups - next steps

- In order to ensure synergy between the working groups, specific meetings of all co-chairs will be regularly scheduled. The Co-chairs will provide a brief overview of the work of the groups and discuss possible areas of synergy. The gFSC support team will provide the secretariat support to these meetings.
- The four gFSC Working Groups will revise plan-of-actions for the period of October 2012 – April 2013 based on the feedback and outcomes of discussions during this meeting.
- All minutes of the Working Groups will be shared with all gFSC partners.
- gFSC partners are encouraged to continue (and in some cases) increase their commitment of in the technical working groups.

Review of gFSC achievements 2012

Presenters: Graham Farmer, Global Food Security Cluster Coordinator

Background document: Annex 7 gFSC Achievements 2011-2012

Expected outcome

Overview of gFSC achievements linked to the 5 strategic pillars.

The key achievements of the global cluster for 2011 and 2012 along with some of the main challenges faced over the past six months were presented against the five pillars of the gFSC: surge support; capacity development; tools and guidance; information management; and advocacy.

Surge support

The gFSC has provided surge deployment in eight operations. The gFSC support team has supported missions in 12 countries in 2011 and 18 countries so far in 2012.

A summary of the gFSC missions undertaken is presented below.

Support Missions & Surge Deployment

YEAR	GST Support Missions		Surge Deployment
2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Afghanistan Bangladesh Cote d'Ivoire Djibouti Ethiopia Haiti 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kenya Libya Nepal Somalia South Sudan Sudan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Libya Pakistan Kenya
2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Afghanistan Bangladesh Burkina Faso Chad Colombia DRC El Salvador Kenya Mali 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Niger oPT Pakistan Panama Senegal Somalia South Sudan Timor Leste Yemen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bangladesh Fiji Sahel South Sudan Yemen

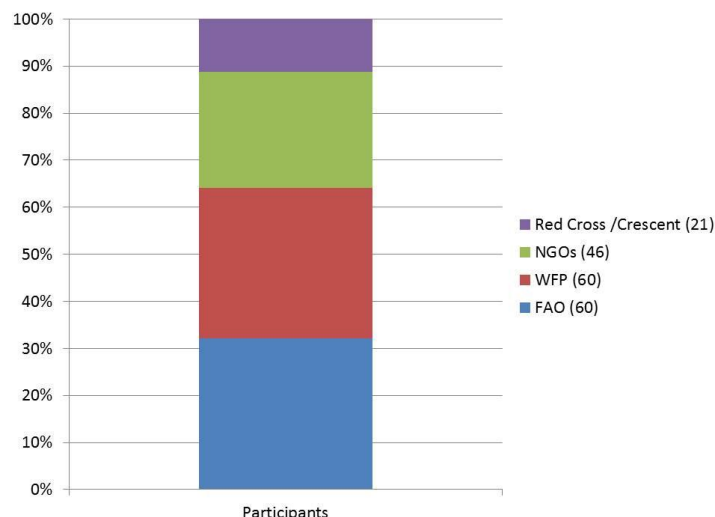


These missions have raised the profile, presence and effectiveness of food security clusters and related country specific coordination solutions as improved in country quality programming.

The major challenge faced has been ensuring that the appropriate people are available for short-term deployment for a level 3 disaster response.

Capacity development

Nearly 200 participants from partner NGOs, IFRC, FAO and WFP have completed the Food Security Cluster training for coordinators and information managers. The trainings have been held in English, French and Spanish in Rome (twice), Nairobi, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Bamako, Panama, and Dakar.



These country-based trainings provided technical support to cluster coordinator, information managers and partners. Further country based training / technical support has also been provided to South Sudan and Sudan involving partners, other clusters and government counterparts.

It has been recognised that the gFSC needs to now broaden the strategy of capacity development at country level through the refinement of training content, driven by country-level needs. Initial suggested ways forward include a combination of country missions and e-learning material. It is also important to maintain and enhance multi-institutional spread of trainees.

Tools and guidance, information management and advocacy

The gFSC has rebuilt and launched the food security cluster website: <http://foodsecuritycluster.net/> . This website provides useful information to all partners on tools and documents, current activities as well as national website pages. The FSC Handbook is now available on-line. Feedback and comments on the utility of the handbook is being sought from cluster coordinators, and partners. The gFSC will plan to incorporate key areas of the handbook within e-learning materials.

The gFSC is fully committed to the Transformative Agenda and is involved in many of the IASC thematic and sub-working groups that focus on the development of tools and reference documents for increased coordination and monitoring of country level clusters, ensuring that the specific needs of the food security cluster are appropriately reflected and included. Specifically in 2012, in response to, and as part of the on-going IASC Transformative Agenda to improve the cluster coordination system, a task team of the IASC Sub-Working Group on the Cluster Approach (lead by the gFSC and GHC/WHO, with the participation of UNHRC, UNICEF and OCHA) developed two mechanisms for monitoring cluster performance. They are a *Cluster Activation Checklist* and a *Coordination Performance Report*.

Since the gFSC Inception Meeting in May 2011, the gFSC has held three Global Meetings among partners in October 2011, April 2012, and October 2012. These meetings have provided strategic direction to the cluster as well increasing awareness on food security issues faced by cluster partners and colleagues.

The gFSC has been operational for eighteen months. The need to improve the processes of systematically bringing in feedback from the country clusters and to maintain a high visibility among donors, global partners and stakeholders is recognised.

Learning from country experience

Panel members

Mark Gordon, Somalia Food Security Cluster Coordinator

Nicholas Hutchings, AfghanAid, Afghanistan, Food Security Cluster

Line Rindebaek, Food Security Cluster, Consultant

Facilitator: Jeff Tschirley, Food and Agriculture Organization

Background documents: Annex 8 IASC Coordination Reference Module

Expected outcomes

Identification of areas of support / increased engagement required at the field level from the gFSC partners and the global support team.

Introduction

An overview of the IASC Coordination Reference Module was provided by Graham Farmer. The Coordination Reference Module was prepared by the IASC Sub-Working Group (SWG) on the Cluster Approach - with support from the Global Clusters. It is composed of nine sections focused on response to both level 3 (L3) and non L3 emergencies, covering the critical areas of cluster activation and deactivation; cluster functions and management; minimum commitment for participation in clusters; sub-national and inter-cluster coordination; sharing leadership within the cluster approach and, monitoring cluster performance. The Module has been produced in response to requests from the field for such guidance. The Module was developed in consultation with all global clusters and comments and inputs were sought and provided by food security cluster partners, national cluster coordinators and information managers.

Coordination is a means to an end – the ultimate aim of the humanitarian community is to serve vulnerable populations effectively. The Cluster Coordination Reference Module is about the basics of cluster coordination in non-refugee situations. This reference module will be reviewed periodically based on feedback from the field. While this reference module focuses on the cluster approach as the principal tool available to the international community for coordinating and accounting for their response, it falls to the leadership of the humanitarian team at the country level to devise the most appropriate ‘coordination solutions’ taking into account the local operational situation.

Panel discussion

Panel members were asked to provide an introduction on key topics of concern, highlighting best practices and identifying areas of support / increased engagement needed from the gFSC drawing directly from their work at the country level.

Mark Gordon, Somalia Food Security Cluster Co-Coordinator

Context

Over the past 8 years, the humanitarian community in Somalia has responded to three major crises (2005-2006, 2008-2009 and 2011) with the most severe emergency leading to the declaration of famine in July 2011. However, in the past 10 years, the pastoral, agro-pastoral and agricultural livelihoods within Somalia have fluctuated between Famine/Emergency/Crisis and Food Secure/Stressed. As a result of a combination of shocks such as poor rainfall, global price fluctuations and eruption of resourced-based or regional inter-state conflict, between 3.4 and 6.5 million Somalis have, to some degree, lost their assets and remained food-insecure. In March 2012, FAO Somalia and WFP Somalia management agreed that the existing Food Assistance and Agricultural Livelihoods Clusters should be merged into a holistic cluster to coordinate member response from immediate lifesaving needs to establishing an environment for promoting early recovery, not only in an affected area, but throughout the country. This work is complicated by access and movement constraints, remote coordination and dispersion of agency ‘decision making’, limited ‘hands on’ facilitation of localised ‘operation coordination’ in areas when specific actors may or may not be present and a membership of 300+ organisations with less than one agency in five having a level of sophistication and governance to be eligible for direct funding from traditional donors.

Objectives of the FSC Somalia

The Somalia FSC strives to be the primary source of information regarding the on-going humanitarian response to address food insecurity and facilitate the development of a strategic vision. This requires the cluster to think, plan and advise its members beyond one seasonal assessment or annual CAP. Looking at humanitarian responses from a multi-year perspective, requires guidance and strategy to move beyond addressing acute seasonal needs for improved access to food and livelihood support and look through a livelihood lens. This involves consideration of vulnerability and the development of common best practices and normative standards that strengthen household and community resilience and protect vulnerable households with regular and dependable safety nets. In order to achieve this, the Somalia FSC established for itself 6 priorities:

1. Coordination of responses and development of strategic response guidance;
2. Reporting, forecasting and gap identification;
3. Local level emergency preparedness and contingency planning;
4. Development and circulation of technical standards, and collecting and disseminating best practices;
5. Advocacy and resource mobilization;
6. Strengthen the capacity of humanitarian actors.

Ownership and Inclusiveness

In order for the FSC to accomplish these ambitious priorities, an FSC cluster structure was developed - based on the recommendations of a gFSC-led needs consultation in January 2012. The structure of the Somalia FSC is designed to have a dedicated secretariat managing the activities of the cluster to achieve its six priorities, but at the same time ensuring that the cluster is reflecting its membership. To ensure this, the structure of the FSC is based on including the cluster’s diverse membership in its positions of leadership and responsibility. While WFP and FAO, as lead agencies, retain overall responsibility for the activities of the cluster, the cluster draws upon the expertise and commitment of its members (UN, International Organisations, INGO and LNGO) to ensure the cluster meets the needs of its members, ensuring transparency in the development of the CAP and CHF funded activities and promoting inclusiveness at local level for operational coordination. In summary:

- to oversee the implementation of the day to day activities of the cluster to support its members, the FSC has a cluster secretariat which is staffed by a small team of professionals with specific responsibilities;
- to complement the secretariat and ensure that the cluster is addressing the needs of the membership, the FSC relies on voluntary contributions from the cluster membership to provide oversight of the cluster activities (SAG);
- to ensure transparency in the development of the CAP and selection of CHF funded projects the cluster has an elected Cluster Review Committee (CRC) to review and evaluate members' submitted CAP, CHF and emergency proposals;
- to encourage participation at the field level and ensure that the cluster engagement is as broad as possible, local level cluster vice-coordinators are elected from the UN/INGO/LNGOs working in particular areas to meet regularly to discuss local level response gaps, security constraints, implementation challenges and localised seasonal response planning;
- to ensure that the technical guidance, best practices and normative standards which cluster members are committed to employing or adhering to are nuanced to the context within which members in Somalia are working, working groups, drawn from the vast level of technical expertise from the membership, are called upon to develop cluster specific guidance.

Challenges

Although the Somalia FSC has drawn from its membership to create a coordination mechanism that addresses its members' operational needs and encourages its members to respond more appropriately and efficiently, there are nevertheless major challenges:

- **Resources:** This type of broad engagement is not resource neutral. Expenses include costs for the 'volunteer' organisations that have accepted to contribute to the leadership of the cluster in terms of both human and time resources. How long elected agencies will continue to allocate these finite resources to the management of the cluster is uncertain. If on the other hand the FSC transitions toward paid positions for its voluntary leadership – where will these resources come from?
- **Membership:** What does it mean to be a 'member' of the cluster? One of the sore strengths of a cluster is that it is inclusive. . But what does it mean to be a member? What are the responsibilities (or expectation) of agencies when they join the cluster. For example, the FSC has an 'extreme' level of confidentiality which is understood and respected by the donor community. This level of confidentiality means that the FSC does not report on what specific agencies are doing. However, the FSC depends on cluster members providing timely response planning and actual information. This allows the FSC to engage with the membership to ensure that gaps and oversubscription over the response period a minimised. However, when members limit their engagement with the cluster to informing the secretariat 'post factum' of their activities, sharing of minimal information that does not allow for the response coverage to be estimated, leads to FSC to have poor information on guiding it members to responds at the right time.

Conclusion

The Somalia FS 'cluster' system did not develop due to an 'activation' based on a single emergency. Instead, the Somalia FSC has been a gradual development of coordination mechanisms that evolved over the past 16 months. The context of Somalia and the fact that each year millions of Somalis have endured food insecurity has meant that continued and valued added 'coordination' and support to membership of the FSC is required. The cluster is

supported by a team of 8 dedicated staff who work together with lead agency staff acting as field level Focal Points ensuring that support is provided to the local level clusters. This is complemented with over 30 elected cluster member volunteers in leadership positions such as Field Level Vice-coordinators, Strategic Advisory Group and Cluster Review Committee. The Somalia FSC continues to attempt to balance the need for a dedicated secretariat to oversee the day to day activities with the need to be inclusive and bring as much of the membership as possible into the management of the cluster.

Nicholas Hutchings, AfganAid, Afghanistan, Co-Chair, Food Security Cluster and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC)

The Food Security and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC) in Afghanistan was established in 2008 and is co-led by WFP and FAO with AfghanAid as NGO in a co-chair role. The FSAC has had a dedicated Cluster Coordinator since October 2010. In 2011, the FSAC underwent a review process which resulted in TOR being developed. These identified the FSAC's main aim as providing an action-oriented forum for bringing together national and international humanitarian partners to improve the timeliness and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance on the lives of crisis-affected population in Afghanistan. The FSAC is also operational at a sub-national level in two regions of Afghanistan, with additional subnational structures currently being established.

The responsibility for the coordination of partners is shared among the two lead agencies – WFP and FAO and a large NGO partner, AfghanAid. This has highlighted the positive benefits of sharing leadership roles with partners to improve partnership, advocacy and information for better response.

The Afghanistan FSAC technical team provides guidance on responsible analysis, assessment and other tools. This guidance is then shared in larger partner meetings, creating more ownership and agreement.

The NGO chair is elected on a yearly basis. Although there is strong commitment at the moment, this co-chairing role is voluntary with no funding available for the time, resources and expertise committed by the NGO co-chair organization. This could lead to possible diminishing of time and resources available to be committed by NGO co-chairs over the long term.

A key issue facing the FSAC is the recognition of the importance of strong information management. Currently, there is no reliable baseline to compare chronic and acute crises, which highlights the need to establish a process to enable joint assessments and needs analyses. In addition, the cluster and partners are often confronted with unreasonable donor requests for information and there are too many instances of duplication of assessments. In early 2011, FEWSNET the information warning network highlighted the potential upcoming drought situation leading to a 2 million tonne deficit of grain. This led to a separate assessment initiative led by an ECHO consortium in 8 provinces with a plan to cover the remaining 6 provinces with informal discussions at provincial level and a second joint assessment in July 2011 over two and a half months covering 4,000 households.

This was not a positive initiative as it was undertaken without consultation within and between FSCA partners on the methodology and tools to be used. The process was very

rushed and there seemed no clarity on how the findings would be used to inform decision making. This initiative was seen as a UN-only initiative.

A review of this process was undertaken in September 2011 resulting in a more transparent and inclusive process for joint assessments. The methodology was altered in January 2012 to include 5 NGOs, FEWSNET, iMAP and two UN agencies with one of the NGOs responsible for producing an appropriate tool by April 2012. Although the initial stages of the planning took longer to define because of the need to consult with many partners, it resulted in a stronger sense of ownership and consequent buy-in of resulting data and analysis.

The lack of dedicated staff and resources at the regional / sub-national levels has resulted in overall poor communication between regional and with the national cluster. This is another burden that restricts effective needs analysis and strategic planning. There is a need for a survey manager at the national level and a technical expert to support advocacy and accountability efforts and to help NGOs who do not have those particular resources.

There is also a need to mobilize larger agencies and larger national counterparts by mobilizing at the global level so that they are engaged at national level. This is a clear area of support that all global FSC partners could contribute to by helping ensure that country offices are fully involved and engaged in the cluster system at national and sub-national levels. Although the global support is appreciated, it is the day-to-day involvement of implementing partners in the clusters that can help strengthen the overall response.

The role of gFSC is to advocate for reasonable expectations of donors and ensure they are met. The necessity of dedicated staff at all levels of the response in order to provide strong, evidenced based strategies and response is essential.

Line Rindebaek, Food Security Cluster, Consultant

Experiences from working as an information manager for the food security cluster during the crises in Libya and Fiji in 2012 as well as being involved in the establishment of cluster coordination systems in Bangladesh in 2012 have underscored the importance of strong, transparent information systems and the importance of cluster preparedness – through strategic and consistent information sharing and a who, does what, where data-bases.

The Information Management Officer (IMO) plays a vital role in collecting, analysing, and sharing information that is important for the cluster stakeholders to make informed, evidence-based, strategic decisions regarding:

- the needs of affected populations
- the prioritization of these areas according to Food Security indicators
- where there is a need for Food Security actors and the degree of need
- the key gaps in activity and need
- what capacity (human, material, financial) exists to be used in support of the identified prioritised response needs.

It is essential to plan for and have dedicated information management officers in place.

In most crises, there is a need to avoid duplication of assessments and ensure that a coherent, step by step food security assessment plan is in place with specified timelines and responsible entities. The plan should be phased with specified timelines.

In Bangladesh, it was recognised that humanitarian response coordination requires special attention to ensure adequate preparedness before a disaster strikes and an effective humanitarian response as well as early recovery after disaster strikes. Therefore, the focus when establishing the Bangladesh FSC, was on preparedness through the establishment of strong coordination systems and ensuring that all stakeholders were involved and informed.

The Bangladesh Food Security Cluster (FSC) aims to strengthen the collective capacity of humanitarian actors working in the area of food security in Bangladesh. The FSC focuses in particular on preparedness whilst providing support to the Government and LCG DER on response efforts during times of both slow and sudden onset emergencies. Importantly, the Bangladesh FSC works closely with the Local Consultative Group on Agriculture, Food Security and Rural Development, (LCG-AFSRD) chaired by the Ministry of Agriculture and co-chaired by FAO.

The strong involvement and support of the government in Bangladesh was noted as being very much in line with the principles of clusters. Although the cluster leads were driving the cluster coordination preparedness process, the cluster worked within the government structure where there was an established theoretical framework. Feedback received from government officials and from donor partners has testified to this effect. Positive feedback was also provided by donors regarding the implementation of the Common Assessment Tool considered a success due to the support provided through the gFSC.

Plenary discussion

Plenary discussion focussed on a range of important issues.

Cash and Vouchers

Questions were raised by the plenary on how issues around Cash and Vouchers were / are coordinated within the various emergency settings.

Cash and vouchers are seen as a modality: agencies decide what transfer they want to make in different settings. There are different opinions and confusion as to how best cash should be coordinated.

For the Somalia food cluster, cash transfer is currently most effective. The Somalia Famine Declaration provided some guidance on use of cash and the use of vouchers and e-vouchers has been scaled up by big NGOs with strong input into the cluster.

Libya used the ECHO model and other models for cash transfers, but there was a lack of coordination of efforts. Partners did not coordinate and there was little record of what was being done.

In Afghanistan, there is a lack of clarity regarding the need for and who should undertake the coordination role. The cluster can facilitate CALP especially with regard to trainings and dissemination of information and NGO participation in inter-cluster collaboration. Protection is the main issue as there is a need to make it strategic and operational. The involvement of political seniority can really help clusters.

The Cash and Learning Project (CALP) does not have a coordination function within the clusters. However, cash and vouchers and other cash modalities are becoming increasingly prevalent in emergencies. Many partners use various forms of cash payments and vouchers for services ranging from food to health care. There is a need to evaluate how effective cash

programming has been in different settings and to identify best practices to feed back to the cluster.

The cost of coordination

There is a need for more consistent engagement of the humanitarian community (including donors) in the funding of coordination and cluster management.

The Somalia FS cluster secretariat is funded through contributions from the lead agencies and through other partner agencies' seconded staff. With the investments there is a diminishing marginal return and there is a need to assess when investment flattens out. The budget in Somalia for cluster coordination is 0.4% of the food security CAP. This covers the coordination of 11 regional clusters across Somalia with the national team based in Nairobi.

Earlier in 2012, there was a survey on cluster funding sent to all major humanitarian donors. The results highlighted donor perceptions on the inconsistency of cluster performance. Donors have welcomed the IASC cluster performance modules. In particular the Coordination Performance Report should emphasize areas of need for strong coordination systems.

Cluster Coordination costs. The cluster is a deliverable and we need to make the argument for the funding of this deliverable. There is a need to consider the costs for coordination and the value for money it represents. For example, at the global level, the direct costs of the gFSC (staff and activities) are 3 million US dollars a year.

Government

It is important to recognise that not all countries and crises are the same and the extent to which - and how - clusters should be involved and deal with national authorities will vary.

In Somalia, for example, it is necessary to be clear about which governments should be involved with the clusters. Should it be the national government or regional authorities or the district commissioners? Somalia is an example of competing governmental interests which would be best addressed at inter-cluster and regional meetings.

In Afghanistan, OCHA could have a significant role in engaging national authorities trying to portray Afghanistan as a post-conflict zone. The heads of UN/NGO agencies can provide a larger forum to deal with national authority issues. This forum could develop a strategy for dealing with officials at various levels (local, district, regional and national levels).

The examples provided from Bangladesh, highlighted how - by strengthening existing national structures - the food security cluster created a better chance of a harmonised and complementary approach to the response in future emergencies.

Further guidance on working with government is needed (recognising that each country is different) specific to the food security cluster to compliment the generic IASC Guidance on working with National Authorities.

Inter-cluster coordination

The importance of strong inter-cluster coordination to both the FSC and the overall humanitarian response and the FSC response came through very strongly through the plenary discussions.

It was recognised that the extent of effectiveness of a country inter-cluster coordination group is very dependent on the personality and leadership abilities of the designated focal point within OCHA. Both the global and country food security clusters should try and advocate for and support the principle of NGO direct involvement in country inter-cluster forums. The OCHA representative at the meeting recognised the need to strengthen inter-cluster systems and leadership in all cluster countries.

Preparedness

Experience from Bangladesh, in particular, highlighted the importance of having everybody on the same page to ensure a smooth transition into an emergency response by all partners. Established and agreed, strong information management systems as well as clear and transparent lines of communication and coordination can reduce confusion in times of crisis and contribute to a more effective overall response to an emergency. For this to happen, advance building of all the necessary tools for activation is needed as well as full sensitization of stakeholders regarding their roles and what they can expect from the cluster coordination systems.

Examples from Somalia highlighted the effectiveness of establishing strong and transparent systems to deal with hundreds of partners and national coordination systems. This example also demonstrates the vital role of partner involvement in coordination to provide technical expertise at all levels in strengthening the overall coordination.

Partner engagement at the country level

One of the most important messages provided from the country coordinators was the need for the increased engagement of partners at the national and sub-national levels. The reason we, the gFSC are here is to support the country clusters / coordination. This cannot just be done through the lead agencies and the global support team alone.

In line with the commitments of the global food security cluster, all global partners need to ensure that their country teams become involved / support and understand their role and the added value of the FSC at the national level.

Inter-related aspects of Quality Programming

Areas for discussion

Is protection an 'expertise' or can we all work on it?

What can the FS Cluster do to ensure that people are 'protected'?

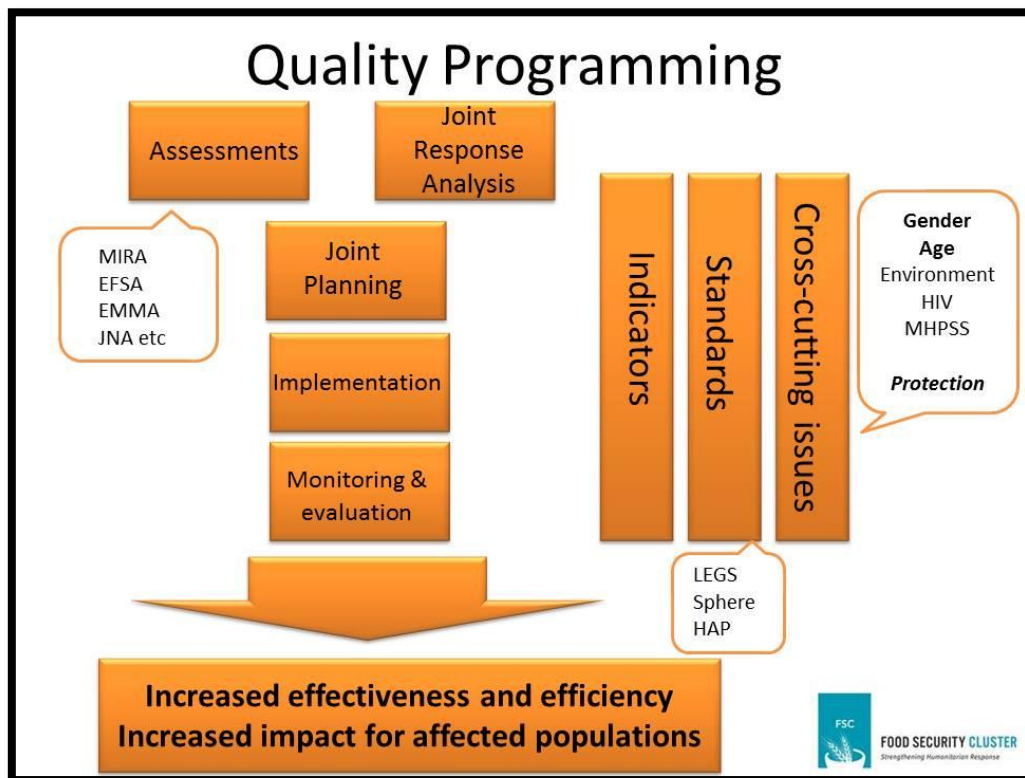
Presenters: Pierre Gentile, International Committee of the Red Cross

Rebecca Skovbye, World Food Programme

The focus of this session was on Mainstreaming Protection issues in the Food Security Cluster and was planned to include elected examples where protection tools have been mainstreamed in country food security operations - lessons learned and best practices. The expected outcome of this session was to establish a clearer understanding of quality programming and the role and needs of food security cluster partners.

Introduction

There are many essentials for quality programming. It is important to do more to ensure that programmatic planning and implementation take into account all aspects that make up the project cycle and ensure that the services provided have the ultimate goal of increased impact for the affected populations. Partners of a global cluster have a key role in mainstreaming these important aspects into the programme cycle and assisting national systems to do a better job.



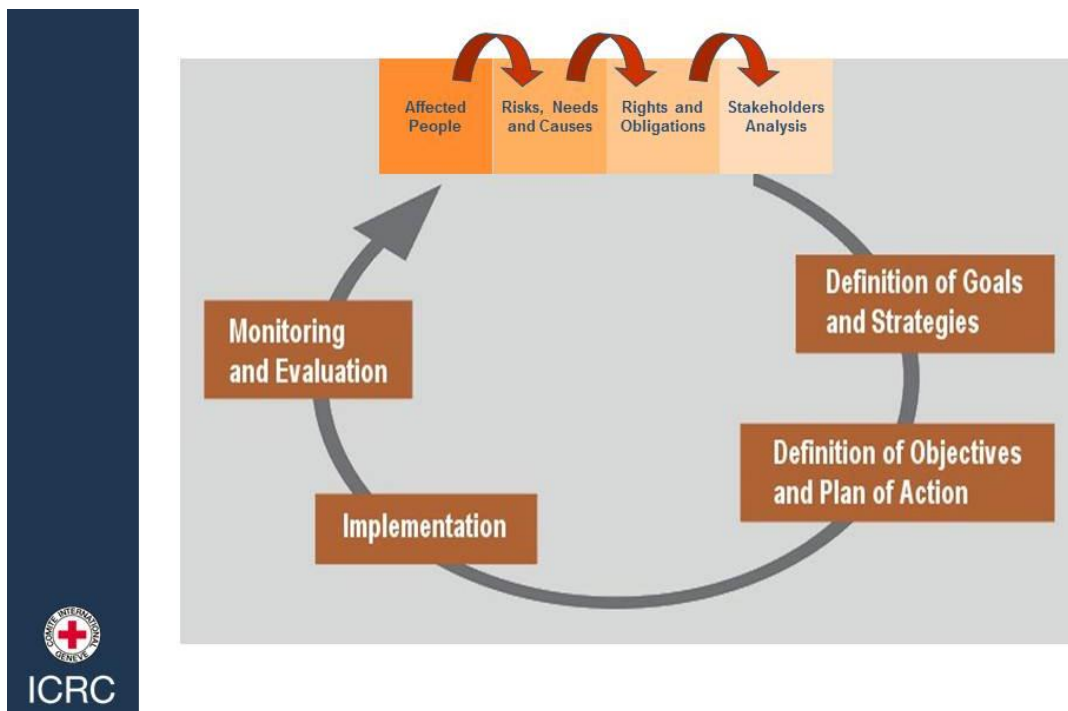
Pierre Gentile, International Committee of the Red Cross
(Annex 9_ An ICRC perspective on protection)

"The most important danger in the protection/assistance approach is that it may give NGOs the impression that *they* are in charge of protecting people. This is the primary responsibility of *States*, and not non-governmental, humanitarian actors...." (ICRC)

The primary duty bearer of protection is the State. This differs from the duty of humanitarian actors to mainstream protection into assistance activities while also developing core protection activities. This requires effective analysis of issues at stake: understanding of the causes enables better targeting; it is helpful to take into consideration the geographical regions of any proposed protection plans to ensure that they are strategic.

It is important that a clear understanding of who does what, when, at the local community level is established and that there is a legal framework facilitating core protection activities.

Problem Analysis and Setting Priorities starts with the people affected



There is a need for systems that not only register individuals, but also ensure follow-up on long-term basis. Monitoring of expected results and possible negative outcomes throughout the project and activity cycle based on identified standards is essential.

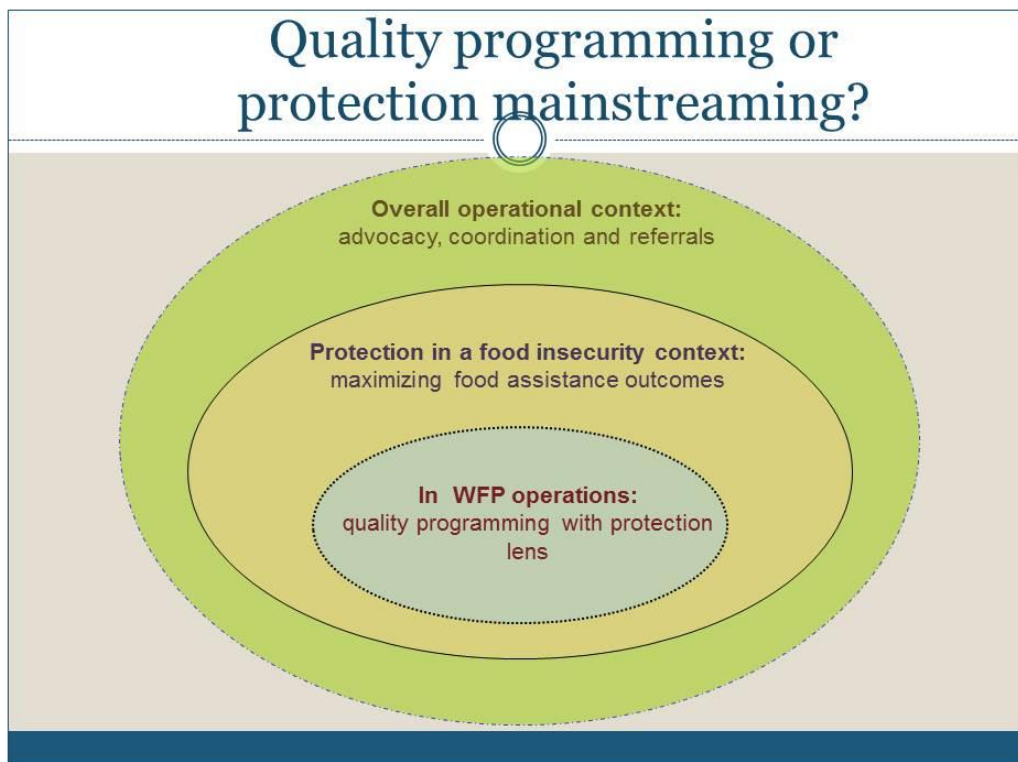
Rebecca Skovbye, World Food Programme
(Annex 10_ WFP_protection)

The World Food Programme sees protection as designing and carrying out food and livelihood assistance activities that do not increase the protection risks faced by the crisis-

affected populations receiving assistance, but rather, contribute to the safety, dignity and integrity of vulnerable people.

The Handbook for the Protection of IDPs breaks down protection into an objective; a legal responsibility; and an activity. WFP's approach to integrating protection in its programmes relates to the first two of these, while the latter is left to specialised protection actors to implement.

WFP perceives its role in protection as three concentric circles as shown below. The inner circle relates to the implementation of WFP's programmes in a way that takes protection concerns arising from these into account. The middle circle refers to understanding how food assistance programmes can achieve both a food security outcome and a protection outcome if correctly implemented. The outer circle addresses the broader engagement WFP can have in supporting protection through advocacy and coordination on protection issues with other actors, including for referring protection cases to the right actors for follow up.



To integrate protection in food assistance programmes, WFP works on three broad areas, including capacity building; operational responses and inter-agency cooperation.

Areas that might be useful to collaborate on as food security actors include developing a common understanding of protection gaps pertaining to food security programmes, capacity building programmes that are open to partner organisations, exchanges on lessons learnt between agencies and a common approach to engaging with protection actors.

Plenary discussion

Questions were raised on how to take these protection principles and translate them into practical actions at country level? Is this the role of the global FSC or for local clusters and actors?

The gFSC partners recognize the need of mainstreaming all appropriate cross-cutting issues and integrating them in daily programming. Sex and age disaggregated data are key elements for understanding vulnerabilities. It is important to remember there is a difference between integrating age, gender and protection considerations into programming from the start as opposed to just adding onto what is already established.

The plenary was reminded that although the IASC refers to age and gender being cross cutting issues; gender and age are characteristics of the human beings we serve and therefore should be a core aspect of our programming. Assessment indicators can be revised by protection and gender specialists.

It is valuable to take time to understand how others interpret situations and to do risk assessments. Understanding community resilience and role of local actors, including government and how others interpret and respond to risks from their perspective. The gFSC should continue to support and facilitate the assessment and analysis of needs of the affected populations and share material.

The link between needs assessments and humanitarian programming is fundamental. . The gFSC and national cluster platforms should be used to integrate all the aspects to ensure increased effectiveness and efficiency of our responses, ultimately enhancing the impact of our programmes on the affected populations. It is difficult to find evidence on engaging children, HIV, child gardening policies for cash transfers in response options. Can we use the Cluster's different expertise to collate evidence of best practices?

Often, the demands faced by country cluster partners make it difficult to manage all aspects of quality programming to ensure they are fully integrated in different quality programming. In Somalia for example, the food security cluster brought in a protection advisor to look specifically at the cluster policies and develop mechanisms to roll out the policies through guidance and trainings. One concrete result was adapting tools for local level assessments. The population figures throughout Somalia are questionable and not always disaggregated. Therefore it was recognised that there was a need for local level assessments that adapt the beneficiary questionnaires questions to see if protection issues are met within food security interventions. In Somalia, this is very important as both implementers and recipients may be at risk if protection is not rolled out properly. This information also provides a deeper level of understanding for the cluster feeding into their strategic response.

It was suggested that the gFSC advocate for the inclusion of quality programming across the board in CAPs. For this to be effective, OCHA in Geneva would need to use project evaluations and provide constructive feedback to ensure progress happens. The gFSC could begin by evidence of best practices in quality programming within the Food Security Cluster.

It is valuable to remember that GenCap and Pro-Cap advisors are available to provide advice from the gFSC team along with a specialist on age and disabilities in emergencies seconded from HelpAge. All gFSC partners also have technical knowledge and experience and can also provide support and advice to partners of country clusters.

Thursday 25 October 2012

The second day started with a brief review of day one of the meeting and a reminder of the objectives of the second day of the meeting, which were to.

1. Review the key priorities of the gFSC Strategic Plan January 2013 to December 2014
2. Identify priority gFSC activities and responsible entities November 2012 to April 2013

Development of the gFSC Strategic Plan January 2013 to December 2014

Presenters: Graham Farmer, Global Food Security Cluster Coordinator

Facilitator: David Kaatrud, World Food Programme

Background document: Annex 11 gFSC Strategic areas

Expected outcomes

Review of key priorities for the gFSC January 2013 to December 2014

Agreement on the time-line, next steps, and responsible entities

Introduction

A year ago, partners were asked to consider if a three year strategic plan was necessary to guide the work of the gFSC going forward. During the Global Meeting of Partners in Rome, November 2011, partners decided that the development of the three year strategic plan was not a priority at that stage but would be re-considered in 2012. In September 2012, partners decided that key to the development of a proposed strategic plan was the involvement of all stakeholders and that the gFSC would develop a two year plan building on its vision and mission. The gFSC would construct the framework for the plan during the Global Meeting of Partners in October 2012. It was suggested that partners combine the existing five pillars of the gFSC (surge support; capacity development; information management; tools and guidance) into four core elements:

1. Capacity Development
2. Operational and Surge Support to National Clusters
3. Information Management
4. Communication and Partnership

In developing our strategic plan, we need to ensure that the focus remains on improving the efficiency, effectiveness and accountability to affected populations in countries in crisis, linking to the key polices of the Transformative Agenda.

Some suggested core elements under the four pillars were presented to the plenary for further discussion.

1. Capacity Development

- Training
 - Country Level
 - Individual
- Tools and Guidance

2. Operational and Surge Support to National Clusters

- Support Missions
- Surge Deployment
- Quality programming
 - Accountability to affected populations
 - Age
 - Gender
 - Protection

3. Information Management

- Information Management
 - Networking on new developments
- Knowledge and Learning
- Good Practice

4. Communication and Partnership

- Advocacy
- External Communications
- Enhancing the Coordination System

Once developed and agreed, the plan's implementation will need to be accompanied by additional, detailed yearly work plans to reflect available resources, constraints and new and/or unexpected challenges and opportunities.. It is envisioned that the plan will be continually reviewed and adapted at the bi-annual Global Meeting of Partners.

Currently, the gFSC needs 3 million dollars per year for an active/productive global cluster. This requires a resource mobilization strategy to be completed by February 2013. A log-frame outlining specific objectives/ results will be essential.

Plenary discussion

The facilitator David Kaatrud, opened the plenary discussion noting that the gFSC was a good product and suggested that partners focus on the higher level of the pillars as part of a log frame approach and then move to the objectives and detailed results. The gFSC had shown value-for-money through concrete results. There was now a need to focus on priorities and on the specific support to be provided at the field level.

There was considerable input from participants offering comment, questions and suggestions.

Throughout the plenary, questions were raised on the structure and intended interaction of the global support team with the cluster partners and a brief overview of the support team structure was provided.



Tools and guidance are important but rather than inventing other tools there is a need to create an inventory of existing tools together with recommendations/best practices and guidance on how to use the tools concretely in different contexts at national level - remembering that all tools need to be used in specific contexts. One specific area is tools related to cash-transfer programming. It was made clear that the gFSC could facilitate peer review, but would not prescribe, endorse or condemn tools.

The new strategic direction should consider the role of the gFSC support in mobilizing resources for country clusters.

Quality programming will not be limited only to gender and protection but will encompass all elements of quality programming taking into consideration long-term consequences and impact.

In order to help strengthen the commitment and engagement of partners at the national level, it was requested that the gFSC work towards strengthening dialogue between global and national partners and stakeholders (lead agencies, partners and donors).

Participants were reminded that the clusters in the field are not implementing agents. Agencies determine individual programming and what is most efficient while the cluster ensures a coordinated response that can be comparable and have resonance across different sectors. This is mirrored at the global level. The gFSC facilitates the response – there is no management or command/control monopoly with country clusters.

Result areas within the strategy must be measurable. It was proposed that result areas should include the word “timeliness” as well as “appropriate/specific”.

The focus should be on preparedness/ resilience building. There is a breach between emergency and long-term development in food security programming that needs to be addressed.

The strategic plan should be specifically separated from outputs of the national clusters so as to be very clear on what the gFSC can/cannot contribute. This should be done in collaboration with the national clusters. Result areas should be geared at enhancing livelihoods and social protection. Specifically, clarification is needed regarding the parameters of resilience work to be conducted at global level to ensure resilience is achieved at national level. The cluster must be realistic in its objectives and face its limitations. There is a need to set reasonable goals with realistic funding and to bridge the gap between ‘one shot’ humanitarian interventions and repeated humanitarian interventions in protracted crises.

It was suggested that the training package be re-formulated to focus on people already in the field conducting resilience work. Resilience is not an activity – it is an overall objective/approach that is achieved on a long-term basis following numerous activities.

The original purpose of training was two-fold. One was to ensure that there was a pool of qualified experienced coordinators; the second purpose was to increase partners’ awareness and understanding of the roles and responsibilities within the cluster system.

A specific workshop to discuss the way forward of the gFSC training had been scheduled later that week. Outcomes and recommendations would be shared and incorporated in the development of the gFSC two year strategic plan. The focus would remain on the needs of the country-level coordination. Other aspects would also be included in order to tap into the expertise of partners recognizing that it is the partners and not the cluster that are operational.

There is a need to clarify NGO monetary contributions and more generally the human resources required for surge support in the cluster at the global level. At the same time, modalities and ways of increasing the roles of NGOs in coordination roles at the country level also need to be explored.

Experience from the field as well guidance stemming from the Transformative Agenda suggested that increased NGO involvement within the cluster would improve overall effectiveness. However, coordination has a cost and many small and medium sized NGOs cannot contribute resources unless they are compensated. The gFSC support team had surveyed partners to find out suggested ways to include more NGOs at all levels of coordination. The result had been the secondment of an NGO to the gFSC team in Rome as well as a MoU with another NGO to ensure a percentage of time per year for staff to be dedicated to the cluster.

It would be necessary to include the planned outputs and objectives of the gFSC technical working groups in the strategic plan as well as the annual work plan. The technical working groups would be encouraged to look for new ways of working together and linking with urban and non-agricultural groups.

In order to help sustain commitment, it is important to ensure that individual gFSC partner strategies include their participation and engagement in the gFSC and the overall Strategic Plan.

It was recommended that the gFSC explore options for an evaluation of the global food security cluster. Lessons learned from the Logistics Cluster Evaluation could be taken into consideration. As the gFSC is made up of lead agencies and partners and observers, it is vital that the process be transparent and that all partners have a role establishing the way forward.

A question on whether a steering committee should be established to assist the development of the strategy was raised. Partners felt that continued high level of commitment and participation in the monthly teleconference and correspondence via email was strong enough to ensure partner participation throughout the process without a steering committee at this stage.

Priority gFSC Activities from November 2012 to April 2013

Moderator

Graham Farmer, Global Coordinator, Food Security Cluster

Expected outcomes:

Review and agree priority gFSC activities from November 2012 to April 2013

Following over one and half days of discussion, the plenary was opened to deliberate on the priority activities for the gFSC support team and partners over the next six months.

Syria

The situation in Syria is likely to require a large scale response from the cluster and individual partners. The situation is likely to be an example of the need for the gFSC to ensure preparedness for non-traditional emergencies in both urban and rural settings.

In order to prepare, the gFSC will:

- Map out gFSC partner capacities in the region
- Ensure that there is appropriate staff for cluster coordination and information management on stand-by for rapid deployment for a period of at least 2 months.
- Establish standardized information tools and templates.
- Work through the Urban Working Group to engage with other urban groups addressing refugee issues in the area.

General

A question was raised as to the role of the cluster in addressing global issues with national effects, such as climate change, urbanization, resilience, food price. Another issue raised was how the cluster should deal with resilience and the need for this to be addressed through concrete tasks/ tangible activities in programming.

Although the importance of such issues was recognised, it was felt that the cluster should begin to focus on what it could achieve within current resource boundaries.

Other key documents to be completed over the next six months included:

- Pre-deployment SOP(s) for Cluster Lead Agency (CLA) and/or Cluster Coordinator (CC)
- Deployment: SOP for Cluster Lead Agency and/or Cluster Coordinator
- SOP For Common Fund Allocation (Pooled funds)

- SOP for Surge Support Missions
- 2012 Annual Report

Meeting action points

The final session of the meeting focussed on a brief summary of the meetings action points and next steps:

- In order to ensure synergy between the working groups, specific meetings of all co-chairs will be regularly scheduled. The Co-chairs will provide a brief overview of the work of the groups and discuss possible areas of synergy. The gFSC support team will provide the secretariat support to these meetings.
- The four gFSC Working Groups will revise plans-of-action for the period of October 2012 – April 2013 based on the feedback and outcomes of discussions during this meeting. All minutes of the Working Groups will be shared with all gFSC partners.
- gFSC partners are encouraged to continue (and in some cases) increase their commitment to the technical working groups.
- Further guidance on working with governments is needed (recognising that each country is different) specific to the food security cluster to compliment the generic IASC Guidance on working with National Authorities.
- It was recognised that the extent of effectiveness of a country inter-cluster coordination group is very dependent on the personality and leadership abilities of the designated focal point within OCHA. Both the global and country food security clusters should try and advocate for and support the principle of NGO direct involvement in country inter-cluster forums. The OCHA representative at the meeting recognised the need to strengthen inter-cluster systems and leadership in all cluster countries.
- In line with the commitments of the global food security cluster, all global partners need to ensure that their country teams become involved / support and understand their role and the added value of the FSC at the national level.
- The gFSC will explore the specific role of the gFSC and how to link / integrate with the existing CALP / CASH groups that already exist within our organizations at global and national levels.
- The tentative dates and venue of next gFSC meeting were set for the 16, 17 and 18 April 2013, in WFP, Rome. Partners were encouraged to send in meeting agenda suggestions at any time.

It was requested that the second meeting of 2013 be held before or after the CAP, CHAP processes but not during the process and, if possible, should also precede the WFP meeting of NGO partners in order to save on travel costs.

Closure

Graham Farmer, Global Coordinator, Food Security Cluster, thanked all participants for their continued commitment and enthusiastic involvement during the meeting. The added value of including experienced cluster practitioners as part of the meeting was noted and Mark Gordon, Nicholas Hutchings and Line Rindebaek, were thanked for their insightful contributions throughout the meeting.

Special thanks were given to Hilary Dhliwayo-Motsiri, International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies for her support throughout the meeting in her role as meeting Chair.

Annex 1: Agenda

Global Meeting of Food Security Cluster Partners 24 – 25 October 2012

The purpose of the meeting is to review the work of the gFSC throughout 2012 and to identify the strategic direction for 2013-2015.

24 October 2012	
The objectives of the day are to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Assess progress and provide direction for the global Food Security Cluster's four Working Groups2. Identify field support requirements	
Meeting chair Hilary Dhliwayo-Motsiri, International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies	
09.00-09.15	Opening remarks and welcome Presenters: Sandra Aviles, Food and Agriculture Organization
09.15-09.30	Introduction Presenters: Hilary Dhliwayo-Motsiri, Chair <i>Expected outcome</i> Overview of the objectives and expected outcomes of the meeting Introduction of the meeting participants
09.30-10.00	Report back from Technical Working Groups Advocacy Working Group Chair: Larissa Pelham, Care International Assessment Working Group Co-Chair: Vincent Annoni, ACTED Co-Chair: Kathryn Ogden, WFP
10.00-10.30	<i>Coffee break</i>
10.30-12.30	Report back from Technical Working Groups Food Security and Nutrition Inter-cluster Working Group Co-Chair: Caroline Abila, International Medical Corps Co-Chair: Hilary Dhliwayo-Motsiri, IFRC Food Security and Livelihoods in Urban Settings Working Group Chair: Allister Clewlow, Samaritan's Purse
12.45-13.45	<i>Lunch</i>
13.30-14.15	Review of gFSC achievements 2012

	<p>Presenters: Graham Farmer, Global Food Security Cluster Coordinator</p> <p><i>Expected outcome</i> Overview of gFSC achievements linked to the 5 strategic pillars.</p>
14.15-15.45	<p>Learning from country experience</p> <p>Panel members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Anne Marie Cunningham, Consultant, Food Security Cluster – Mark Gordon, Somalia Food Security Cluster Coordinator – Nicholas Hutchings, AfgnAid, Afghanistan, Food Security Cluster – Line Rindebaek, Food Security Cluster, Consultant <p>Panel members will provide an introduction on key topics of concern, highlighting best practices and identifying areas of support / increased engagement needed from the gFSC.</p> <p>Facilitator: Jeff Tschirley, Food and Agriculture Organization</p> <p><i>Background documents:</i> IASC Coordination Reference Module; Introduction to Coordination Performance Monitoring</p> <p><i>Expected outcomes</i> Identification of areas of support / increased engagement required at the field level from the gFSC partners and the global support team.</p>
15.45-16.15	<p><i>Coffee break</i></p>
16.15-17.00	<p>Inter-related aspects of Quality Programming <i>Focus on Mainstreaming Protection issues in the Food Security Cluster</i> Selected examples where protection tools have been mainstreamed in country food security operations - lessons learned and best practices.</p> <p>Areas for discussion Is protection an ‘expertise’ or can we all work on it? What can the FS Cluster do to ensure that people are ‘protected’?</p> <p>c Jeff Tschirley, Food and Agriculture Organization</p> <p>Presenters: Pierre Gentile, International Committee of the Red Cross Rebecca Skovbye, World Food Programme</p> <p><i>Expected outcome</i> A clearer understanding of quality programming and the role and needs of food security cluster partners.</p>

17.00-17.15	Summary of day one
25 October 2012	
<p>The objectives of the day are to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the key priorities of the gFSC Strategic Plan January 2013 to December 2014 2. Identify priority gFSC activities and responsible entities November 2012 to April 2013 	
09.00 – 09.15	Summary of Day One
09.15-10.30	<p>Development of the gFSC Strategic Plan January 2013 to December 2014</p> <p>Discussion around the four suggested priority areas</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Operational and Surge support to National Clusters 2. Information Management 3. Communication and Partnership 4. Capacity Development <p>Presenter: Graham Farmer, Global Coordinator, Food Security Cluster</p> <p>Facilitator David Kaatrud, World Food Programme</p> <p><i>Expected outcomes:</i> Review of key priorities for the gFSC January 2013 to December 2014</p>
<i>Coffee break</i>	
11.00-12.30	<p>Development of the gFSC Strategic Plan January 2012 to December 2014</p> <p>Time-line, next steps, and responsible entities</p> <p>Moderator Graham Farmer, Global Coordinator, Food Security Cluster</p> <p><i>Expected outcomes:</i> Agreement on the time-line, next steps, and responsible entities</p>
12.30-13.30	<i>lunch</i>
13.30-15.30	<p>Priority gFSC Activities November 2012 – April 2013</p> <p>Moderator Graham Farmer, Global Coordinator, Food Security Cluster</p> <p><i>Expected outcomes:</i> Review and agree priority gFSC activities from November 2012 to April 2013</p>
15.30-16.00	<i>coffee</i>
16.00-16.30	<p>Conclusion next steps</p> <p>Tentative dates, venue of next gFSC meeting</p>

Annex 2: List of Participants

Global Meeting of Food Security Cluster Partners 24 – 25 October 2012

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