

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### Agriculture and Food Security Sector Working Group

##### **A. Context**

The El Niño climatic event has caused the worst drought in 35 years in Zimbabwe. The drought has compounded existing vulnerabilities resulting in severe food shortages across the country. The 2015/16 season was characterised by late start of season, below normal rainfall and prolonged mid-season dry spells with most of the southern districts recording crop failure. Cereal production is estimated to be about 500,000 Mt which only meets about 30% of the requirements for human consumption. The Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVAC) revised its projections concerning the prevalence of food insecurity at peak hunger period (January-March 2017) up to 43% (or approximately 4.1 million people) of the rural population.

The humanitarian community revised the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) to facilitate scaling up the drought response. The HRP covers the period April 2016 to March 2017 and focuses on lifesaving and protecting critical livelihoods of 2.8 million people (30% of the total rural population) in the sectors of Food Assistance and Agriculture, Health and Nutrition, Protection, Education and Water and WASH.

Upon the recommendation of the Humanitarian Country Team, FAO and WFP have merged the Agriculture Emergency Working Group and the Food Security Sector Working Group to further strengthen humanitarian coordination in response to El Niño. The AFSSWG will work in close collaboration with Agriculture and Food Security partner organizations, relevant Government authorities, and in close coordination with other sector Working Groups, including Nutrition, WASH, and Health in country, as well as with other relevant groups.

##### **B. Purpose**

The main purpose of the AFSSWG is to ensure a coordinated and effective response to the El Niño drought amongst all partners involved in the Agriculture and Food Security Sectors, and to maintain an updated account of the sector's needs and priorities (5Ws) as they evolve throughout the response.

AFSSWG also aims to ensure cohesion between all the humanitarian partners in the two sectors, making sure that cross-cutting issues are timely identified and addressed. The AFSSWG will further provide a platform to develop any sector-level strategies or inputs to broader inter-sector strategies.

##### **C. Responsibilities**

The AFSSWG main tasks and responsibilities are to:

- Ensure a coordinated and cohesive response amongst all humanitarian partners of the Agriculture and Food Security sectors to the El Niño drought response;
- Ensure that there is a clearly articulated complementarity of the humanitarian response of the two sectors and a commitment amongst partners to respond to the identified needs;
- Provide a detailed sector mapping of needs and response capacity (5W) to ensure efficient and effective use of resources, and to avoid potential overlaps or gaps;

- Address cross-cutting issues and identify opportunities to mainstream issues (gender, human rights, etc.);
- Coordinate the preparation of any sector-level funding appeals (i.e. to CERF);
- Coordinate field level assessment as well as the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation;
- Ensure that sector members are aware of relevant policy guidelines and technical standards in agriculture and in food security activities and align the response to these standards.
- Consolidate sector level contributions to any strategic document or response plan;
- Consolidate and quality control any sector level reporting for external purposes;
- Provide a platform to effectively share findings and recommendations of agricultural and food security related studies, share best practices and promote ideas, and discuss ways forward to further improve drought preparedness and response;
- Ensure timely emergency preparedness amongst sector partners, particularly for the upcoming lean season;
- Monitor the performance of sectors, and report to the HCT on progress, gaps and key challenges;
- Identify common advocacy concerns and key messages on behalf of the two sectors and contribute to any broader advocacy initiatives (i.e. of the HCT);
- Develop effective linkages with other relevant sector working groups (Nutrition, WASH, and Health) to improve humanitarian integrated response through joint planning;
- Ensure appropriate links to promote coordination and information exchange with national and local authorities, government institutions at the National, Provincial and district levels, local civil society and other relevant actors;
- Ensure that 5Ws, as well as meeting minutes, reports and regular sector documents are regularly produced and shared;
- Any other task that might be raised as relevant for the benefit of the humanitarian community.

#### **D. Composition, Chair and Secretariat**

*Membership:* The WG is comprised of representatives of the sectors agencies (UN, NGOs, and Red Cross).

*Chair and Secretariat:* The Working Group is co-chaired by FAO and WFP, with rotational responsibility for hosting, chairing, and producing other secretariat functions, including meeting minutes. WFP shall service the AFSSWG with Operational Information Management support, including mapping, a dashboard, 5W and other info graphic and tools to facilitate the identification of needs and priorities, based on the timely inputs provided by member agencies.

*Frequency of meetings:* The WG is expected to convene on a bi-weekly basis, unless otherwise communicated by the Secretariat.

#### **E. Accountabilities**

The AFSSWG will report to the Agriculture National Steering Committee (ANSC) and the Food Assistance Working Group (FAWG) separately. It will also coordinate closely with the Inter-Sectoral Working Group as well as the HCT.