

Terms of Reference

global Food Security Cluster (gFSC)

and the Global Support Team (GST)

DRAFT, December 2011

The cluster approach – a way to organise the humanitarian organisations that contribute during major crises – has yielded better identification of what needs to be done, promoted stronger partnerships and improved the way aid is distributed. – Valerie Amos, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator – May 2011

Background

The Cluster Approach was adopted in 2005 by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) as a strategy to address gaps in humanitarian response. It is a key component of the 2005 Humanitarian Response review and ongoing reform initiative for improved efficiency, increased predictability and accountability in international responses to humanitarian emergencies.

National-level food security related clusters formed from 2005 onwards, and the global Food Security Cluster (gFSC) was endorsed by the IASC in December 2010. The gFSC is co-led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP). A multi-institutional Global Support Team (GST) is located in Rome, Italy.

These Terms of Reference relate to the global Food Security Cluster (gFSC), as an entity within the IASC architecture, and to the Global Support Team in its supporting role.

Vision

The vision of the Food Security Cluster is that the specific food security needs of individuals and communities affected by or at risk of being affected by humanitarian crises (whether sudden onset or protracted) are met. Coordinated preparedness, response and recovery action at community, national and global levels result in saved lives, improved livelihoods and increased resilience of households and communities.

The Approach

People, who are in need because of humanitarian crises, are more effectively assisted through coordinated solutions. Therefore, the gFSC will support efficient food security related country-level clusters and other coordination systems in providing predictable, accountable and demand-driven services That meet the specific needs of vulnerable women, girls, boys and men. The gFSC aims to strengthen the impact of national and sub-national life- and livelihood-saving food security responses in crisis situations and to mainstream early recovery approaches from the outset, enhancing coordinated national capacity to:

1. deliver predictable and accountable coordination and leadership on food security responses;
2. integrate early recovery activities consistently into approaches to food security responses;
3. strengthen existing national/local humanitarian management and coordination systems, (including state institutions, local civil society and other relevant stakeholders) and ensure that humanitarian responses build on local capacities through the active participation of women and men from the affected population groups a and enable appropriate coordination and information exchange; and
4. optimize inter-cluster collaboration and partnerships with Governments, UN agencies, NGOs, The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, donors and other stakeholders for a more holistic response.

gFSC Priority Areas

The gFSC has a humanitarian focus, encompassing support related to a broad range of food security activities (including food assistance, agricultural input support, livelihood-centered interventions and preservation and restoration of agricultural assets), in sudden- and slow-onset emergencies, post-conflict situations, complex emergencies, and protracted crises. All of the above services need to target the specific needs and constraints of women, girls, boys and men who are affected by a specific humanitarian crisis. Interventions agreed upon need to be mindful of local socio-cultural realities.

The discussions leading to the creation of the gFSC identified five priority areas for activities. These included:

- ⤴ **Surge Support** for new crises or peaks in chronic emergencies, particularly in areas of coordination support and information management. Rosters will be developed and maintained and support teams will be deployed upon request by the Country team in the event that Food Security Clusters are activated.
- ⤴ **Information Management** at national and global levels, wherein the GST will develop and maintain an efficient and effective communication mechanism, through e-mails, teleconferences and meetings. Communication will be geared towards regular information sharing, work-plan development and implementation, decision-making, soliciting inputs and feedback on cluster activities, soliciting inputs

and feedback on activities initiated by other cluster and others of a general nature, and promoting debate and information exchange.

- ⤴ Development of **Tools and Guidance**, reviewing existing guidance material and tools relevant to humanitarian food security interventions and prioritising relevant gaps. The GST will then identify partners that have interest and appropriate resources available to take forward the process of filling the prioritised gaps.
- ⤴ **Capacity Development**, where the GST will focus on capacity development of cluster coordinators and information managers as key elements of an improved cluster system at national and sub-national level. At the same time, there will be a rolling programme of training and awareness raising for in-country partners and stakeholders of the cluster system.
- ⤴ **Advocacy**, wherein the GST will develop and promote, cluster-wide and where appropriate inter-cluster, advocacy strategies, including for example, public statements, campaigns and donor messaging, stressing the importance of saving lives and restoring livelihoods of affected populations in humanitarian crisis situations.

The above priority areas have guided activities from the operational outset of the gFSC and will be reviewed annually with gFSC partners in the development of successive work plans.

Overall Structure of the gFSC

As per the IASC endorsement, the FSC is co-led by FAO and WFP, who represent the cluster in relevant IASC policy fora. Working relationships between the two lead agencies are formalized by an exchange of letters. Under the IASC Cluster approach, the co-lead agencies are directly accountable to the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC), a responsibility held by FAO's Deputy Director-General (Operations) and WFP's Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer.

FAO and WFP are committed to building a strong gFSC by creating a mutually reinforcing partnership with other international food security practitioners. gFSC Partners have demonstrated experience and expertise in humanitarian food security response in standards and policy setting, building response capacity and/or operations. gFSC Observers are members of the broader humanitarian community deemed by gFSC Partners to have the ability to make value-added contributions to the work of the gFSC.

The Global Support Team (GST) is the coordination unit of gFSC Partner and Observer organisations. The leader of that team is the Global Cluster Coordinator (GCC), recruited by FAO through a joint FAO-WFP selection process. The Global Cluster Coordinator is functionally supervised by, and reports directly to FAO's Director, Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division and WFP's Director of Emergencies.

Technical Working Groups will be established by the gFSC on an 'as needed' basis to address specific projects that require special attention or focus for completion. The working groups will be mandated with specific tasks and timelines, as agreed by gFSC partners.

The overall responsibility of the gFSC to the field-level clusters is to provide a range of services including orientation, formal training and technical and coordination management support missions to ensure IASC coordination responsibilities are effectively met. The gFSC provides demand driven technical and coordination management support, led by field-level FSC partners.

Global Support Team

The Global Support Team (GST) is housed at WFP Headquarters and is multi-institutional, staffed by a team seconded from FAO, WFP, GenCap, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs. The GST's role is to support and enable the network of gFSC partners to achieve the vision and implement the priorities identified by gFSC partners.

As such, the GST will work on behalf of the gFSC partners and observers to:

1. Ensure progress is made on implementing gFSC activities under the five priority areas, in accordance with the annual work plan agreed by gFSC partners.
2. Support the work of the gFSC in alignment with the accepted Principles of Partnership approach; and supporting the broader food security community, rather than promoting the interests of specific cluster partners.
3. Foster synergies with other IASC Global Clusters with specific emphasis on mainstreaming IASC cross-cutting issues.
4. Ensure broad participation by gFSC partners and observers in the GST and Cluster activities, including surge support.
5. Strive for and maintain the multi-institutional nature of the GST reflecting the multi-faceted nature of food security, and the range of responses.
6. Facilitate communications between gFSC stakeholders, including: (i) the coordination and management of annual or semi-annual meetings with gFSC partners and observers to jointly review progress and determine the principle elements of the annual work plan; and (ii) engagement with current and/or potentially interested donors.