



FOOD SECURITY
CLUSTER



2023-2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

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FOREWORD

Seven years away from 2030, hunger will march on unless we take immediate, concrete, and effective action. In 2022, we welcomed the relentless efforts of the global community, donors, partners, and our staff in the field, as we saw the world rallying extraordinary resources to beat the hunger ticking clock; nonetheless, the sands are running out as we drift further and further away from achieving our commitment to the SDG2, ending hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition globally. According to OCHA, throughout 2023, 339 million people in 69 countries will need humanitarian assistance: this is the highest number of people requiring humanitarian assistance ever registered.

The humanitarian community is mobilizing to support the increase in caseloads. However, although funding reached higher levels in 2022, it remained concentrated on a limited number of operations and did not keep up with the level of needs and operational costs. These rising costs and growing needs have meant that in some cases food security partners saw their capacity to assist significantly hampered; in some places, they were forced to cut assistance in half, leaving behind millions of people in extremely vulnerable conditions. Funding flows analysis has also showed that only 4% of funding to the food security sector is going to emergency agricultural interventions. Furthermore, we witnessed with dismay the surge in attacks targeting humanitarian aid workers, and blockades preventing thousands of vulnerable people from receiving international aid: assisting affected populations has become more expensive, and in many places more dangerous, and severely constrained.

The international community has a responsibility to act: the Food Security Cluster is advocating for more anticipatory action to prevent the escalation of food crises as well as for urgent interventions to alleviate hunger. The cluster will

continue coordinating the food security response in 34 operations, not only to distribute emergency food assistance, but to also provide affected populations with agricultural inputs, training or employment opportunities, improved access to markets and more diversified and resilient livelihoods. Cluster partners will need the support of the international community – financially and politically – to collectively address the causes and consequences of food crises.

One hungry person is one too many. We cannot just stand-by as thousands are dying or close to dying due to hunger and starvation. As lead agencies of the Food Security Cluster, we reiterate our commitment to assist the most vulnerable and build a safer, more resilient world to banish hunger and looming famine globally. We will continue to actively lead the Food Security Cluster and broaden our contribution to intersectoral efforts to address the underlying causes of hunger and strengthen our collaboration with authorities and local actors – in line with the thematic priorities outlined in the 2023-25 Food Security Cluster strategic plan.

Rein Paulsen

Director, Emergency and Resilience Division
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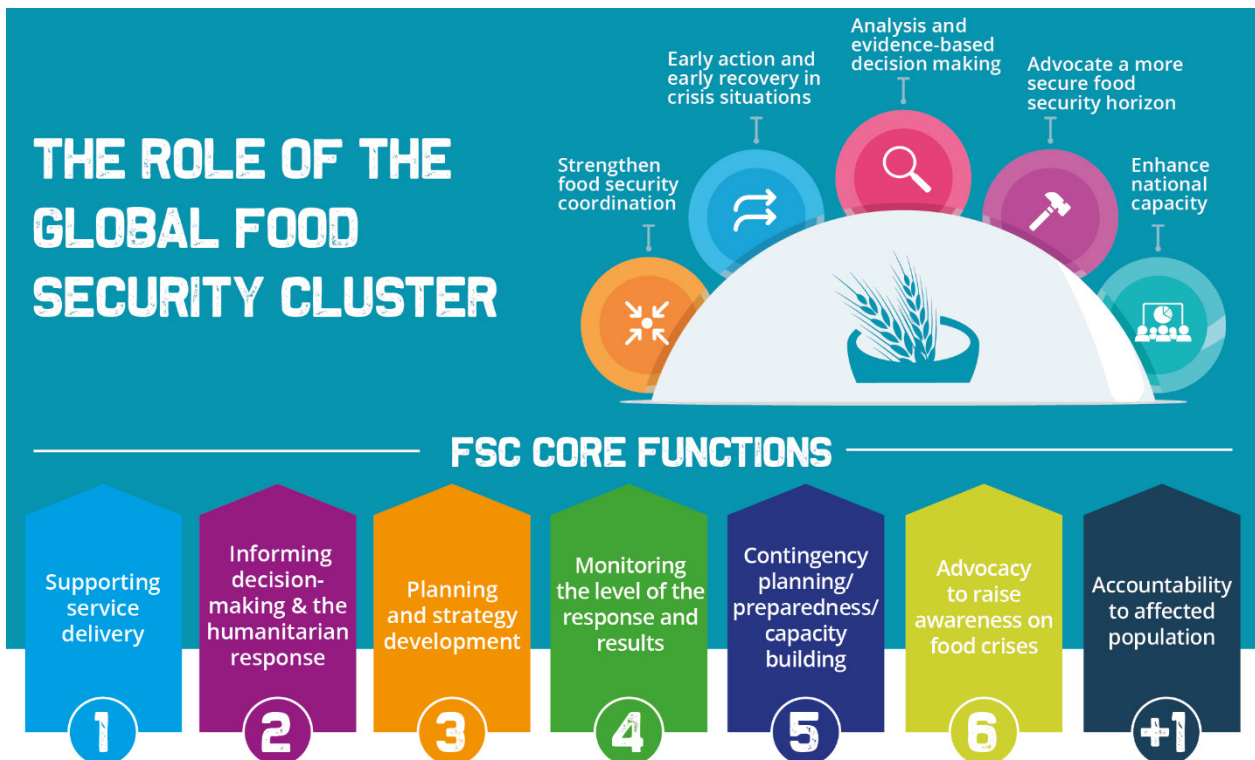
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INTRODUCTION

The Food Security Cluster (FSC), established in 2011, jointly led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP), coordinates food security responses during and after a humanitarian crisis, addressing issues of food availability, access, utilization, and stability. Through a network of about 1,200 partners¹ across 34 operations in 30 countries, the FSC ensures timely, coherent, and effective food security interventions, at both local and global levels. The FSC engages with other global clusters including Health, Nutrition, and WASH, the Joint Intersectoral Assessment Framework and the Global Cluster Coordinators Group to elevate country clusters' key asks and increase awareness on the state of the food crises. Additionally, the FSC's accountability to partners is guaranteed by the Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) and Working Groups (WGs). Through the global Food Security Cluster (gFSC), guidance, technical and strategic support as well as operational capacity is provided to ensure that national level FSCs are well-positioned to perform on the [six core functions](#)^[1] and ensure accountability to affected populations. Cluster coordinators lead, steer, and coordinate the food security response towards a common strategic objective agreed with partners and CLAs.

¹ The global membership is composed of 83 partners including United Nations, global clusters, international non-governmental organisations, International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and academia.



THE OBJECTIVE OF THE GFSC IS TO GUARANTEE:



To avoid gaps and duplications, and to ensure assistance is delivered on time to affected populations, through Information Management (IM) the FSC captures and analyzes data to support decision-making at both country and global levels.



RATIONALE FOR THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The Strategic Plan compiles the collective priorities which emerged from a series of consultations with gFSC's partner organizations and national cluster coordinators. Following the consultations, five strategic taskforce groups, inclusive of one member of the Strategic Advisory Group (SAG), representatives of the CLAs and FSC NGO partners, were created to define the strategic pillars' objectives, outcomes, and outputs, as well as key indicators of performance to monitor the effective implementation of the Strategic Plan.

The 2023-2025 Strategic Plan priority pillars include:

- Improve, scale-up and mainstream **anticipatory action** on food crises by coordinating and harnessing different sources of financing, technical support, and acting on early warnings.
- Strengthen participation, leadership, and capacity of local and national actors (L/NAs) and drive the **localization process**.
- Build the FSC capacity to contribute to and/or bridge existing **development and peace coordination** platforms, foster dialogue and/or identify synergies.
- Raise awareness on food insecurity conditions, resource mobilization for humanitarian action, enhance humanitarian **advocacy** and position the FSC as lead reference for food security analysis and evidence.
- Mainstream **cross-cutting issues** at all stages of the FSC work.

The global FSC team will provide leadership and extend support for country FSC teams in the Strategic Plan 2023-2025 pillars implementation.



Photo: FSC/Mauricio Bisol

HUMANITARIAN LANDSCAPE CHALLENGES

Over the past three years, the global food security outlook drastically changed with record high levels of hunger spreading at an alarming pace, pushing millions of people closer to the edge of destitution. As soaring needs and rocketing operational costs outstripped the available resources, FSC partners were faced with unprecedented challenges to deliver food and livelihood assistance. The FSC sounded the alarm time and again, stressing its concern over the increasing number of people experiencing high level of food insecurity and the alarming gap in resources which would inevitably result in an inadequate food security response.

As the FSC was active in 34 operations over 30 countries, partners have been witnessing food insecurity drivers – including protracted conflicts, climate hazards and socioeconomic shocks – exceed all prior records as the recent conflict in Ukraine and extreme climate-related disasters further compounded the severity and complexity

of food crises at local, regional, and global levels. Floods in Pakistan, Mozambique, South Sudan were of unprecedented intensity, whereas the Horn of Africa faced the fifth consecutive season of failed rainfall and severe drought. Violence and conflicts rocketed in the Sahel region and Haiti among others, generating situations of blockades and life-threatening conditions for humanitarian staff in the field. Increased food, fuel and fertilizers costs worsened the conditions of many people already food insecure. In 2022, 68 countries recorded increased food price inflation of 15 percent or more than in 2021, while in 13 countries this rate exceeded 50 percent. Cluster partners joined forces to stabilize the inflation through a series of interventions, such as the UN-led Black Sea Grain Initiative which successfully limited food price inflation but remained hampered by its short-term duration, as it needs to be renewed every four months.



Photo: FAO/ Ahmad Abdulmannan

ANTICIPATORY ACTION

Hazards do not need to become humanitarian disasters, but when they do, they affect people's lives and livelihoods, and all three pillars of sustainable development: social, economic, and environmental.

Anticipating shocks is essential, if communities, governments, humanitarian, and development actors are to efficiently protect lives and livelihoods and maintain food security. Furthermore, it empowers communities to act and limit potentially devastating losses as well as their reliance on emergency assistance: this proves to be both cost-effective for the humanitarian community and dignifying for the affected populations.

WHAT IS ANTICIPATORY ACTION (AA)?

"Anticipatory action is defined as acting ahead of predicted hazards to prevent or reduce acute humanitarian impacts before they fully unfold. This requires pre-agreed plans that identify partners and activities, reliable early warning information, and pre-agreed financing, released predictably and rapidly when an agreed trigger-point is reached."¹



BENEFITS, CHALLENGES, AND BOTTLENECKS

Anticipatory action means acting ahead of predictable shocks and has been shown to provide a timely, dignified, and (cost) effective way to support vulnerable communities. Continuous improvements in forecasting and early warning systems are enabling the development of anticipatory action frameworks for different risks and across diverse contexts. Currently only up to 3% of crisis response funding is pre-arranged for anticipatory actions, which means the very largest share of funding for humanitarian response is mobilized, allocated, and programmed post disaster. Furthermore, an inherent challenge of funding anticipatory action is that it requires donors and implementers to accept a no-regret approach given the degree of uncertainty regarding the likelihood and severity of a predicted event. Therefore, even when the tools and information are available, it is acknowledged that often action comes too late.

With conflict responsible for 70% or more of all food insecurity, anticipatory action also allows to better predict and act early to mitigate the impact of social unrest and conflict.

1

<https://reliefweb.int/report/world/g7-foreign-ministers-statement-strengthening-anticipatory-action-humanitarian>

OBJECTIVE

Through a strengthened gFSC and in-country presence, the FSC will contribute to increased understanding of anticipatory action among actors, ensuring country teams have support systems. It will improve, scale-up and mainstream anticipatory action within the humanitarian programme cycle, to anticipate food crises by coordinating and harnessing different sources of financing, technical support, and acting on early warnings.

In short, a gFSC Anticipatory Action WG will support global members and country FSC teams with the development of guidelines, the documentation of best practices and the provision of technical support. This WG will create linkages with existing global initiatives and platforms (e.g., Anticipation Hub, CERF, KORE, REAP, AA Task Force, EW4All etc.).

OUTCOME 1. ALIGNMENT IS FACILITATED ON OPERATIONAL AT THE COMPLEXITY OF FOOD CRISES THROUGH COORDINATED ANTICIPATORY ACTION

ACTIVITIES

1.1 Develop a guideline and common understanding for cluster coordinators on how to incorporate AA actions in the FSCs strategic plans.

1.2 Support capacity-strengthening activities.

1.3 Establish an AA Working Group (WG) (temporary if needed) which will also provide technical support to the country FSC.

INDICATORS

A guideline and common understanding for FSCs is developed.

85% of the country FSCs are trained.

An AA WG is established to develop on the guideline, common understanding and support trainings.

OUTCOME 2. IMPROVE THE USE AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF EARLY WARNINGS TO ENSURE ANTICIPATORY ACTIONS ARE IMPLEMENTED IN A TIMELY MANNER

ACTIVITIES

2.1 Link FSC discussions to the UN Early Warning for All Initiative

2.2 Map and/or coordinate early warning systems.

2.3 Use acute food insecurity (AFI) projections (e.g., IPC/ Cadre Harmonisé) to validate triggers, as well as triggering AFI updates.

INDICATORS

A map of Early Warning Systems (EWS) is available.

Number of countries using EWS including AFI.

Number of countries using EWS including AFI.

OUTCOME 3. IMPROVE LEARNING AND SHARE BEST PRACTICES TO RAISE AWARENESS AND INFORM PRACTICAL ACTION OF FSC TEAMS AND MEMBERS

ACTIVITIES

3.1 Develop and disseminate lessons learned and share experience (webinar, documents).

3.2 Identify “AA champions” in country FSCs.

3.3 Provide practical guidance (to CCs, IMOs, FSC members etc.).

INDICATORS

Number of case studies, webinar and other documents produced and shared.

At least one champion per regional focus (MENA, West Africa, Southern and Central Africa, Asia, etc.).

Number of orientation and training to FSC teams.

OUTCOME 4. ADVOCATE FOR FUNDING FOR ANTICIPATORY ACTION

ACTIVITIES

4.1 Participate in global discussions to advocate for increased and flexible financing, including for locally led AA.

4.2 Conduct operational research and develop evidence and key messages around AA for food crises.

INDICATORS

Number of advocacy notes on AA.

Number of operational research conducted to support AA.

OUTCOME 5: CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEVELOPMENT AND INCLUSION OF AA IN THE HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMME CYCLE.

ACTIVITIES

5.1 Support AA in the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC) development.

5.2 Support collective, sectoral and inter-sectoral risk analysis.

INDICATORS

Number of HNOs and HRPs with AA sections contributed from the FSCs.

of HNOs and HRPs with food security and inter-sectoral risk analysis.

PILLAR 2



Photo: FAO/Ahmad Abdulmannan

LOCALIZATION

LOCALIZATION AND FSC

Aligned with the localisation Grand Bargain commitments and informed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) guidance as well as the Principles of Partnership,¹ FSC partners and CLAs have placed localization at the core of the 2023-2025 strategic plan.

The FSC recognizes the core role local and national humanitarian Actors (L/NAs) play in humanitarian responses. L/NAs, NGOs, community-based organizations (CBOs), affected communities and other networks, including the Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, are in a unique position to fight hunger, strengthen resilience, sustain livelihoods, and improve food security conditions of vulnerable populations.

The gFSC will commit to enhancing capacity building and exchange of best practices, as well as to advocating for financial resources and support towards the localization agenda. Particular emphasis will be put on women-led organizations and organizations representing vulnerable populations.

Localization calls for humanitarian action that is as local as possible and as international as necessary in a complementary manner. Complementarity becomes an outcome in itself where an appropriate mix of local, national, and international capacities and capabilities support the best humanitarian outcomes for affected populations².

The gFSC and its partners will promote and advocate for a change in mind-set that translates in a more enabling and inclusive space for localization through approaches that address practical issues around active membership, representation, communication (including language), capacity and process issues related to meaningful engagement in needs analysis, strategic prioritization, and general decision-making mechanisms.

¹ <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/other/principles-partnership-global-humanitarian-platform-17-july-2007>

² What is 'appropriate' will depend on the context, mandate and value-add of the organisation and, critically, on the requirements and requests of L/NAs. The context influences which capabilities will be most appropriate in what proportions and determines what is most critical while the capacities of L/NAs will determine how international actors can/should behave in a complementary way.

BARRIERS, CHALLENGES, AND ENTRY POINTS

- L/NAs' meaningful engagement in coordination mechanisms face different challenges and barriers, including those outlined below.
- **Funding:** Access to direct funding and direct liaison with donors is a recognized challenge for L/NAs. Country-based pooled funds often represent the main funding source. The FSC in countries can act as a platform to facilitate dialogue with donors and promote tools to access direct resources, and other funding sources, enabling L/NAs to increase reserves for meaningful participation in coordination mechanisms and decision-making processes.
- **Access, participation, and representation:** FSC teams should advocate and promote a more enabling and inclusive mindset regarding localization, and coordination platforms should be organized in a conducive way to enhance access and participation of L/NAs. This would include – and not be limited to- L/NAs in the FSC and Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs), as well as removing barriers related to communication such as language, humanitarian jargon, lack of translation or interpretation services, and lack of sub-national coordination mechanisms, among others.
- **Leadership:** L/NAs' leadership in humanitarian coordination is essential to strengthen the quality, accountability, and coherence of humanitarian response. This would mean the involvement of L/NAs in the co-leadership of the country FSCs as well as in lead or chair positions of decision-making bodies and platforms such as the Strategic Advisory Group (SAG), Technical Working Groups, and Steering Committees. L/NAs should be enabled to actively contribute to the Humanitarian Needs Overviews (HNOs) and Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs), and in general to the HPC at all stages, starting from needs analysis, strategic prioritization, targeting, implementation and monitoring.
- **Capacity strengthening and sharing:** Capacity strengthening should be considered as a demand-driven two-way process for

mutual reinforcement over the long-term and should foresee various empowering methods, such as training, mentoring, shadowing, and peer-to-peer learning exchanges. Capacity strengthening initiatives can be organized around a wide range of areas, including coordination mechanisms, technical and operational issues, needs assessment and analysis, inter-sectoral approaches, and governance, where possible together with other coordination bodies. FSC teams should facilitate collaboration with L/NAs, the mapping of national and sub-national stakeholders, identifying their priorities, capacities, and needs. Moreover, FSC teams are best placed to analyze local challenges, explore potential solutions and mobilize local networks which can offer greater access to affected populations, hence contributing to a more effective, efficient, and sustainable humanitarian response with an enhanced accountability to affected populations.



OBJECTIVE

By actively promoting meaningful engagement and leaderships of L/NAs in food security coordination responses, the gFSC will commit to enhancing capacity building and exchange of best practices, as well as to advocating for financial resources. Particular emphasis will be put on women-led organizations and organizations representing vulnerable populations.

The FSC strategy will aim at strengthening participation, leadership, and capacity of L/NAs at global and country level. FSC teams together with key L/NAs will work towards developing localization roadmaps and workplans for their respective countries, in a transparent and inclusive way.

The FSC will collect and promote good practices in terms of inclusion of L/NAs and their demonstrated leadership. FSC teams will ensure meaningful participation of local actors in its strategic forums, including SAG, Working Groups, and overall coordination role. The process will be documented, progress against objectives monitored, and funding targets tracked. Cluster coordinators will drive the localization process under the guidance of the gFSC support team.

OUTCOME 1. PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION

ACTIVITIES

- 1.1 Facilitate a shared understanding between local and international actors on localization in the food security sector.
- 1.2 Raise awareness on the concept of 'Principles of Partnership' and enhance the understanding on the partnership concept.
- 1.3 Reflect the localization strategy in the country FSC workplans.
- 1.4 Address local actors' participation barriers local actors face is (e.g. due to limited resources, no physical presence in the capital cities, language used, gender and security issues).

INDICATORS

Number of FSCs having a localization related outcome in their country results frameworks.

OUTCOME 2. LEADERSHIP, ADVOCACY, AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

ACTIVITIES

- 2.1 Create leadership and co-leadership opportunities for local actors, and greater involvement in to play leadership and co-leadership roles and to get in decision-making.
- 2.2 Advocate for funding for L/NAs needed for co-facilitation.
- 2.3 Ensure participation and chairing of different groups at national and sub-national levels: technical WGs or time-bound Task Forces, SAGs, core groups, or Steering Committees.
- 2.4 Monitor the allocation of resources to local partners.
- 2.5 Facilitate L/NAs dialogue with donor community.

INDICATORS

Percentage of country FSC coordination groups led or co-led by local actors (government, civil society organization).

Proportion of humanitarian resources including pooled funds given to local food security actors.

Number of Humanitarian Response Plans reporting funding disaggregated for local and international FSC partners.

Number of local FSC partners accessing funds directly.

OUTCOME 3. CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

ACTIVITIES

3.1 Assess, and strengthen the L/NAs' capacity and, increasing increase their understanding of the cluster system, leadership, food security technical expertise and programming capacity (e.g., training, coaching, mentoring and other similar models).

3.2 Develop and disseminate lessons learned, best practices, guidance, and share experience (webinar, documents).

3.3 Identify "localization champions" in country FSCs.

INDICATORS

Number of FSCs having provided training on the Principles of Partnerships in the last 12 months.

OUTCOME 4. GENERATING LEARNING

ACTIVITIES

4.1 Organize forums to discuss localization with L/NAs and global partners (e.g. FSC retreats, Global Partners Meetings and Working Groups).

4.2 Develop and disseminate best practices based on lessons learned, including guidance documents, webinars.

INDICATORS

Number of best practice documents produced and disseminated.

Photo: OCHA/E. MASSOMA Colomina



PILLAR 3

HUMANITARIAN DEVELOPMENT PEACE (HDP) NEXUS

HDP NEXUS APPROACH AND FSC

In 2022, nearly 258 million lingered in crisis or worse acute food insecurity (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above) in 58 countries or territories. This represented over 25% increase compared the previous year, with 193 million in people in 53 countries or territories. The most acute levels of food insecurity were experienced in countries or regions grappling with protracted crises, plagued by conflicts, violence and climate emergencies.

Bridging the divide between humanitarian, development and peace actors has therefore become essential to address the unprecedented levels of food insecurity, strengthen food systems and mitigate or prevent future crises, in order to promote and secure sustainable livelihoods.

Country FSCs can drive engagement, support coordination, and promote an understanding between development and peace partners, by advancing joint risks and vulnerabilities as well facilitating more coordinated and complementary efforts to layer and sequence humanitarian,

development, and peace programming.

In carrying out the work under this Pillar, the gFSC will seek to identify opportunities for collaboration with existing platforms and initiatives at global, regional, and country level, such as the Global Network Against Food Crises.

OBJECTIVE

The FSC will increase country teams' capacity to integrate the HDP approach into food security programming, fostering a strengthened collaboration among humanitarian, development, and peace actors, through the use of common tools and shared analysis to define joint programming initiatives. Additionally, the gFSC will provide country teams with enhanced human resources and tools to facilitate coordination among HDP partners, bridge the existing peace and development coordination platforms, foster coordination and dialogue at sub-national, define timeframe and complementarities of all parties involved to ensure a comprehensive and adequate response.

OUTCOME 1. ENHANCED UNDERSTANDING OF, AND COORDINATION BETWEEN, HDP PLATFORMS AND ACTORS

ACTIVITIES

1.1 Map existing platforms used for coordination of HDP actors and interventions¹.

1. Advise how the bridge between country FSCs and existing development and peace platforms can be strengthened.
2. Guide on how to improve collaboration and coordination.

¹ For example the Food Systems Summit HDP coalition. <https://www.fightfoodcrises.net/hdp-coalition/en/>

1.2 Map HDP actors¹ and their activities to identify gaps, duplications and areas of convergence.

¹ HDP actors include: private sector, local authorities, academia, NGOs/CBOs, etc.

1.3 Identify opportunities to strengthen existing capacities.

1.4 Improve the understanding of the current response and existing local capacities. Enhance capacity of local actors to allow participation in HDP coordination and financing mechanisms.

INDICATORS

A Map of existing platforms used for coordination of HDP actors and interventions is produced.

Training/capacity building to FSC partners and local actors on HDPN is conducted.

OUTCOME 2. ENHANCED JOINT CONTEXT ANALYSIS OF SYSTEMATIC AND BASIC DRIVERS OF FOOD INSECURITY AND CRISIS

ACTIVITIES

2.1 Perform secondary data analysis to better understand contextual drivers of food insecurity actors (government, civil society organization).

2.2 Identify data gaps for a holistic understanding of local food systems.

2.3 Promote joint data collection (including on indicators assessing underlying and basic drivers of food insecurity) and increase data interoperability.

2.4 Promote data sharing and merging between HDP practitioners.

2.5. Promote collaboration with research institution to better understand local drivers and impact on protracted food insecurity.

INDICATORS

A data sharing and data interoperability SOPs and MoUs are drafted.

Study report on contextual drivers of food insecurity in countries to be selected in cooperation with research institutes and universities.

OUTCOME 3. IMPROVED PROGRAMMATIC COHERENCE AND ALIGNMENT AMONG HDP ACTORS AND ACTIONS

ACTIVITIES

3.1 Identify geographic priority areas based on the severity of needs and convergence of actions (as identified during the HDP mapping and joint analysis).

3.2 Based on gaps analysis in the agreed priority areas build a response plan that responds to collective outcomes or agreed priority areas (coordinated or jointly conducted with development and peace actors) with an aligned targeting approach, ensuring complementarity.

3.3 Provide training of cluster coordinators and cluster partners on coordinating HDPN activities (e.g. through the Nexus Academy).

3.4 Encourage strategic partnerships that promote HDP Nexus (HDPN) e.g., by including HDPN in multi-year HRP projects.

3.5 Gather, share good practices and lessons learned, and develop evidence-based advocacy for better integrating the multi-risk and impact management within food security responses for boosting resilient and sustainable agrifood systems, while leaving no one behind.

INDICATORS

A guidance on collective outcomes is drafted and inclusion of HDPN in HRP is drafted.

A training/webinar for FSC CCs on HDPN is conducted.

OUTCOME 4. IMPROVED COORDINATED JOINT MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING (MEAL)

ACTIVITIES

4.1 Promote shared theory of change and coherent monitoring framework among HDP actors who contribute to addressing food insecurity (in relation to the development of collective outcomes).

4.2 Assess to what extent the FSC is contributing to the joint monitoring framework in case a collective outcomes strategy has been developed.

4.3 Promote mutual accountability among humanitarian, development and peace actors.

4.4 Provide guidance on HDP indicators Conduct participatory learning exercises and events to share evidence on HDP coordination.

4.5 Support to generate relevant evidence around HDPN.

INDICATORS

A theory of change framework is developed.

An experience sharing/learning exercise is conducted.

OUTCOME 5. EFFECTIVE JOINT INITIATIVES TO ADVOCATE THE HPD APPROACH TO REDUCE HUMANITARIAN NEEDS OVER TIME

ACTIVITIES

5.1 Map potential HDP donors and their financing instruments including by leveraging other stakeholders' efforts (OCHA, UNDP, etc.).

5.2 Identify gaps and opportunities to promote complementarity and coherence in financing instruments.

5.3 Jointly advocate for inclusion of longer-term financing complementing HRP.

5.4 Advocate for increased flexibility in immediate, mid and longer-term development grants or advocate for pooled/consolidated funding mechanisms/appeals that promote HDPN to be able to adapt funds in case of crisis.

5.5 Advocate for more dedicated human resources FSC capacity where required (sub national and HDP focal points).

INDICATORS

An advocacy note/position paper on HDPN is drafted.



Photo: WFP/Kevin Ouma

DEFINITION & OVERVIEW OF THE CHALLENGES

Advocacy for the FSC means to secure commitment from the global community, donors, international and national authorities to address the needs of population affected by acute food insecurity conditions. It is about guaranteeing access to assistance, providing effective support, and fostering change. Country FSCs do not only operate in emergency contexts as the last resort to save lives: they also aim at preventing severe food conditions from worsening. To do so, the FSC actively advocates- via statements, partners' meetings, media briefings, interviews, evidence-based assessments, analysis and more - for a better understanding of the food security crises, the severity of the needs, the required response and appropriate allocation of resources.

Advocacy is also about timely communication of pertinent key messages to the relevant audience. The gFSC support team continuously enhances the information management systems and resources to support advocacy initiatives at global or country levels, including statements, partners' meetings, media briefings, interviews, evidence-based assessments, analysis and more, to raise awareness on the food security crises, the severity of the needs, the required response and appropriate allocation of resources.

As country FSCs coordinate a large group of humanitarian actors - UN agencies, international, local, and national NGOs - they all have different levels of leverage to express critical messages on the drivers of food insecurity. The advocacy strategy will optimize partners' role and room for manoeuvre to not only raise awareness on the affected population needs and funding, but as also engage in humanitarian advocacy, an essential step towards eradicating hunger and livelihood crises in the long term, saving populations from life-threatening conditions and shifting from emergency to self-resilient situations.

OBJECTIVE

Advocacy will aim at strengthening further the positioning of the FSC as:

- The lead reference for analysis and evidence on food security.
- An effective catalyst for improving how the humanitarian system delivers for affected populations.

The FSC will continue to increase the awareness and understanding of food insecurity conditions and will also support partners' advocacy initiatives to shed light on the drivers of food insecurity and global humanitarian crises, and promote a more holistic efforts at resilience building.

OUTCOME 1. ACTIVELY CONTRIBUTE TO HIGH-LEVEL ADVOCACY PLATFORMS TO END HUNGER, SAVE, AND ENHANCE LIVELIHOODS AT NATIONAL, REGIONAL, AND GLOBAL LEVELS

ACTIVITIES

- 1.1 Elevate analysis and evidence generated by the FSC to support advocacy initiatives.
- 1.2 Facilitate partners' advocacy initiatives, providing evidence as well as connecting partners and relevant stakeholders.
- 1.3 Strengthen credibility and legitimacy of the FSC as a leading resource for food and livelihood assistance, coordination.
- 1.4 Ensure constant horizon scanning on strategic priorities and setting key messages.

INDICATORS

Number of advocacy platforms and events the FSC participated to define advocacy priorities.

Number of advocacy documents based upon or integrating FSC evidence and analysis.

OUTCOME 2. ENGAGE IN HUMANITARIAN ADVOCACY TO EFFECTIVELY INFLUENCE POLICY MAKERS IN ADDRESSING THE ROOT CAUSES OF THE GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN CRISIS AND DRIVERS OF FOOD INSECURITY

ACTIVITIES

- 2.1 Develop, further elevate, or contribute to partners' initiatives and advocacy products to increase policymakers' understanding of the complexity and severity of food insecurity drivers.
- 2.2 Support partners' communication campaigns towards policy change, to address the drivers of humanitarian crises and foster long-term change.
- 2.3 Voice the concerns of the affected populations and the unprecedented levels of needs generated by climate hazards, conflicts, socio-economic shocks.
- 2.4 Advocate for improving the effectiveness and impact of the food security anticipatory action and response, and ensure they adequately meet the needs of women, girls, men, and boys.

INDICATORS

Number of partners' initiatives the FSC supported developing or co-sponsored on the drivers of food insecurity.

Number of human-interest stories developed by the FSC.

Number of initiatives dedicated to anticipatory action and accountability to affected population.

OUTCOME 3. ENHANCE AND LEVERAGE THE FOOD SECURITY PARTNERS' NETWORKS, MEDIA PARTNERSHIPS AND ADVOCACY CALENDAR FOR COORDINATED AND TIMELY INITIATIVES

ACTIVITIES

3.1 Facilitate collaboration among food security actors to foster joint communication and advocacy initiatives.

3.2 Build on partners' networks and opportunities to further elevate key messages and voices from the field.

3.3 Develop joint initiatives around key advocacy moments related to food security and humanitarian assistance.

INDICATORS

Number of advocacy meetings organized to facilitate dialogue at global or country level.

Number of guidelines shared by the FSC to harmonize advocacy and communication initiatives in the FS community.

Number of newsletters and partners' communication produced and shared.

Number of food security joint advocacy initiatives.

OUTCOME 4. MEASURE THE LEVEL OF CHANGE GENERATED BY THE FSC ADVOCACY INITIATIVES ON THE HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE AND AFFECTED POPULATIONS

ACTIVITIES

4.1 Monitor the impact of advocacy initiatives on the implementation or increased awareness of the FSC pillars.

4.2 Assess the impact of advocacy initiatives on resources allocated to food security response at country FSC.

4.3 Monitor the influence on policies and concrete changes or roadmap towards change.

4.4 Assess civil society's food security level of understanding (youth in particular) and the effective impact on social behaviour change in regards of livelihoods initiatives and agriculture.

INDICATORS

Internal surveys to country FSC coordinators to assess the level of impact of advocacy initiatives on the FSC pillars' implementation and allocation of resources.

Internal surveys or external in partnership with local partners with access to the affected population to assess the change in mind-set and potential social behavior change.

ALL OUTCOMES

Digital communication indicators including web metrics and social media statistics.



CROSS-CUTTING

1. For the Strategic Plan 2023-2025, the gFSC will prioritize three main cross-cutting themes, which will be integrated and mainstreamed throughout all stages of the FSC work at country and global level.
2. Protection, gender, age, disability and inclusion, environment, and climate.

Broadened collaboration across sectors for nutrition and health outcomes.

OBJECTIVE

The overall objective is to increase country FSCs' capacity to mainstream and integrate these three cross-cutting themes among the FSC partners and in the FSC response.

The gFSC and country FSCs will promote the use of common tools, guidance notes and best practices, as well as deliver training with other stakeholders to improve the quality of the FSC response with the aim to be more **accountable to the communities, to reduce the FSC climate footprint and to improve the food security and nutrition outcomes** of the FSC responses.

PROTECTION, GENDER, AND INCLUSION

Mainstreaming protection, gender, and inclusion concerns within FSC activities will remain one of the key principles in the Strategic Plan 2023-2025.

The FSC, at field and global level, will strive to ensure food security programmes are delivered in a way that ensures protection principles and promotes meaningful access, safety, dignity and accountability to affected population. This includes Child Protection, Gender-based Violence (GBV) prevention and mitigation, gender equity, disability inclusion and inclusion of marginalized groups, and Protection of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA).

Safe programming is fundamental to all humanitarian work through proactive measures to ensure that they do not put affected populations in further danger, do not create or exacerbate conflict and other risks, and where possible, enhance civilian safety, including decreasing the risks of Gender Based Violence (GBV). The FSC supports the adoption of measures to respond to and protect vulnerable people from sexual exploitation and abuse by both humanitarian actors' staff and associated personnel.

Acknowledging the significant work done, the FSC will continue to disseminate the existing tools, guidance documents and learning resources (assessment implementation, monitoring and evaluation), while adapting them to the Food Security sector as needed, and developing new ones when gaps are identified.

At global level, the gFSC will work closely with partners and Cluster Lead Agencies, as well as leverage the expertise and support of the



Photo: FSC/Venezuela

Protection Cluster and the Child Protection and Gender Based Violence Areas of Responsibilities – as already initiated under the previous strategic plan – to provide necessary support to country FSCs.

The country FSCs will identify and incorporate key protection, gender, and inclusion-related actions into their cluster workplan and will contribute to the operationalization of HCT Centrality of Protection strategies and actions to reduce protection risks before, during and after a shock. This will be achieved through the identification of focal points and subject-experts within the cluster membership, the dissemination of available tools and resources to cluster partners, and the monitoring of the collective efforts around the identified priority themes.

Examples of topics on which FSC teams could raise awareness, knowledge and adoption of partners include:

- Guarantee equitable access to assistance and ensure it addresses practical gender needs (also considering that deeply rooted, discriminatory gender norms are key barriers to accessing assistance).
- Ensure thorough understanding of gender, age and inclusion sensitive contextual analysis and needs assessments.

Disaggregate programme data by gender, age, and disability, and report such disaggregation to the FSC team through the 5W matrix.

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

As per Sphere guidelines, programmes should minimize their environment and climate impact, additional risks of future shocks and stresses, and consider how procurement, transport and choice of materials, or land and natural resource use may protect or degrade the environment and climate further (do no harm approach). Food-secure communities, especially those who rely on the environment and weather for their livelihoods (farmers, pastoralists, fishers, fish farmers, forest dependent communities, and food workers, etc.) need healthy and inclusive, resilient, and sustainably productive agro-ecosystems.



Photo: FSC/Mauricio Bisol

Planning for climate and environment sensitive responses will remain a key cross-cutting theme along all the pillars of the Strategic Plan 2023-2025, and one on which further work will need to be undertaken to bring about significant change. The FSC will strengthen its role in encouraging greener and climate-adapted responses through all its programmes. The FSC will contribute to building resilient livelihoods with increased preventative, anticipative, absorptive, and adaptive capacities to better cope with climate induced shocks, while contributing to reversing environment degradation and related stresses. In doing so, the FSC will collaborate with other sectors, especially those responsible for other components, such as access to safe water or energy, that are essential to contribute to food security outcomes (e.g., people need energy and water to cook food).

At global level, the gFSC and its partners will endeavour to gather evidence and disseminate best practices on mainstreaming environment protection, ecosystem restoration, and climate risk and impact management for resilience within the FS responses. The gFSC will also promote awareness of FSC field teams of global climate and environment standards for food security and existing tools and approaches, especially on environmental impact assessment -such as NEAT+-, but also documents such as the WFP Environmental & Social Sustainability Framework or the FAO Environmental & Social Safeguards, nature based-solutions, Climate and Environment charter, etc.

Country FSCs will carry out a similar dissemination role towards cluster partners and will work towards enhancing partners' capacity to use existing climate

and environment tools to reduce their climate and biodiversity footprints. Country FSCs will coordinate efforts on climate and environmental risk and impact screening in areas where food security responses are implemented.

BROADENED COLLABORATION ACROSS SECTORS FOR NUTRITION AND HEALTH OUTCOMES

The FSC will aim at strengthening its collaboration, synergy, and complementarity with other clusters to achieve collective outcomes.

In contexts of extremely high levels and severity of food and nutrition insecurity, the FSC will continue to improve the way food security programmes contribute to nutrition and health outcomes through increased coordination with the Nutrition, Health and WASH Clusters.

At global level, the gFSC and its partners will promote and support country FSCs to work in a more integrated way with other sectors, including through the development of guidance, tools, and trainings. Joint initiatives with relevant global clusters will be instrumental to mutualize expertise and resources in support of these efforts, e.g. joint famine prevention initiatives, Food Security and Child Protection initiatives, and the One Health approach.

At country level, the FSC teams will work with other relevant clusters for improving joint analysis by leveraging, for instance, the IPC and the Joint Intersectoral Analysis Framework (JIAF), programming, and monitoring.

PROTECTION, GENDER, AND INCLUSION

OUTCOME 1. ENSURE FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMMES ARE DELIVERED IN A WAY THAT ENABLE AFFECTED POPULATIONS, IN PARTICULAR WOMEN, GIRLS, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND OTHER MARGINALISED INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS, TO MEANINGFULLY ACCESS ASSISTANCE THAT IS SAFE AND DIGNIFIED, AND THAT FOOD SECURITY ACTORS ARE ACCOUNTABLE TO THE PEOPLE THEY SERVE.

ACTIVITIES

1.1 Dissemination of existing tools, guidance and learning resources while adapting them to the FSC as needed, with support Protection Cluster and the Child Protection and Gender Based Violence Areas of Responsibilities, and other actors, including FSC members and CLAs.

1.2 Develop new tools, guidance for identified gaps.

1.3 Support in establishing AAP mechanisms, as / when needed, by promoting good, contextualised approaches.

INDICATORS

Number of guidance documents, tools and learning documents shared that address protection, gender and inclusion (country and global level).

Number of trainings conducted, or training modules produced and shared with country clusters / partners on AAP and safe programming (country and global level).

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

OUTCOME 2: STRENGTHENING THE FSC ROLE IN PROMOTING GREENER AND CLIMATE-ADAPTED APPROACHES IN ITS ACTIVITIES AS WELL AS IN RELATION TO WATER, ENERGY, AND OTHER RELEVANT SECTORS.

ACTIVITIES

2.1 Gathering of evidence and dissemination of best practices on mainstreaming environment protection, ecosystem restoration, and climate risk and impact management for resilience within the FS responses.

2.2 Raise awareness among country FSCs and partner staff of global climate and environment standards for food security and existing tools and approaches.

INDICATORS

Number of best practice documents disseminated covering greener and climate-adopted approaches.

BROADENED COLLABORATION ACROSS SECTORS FOR NUTRITION AND HEALTH OUTCOMES

OUTCOME 3: STRENGTHENING THE FSC COLLABORATION, SYNERGY, AND COMPLEMENTARITY WITH OTHER CLUSTERS TO ACHIEVE COLLECTIVE NUTRITION AND HEALTH OUTCOMES.

ACTIVITIES

3.1 Development of guidance documents, tools, and trainings (gFSC level).

3.2 Joint work with other relevant clusters, improving joint analysis, programming, and monitoring.

INDICATORS

Number of guidance documents, tools and learning documents developed and shared, in collaboration with other clusters.

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR ALL PILLARS

- The SAG, gFSC support team and CLAs will be accountable to country FSCs and members at country level.
- The CLAs and country FSC teams will be accountable to FSC members.
- The gFSC to facilitate communication with gFSC SAG, Country FSCs and L/NAs.
- The gFSC to provide feedback from country clusters on their needs regarding what to advocate for, whom to advocate to.
- The CLAs, jointly with the gFSC and SAG, to liaise with key policy makers, forums, and institutions.
- The gFSC and the SAG to convene on strategic advocacy priorities and key messages, at global level, to guide engagement with country FSCs.
- The gFSC to regularly share relevant information on trends and operational risks on the response and opportunities for strengthening collaboration with country FSCs.



Photo: WFP/Agron Dragaj



FOOD SECURITY CLUSTER