global Food Security Cluster

**Technology & Innovation Working Group**

**Terms of Reference**

The global Food Security Cluster (gFSC) Technology and Innovation Working Group will be a reference for new, current and emerging technologies and innovations for the FSC. The WG defines innovation as “a means of adaptation and improvement through finding and scaling solutions to problems, in the form of products, processes or wider business models” (Betts & Bloom, 2014, p. 5)[[1]](#footnote-1). Innovation is not the same as invention: it need not involve the creation of something absolutely novel, but often takes the form of adapting something to a different context. The WG defines technologies not only as “knowledge or methods that are necessary to carry on or to improve the existing production and distribution of goods and services” or indeed to develop entire new products or processes, but also as “entrepreneurial expertise and professional know-how” (Unctad, 2001, p. 14)[[2]](#footnote-2)

# Purpose

The purpose of the gFSC Technology & Innovation Working Group is to advise which technologies and innovations are most appropriate for FSC actors in different contexts to meet relief, recovery and development goals. The WG will provide guidance on information sharing and data protection, arising from the use of tools containing confidential or politically sensitive data.

# Representation

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All gFSC partner institutions can join this group at any time. They will be requested to send their letter of intent to the Chair (keith\_chibafa@wvi.org) and to the gFSC focal point (marisa.muraskiewicz@wfp.org).

# Background

Humanitarian organizations are increasingly using new technologies and innovations to provide assistance and protection to affected populations. This Working Group serves as a forum for sharing and discussing these tools, including experience with their use and best practices for information sharing and data protection.

**Method of Work:**

A focal person in the gFSC Rome based team will manage and ensure the communications with the Working Group through:

* Regular email correspondence, including updates on technology/innovation events and conferences
* Quarterly teleconferences to present specific initiatives and update on working group activities
* Working Group Face to Face meetings during the bi-annual Meeting of Global Partners
* Meeting minutes circulated to all WG members

**Work Plan January 2016 – May 2016**

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| **Objective** | **Activity** | **Output** | **Partner Lead** | **Timeline** |
| Advise which technologies and innovations are most appropriate for FSC actors in different contexts to improve the efficiency of food security response | 1. Keep the online survey form open to collect further technologies and innovations 2. Conduct a survey to collect feedback from Cluster Coordinators and gFSC members on which aspects and topics, including innovative processes, need further guidance 3. Match the needs with best practices, especially regarding emerging technologies, and innovations proposed by gFSC members, with dedicated webinars 4. Host webinars on innovative tasks related to food utilization, and other area to be identified through survey, in order to demonstrate applicability of technologies and develop standards amongst partners. | * Tech&Inn mapping matrix updated * Survey with Cluster Coordinators and gFSC members * Two webinars on innovative tasks (a demonstrative one by May) | COOPI (Barbara Nese & Marco Caniato) | 1. February 2016: Survey conducted 2. March 2016: Webinar on Food Utilization 3. October 2016: Webinar on topic to be identified through survey |
| Provide guidance on information sharing/data protection arising from the use of tools with the aim to improve the quality and frequency of information sharing | 1. Pilot FSC Field Guide to Data Sharing in a country to produce evidence that the guide is applicable and adds value for information sharing at field level. 2. Incorporate Field Guide in Cluster Coordinator (CC) training curriculums. 3. Collaboration with other WGs/Partners. | * Updated Field Guide based on field inputs and sharing of lessons learned * Capacity building module for CC training in July 2016 | World Vision (Keith Chibafa) | January – March 2016: Field guide piloted  March – May 2016: Development of CC training module |

1. Betts, Alexander, and Louise Bloom. 2014. “Humanitarian Innovation: The State of the Art.” https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/OP9\_Understanding Innovation\_web.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Unctad. 2001. *Transfer of Technology*. *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development*. New York, USA and Geneva, Switzerland: United Nations publication. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)