COVID-19: CH FOOD SECURITY MONITORING TASKFORCE

MINUTES OF INCEPTION MEETING

Date: 23 April 2020  Time: 11:00 to 13:00

Agenda

1. Agenda Inception Meeting
2. Introduction of Participants
3. Communication from the Chair
4. Presentation of the ToR
   - Objectives
   - Responsibilities of various actors (Including discussion of approach on who would collect data from where, Hard to Reach Areas, etc)
   - Frequency of meetings
   - Next Steps
5. AOB

Attendance:

1. FMARD (NPFS) – Anthony, Okorie, Nkechi, Bulama
2. NBS – Bishop
3. FAO – Precious, Rumbi
4. WFP – Christoph, Olatunji, Ifeoma, Adeyinka
5. Save The Children - Andrew
6. REACH – Jessica
7. FSS - Leslie

Key Points

The Chair of CH (Mr Amu Anthony) opened the meeting and emphasized the need for CH Food Situation Monitoring Task Force, given the currently fast changing context of food insecurity due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has resulted in lockdown in almost all the states of the federation. This has serious implications on the food security and livelihoods of households as food commodities are not easily moved across states, markets no longer operating, and rising prices of commodities amidst scarcity.

Members discussed at length for about an hour on whether the process of reviewing the March CH 2020 analysis would only cover the three States of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe, or also consider the other additional 13 states areas where CH has previously been done. Members also deliberated on whether to include the other states where CH cells do not exist currently such as Ogun and Lagos states, given that they are also significantly affected by the COVID-19 crisis. Other areas mentioned include the North West where there are a few cases mentioned and are also at high risk of food insecurity.

After over an hour of deliberations, it was agreed that:
1. The process of review of the March 2020 CH results starts with the states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe, which there are already significantly having ongoing food security activities, and data might be readily available. Different stakeholders including partners, government and donors may need this information to quickly adjust the programming in those areas.

2. During the discussions, participants agreed that most parts of the country are currently affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, scaling up the analysis now to country-wide level would face some key challenges including:
   a) Setting up new CH cells in areas where CH was previously non-existent such as Lagos, Ogun, etc will be a challenge given limited access, and staff are literally not working from office lately given the difficulty in movements.
   b) Limited data from the various locations.
   c) Absence of CH cells that would mean setting them up during this time of difficulty in access.
   d) Overall lack of resources now.

It was also recommended that country level analysis would also need to be discussed at Ministerial level as this taskforce may not have the capacity to comprehensively discuss it.

WFP mentioned that they are in plan to carry out food security assessments for the whole of Nigeria to support the next steps of projections including areas where there were no CH cells. However, WFP mentioned they were deploying the mVAM tool (which has to do remote data collection approach using mobile devices, etc). The dashboard showing the country-wide coverage was presented to the meeting.

The Food Security Sector clarified that in planning, clarity should be made that it is not about the number of cases reported, as that is more of a health-related issue. As food security partners, the key issue is how the COVID-19 is affecting the food security and livelihoods activities in the different contexts. For instance, how the restrictions/lockdown/fear of movements are the key issue affecting markets and food security.

REACH also asked whether the next round of review would include hard to reach areas. It was agreed that if data is readily available, then this category can also be included.

**Action Points**

1. The process of review of the March 2020 CH results starts with the states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe, as discussions are ongoing for the rest of the 13 additional states, or even the potential of covering addition new states where CH cells did not previously exist.

2. All CH stakeholders including the FMARD – NPFS, NBS, FAO and WFP to discuss with senior management on the capacity, likelihoods of doing CH analysis in the other areas.

3. The Food Security Sector to make a call for recent data from partners for Borno, Adamawa and Yobe to feed the review of the March 2020 CH analysis. The data should be mainly on contributing factors such as food prices, functionality of markets. WFP is also collecting some data on livelihoods, which will be helpful in this review. Additional data on direct indicators and contributing factors is welcome.

4. Next meeting would be after two weeks (Thursday May 07, 2020)