

FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS CLUSTER TRANSITION PLAN 2021 - 2023

Overview

The Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster (FSLC) has developed this transition plan, which would lead to deactivation of the cluster, in the spirit of transferring responsibilities to local actors or government to ensure predictability of leadership¹. This plan is critical to the cluster approach, and without it, the fundamental element of predictable leadership is lost. It is a commitment of the cluster system and FAO, the lead agency, to ensure effective and appropriate humanitarian response.

In 2021, the FSLC will rigorously identify a national partner to execute the transitioning of the cluster. The cluster will also map the transition activities, set benchmarks with the identified partner, and build the capacity during the transition². During the phasing out stage, the FSLC will prepare the partners to accept and support the transition and the FSLC will begin the transfer of responsibilities to its national counterpart. The speed of the transfer will be determined by the security situation in Eastern Ukraine.

BENCHMARKS FOR TRANSITION TO TAKE PLACE

Table 1: conditions and status of the current armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine

Condition	Status
Significant reduction in the number of civilians affected by the emergency	A decrease in the scale of armed clashes since 2015 The OSCE Mission in Ukraine recorded 19 civilian deaths and 128 injuries in the course of 2019, the lowest figures since the conflict began ³ . Flare-ups in hostilities (shelling) injuring 94 civilians ⁴ .
A successfully negotiated peace settlement bringing about the cessation of hostilities	Ongoing
The resumption of normal social, political, and economic activities	Regular shelling continues unabated in eastern Ukraine, causing significant damage to critical civilian infrastructure and houses, that limits access of population to livelihoods, food security and critical agriculture

¹ https://www.unocha.org/sites/dms/ROWCA/Coordination/Cluster_Coordination_Reference_Module_CountryLevel.pdf

² https://fscluster.org/sites/default/files/documents/fsc_handbook_201206.pdf

³ <https://www.osce.org/special-monitoring-mission-to-ukraine/444073>

⁴ <https://unsdg.un.org/latest/stories/10-facts-about-humanitarian-crisis-ukraine>

The Government's capacity to resume its obligation towards the population, in particular the victims of the conflict	Government defined reintegration of IDPs and those residing on NGCA as one of the key objectives ⁵
A resource mobilization strategy should be in place that covers the strategic framework for post-conflict activities	Despite Ministry for Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine (MToT) is active in resource mobilization, development of a comprehensive strategy needs further capacity building

Needs

Benchmark indicator in terms of needs:

People with poor and borderline levels of food consumption is **estimated** not higher than 2.0% in conflict-affected Luhansk and Donetsk regions GCA and 2.0% for IDPs residing in GCA⁶.

Current Status

The FSLC estimates⁷ that 1.5 million people are in need – a 51% increase since 2020 - of food security interventions in 2021, while nearly 430 thousand people are food insecure. This is attributed to the ongoing pandemic restrictions, loss of employment, increase in food prices and restriction of aid to the conflict areas particularly in the non-government-controlled areas.

Response capacities of the government

The key objectives of Ministry for Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories (MToT) are defined as follows:

- Coordination of humanitarian response under armed conflict.
- Peacebuilding, recovery and development of Donetsk and Luhansk regions.
- Cooperation with donors and international financial institutions to raise investment, credits and grants as international technical assistance to achieve goals on peacebuilding, recovery, and development.
- Analytical support, monitoring, and evaluation

⁵ Action Programme of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine as of October 2019. Accessible at <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/188-20#n2>

⁶ According to [2017 FS and Vulnerability Analysis](#), share of people with poor and borderline levels of food consumption was at 7.3% in GCA, 9.2% for IDPs residing in GCA and 15.2% among the general population in NGCA. The analysis is based on the CARI methodology that considers four main food security indicators, people in need and gap analysis.

⁷ Assessments based on social and demographic data of State Statistics Service of Ukraine, Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment and Economic Security Assessment conducted by REACH.

The FSLC estimates that the transition process will start in 2021 and transfer the cluster's responsibilities to a national partner at the end of 2023 under FAO guidance.

Benchmark indicators in terms of the capacities of the government to take over the responsibilities of ensuring immediate access to food and critical agricultural support to affected population and generating income opportunities for those in need:

Government has the capacity to assist the affected population by consolidating the available resources and coordinating efforts of civil society organizations, international actors, and authorities at the national and regional levels and approved these capacities and responsibilities in corresponding documents (strategies, action plans etc.).

2. WHO TO HAND OVER TO & WHAT TO HAND OVER

At the national level: As stated previously, the cluster will likely handover to the Government; hence, the FSLC is working closely with FAO in determining the most appropriate and willing Government agency. In most countries where the cluster operates, the transition is done through the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA). In 2020, the Ministry of Agriculture was part of the Ministry of Development of Economy, Trade and Agriculture⁸. At the end of 2020, the government adopted a decree on reorganization, according to which the Ministry of Agriculture and Food will be separated from the current The Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Agriculture of Ukraine⁹. There are potentially other stakeholders including the MToT¹⁰ that could take over and sustain the cluster function, but this would need to be determined. The FSLC will wait for MoA to take shape and with support of the lead agency (FAO) will start the discussion of the transitioning of the cluster system. Capacity building and engagement will be discussed after the FSLC identifies the partner. In parallel, the FSLC will keep UNOCHA informed of the progress of the transition process.

What to hand over:

- Service delivery and coordination, reporting and monitoring of FSLC partners activities, information management needs, seasonal needs assessments, strategic planning and appeals, capacity building enhancement of the partners to ensure smooth coordination.
- All relevant Cluster documents related to coordination of humanitarian needs, including standard operating procedures (SOP), capacity development plan

⁸ According to the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine:

<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/206-2020-%D0%BF>

⁹ <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/npas/deyaki-pitannya-optimizaciyi-sistemi-centralnih-organiv-vikonavchoyi-vladi-i281220-1344>

¹⁰ Ukraine government designated Ministry of Reintegration of Temporarily occupied Territories (MToT) as the lead agency to lead the humanitarian response in the conflict area of Eastern Ukraine. MToT has a division for Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) and Humanitarian Cooperation, department for Promoting Rights of Persons Residing in the Conflict Affected Areas.

preparedness plans, lessons learned documents, implementation and reporting tools and documents. We will also share software if available and hardware with approval from the lead agency and the donors.

At the regional and local levels: The FSL Cluster transition plan will be implemented at the regional level of Luhansk and Donetsk to ensure buy-in and support of the transition by the regional authorities. The tentative list of departments of the Regional State Administrations and local service providers to be reached in order to communicate the Transition Plan is as follows:

- Department of Agricultural Development and Land Relations.
- Social Protection Department.
- Department of Economy.
- Regional Employment centers (operating under the State Employment Service of Ukraine).

3. WHAT CAPACITIES NEED TO BE BUILT

It is premature to determine the capacity gaps of the Government in the absence of a capacity assessment. Nonetheless, the FSLC assumption is that transitioning partner would need to familiarize with the following: the core functions and responsibilities of the cluster as determined by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee¹¹ (IASC), the humanitarian architecture, the cluster approach, information management and gathering information using the cluster tools, accountability to the affected population, gender and vulnerability concerns, training and monitoring, understanding and coordinating humanitarian assessment and analysis, planning and appeals, and advocacy.

The FSLC will also discuss the humanitarian architecture, roles, and responsibilities of the cluster, agree on the Government or the national partner designated staff and after conducting a training needs assessment and plan the forward steps to address the capacity gap. The FSLC staff (Cluster Coordinator and Information Management Officer) in the interim will support the cluster coordination and information needs. The cluster will not be designating these staff to the Government or national partner, but they will continue to provide technical support especially in the last quarter of 2023 before the final transferring of the coordination leadership.

Transitioning challenges

- Identifying Government or national counterparts willing to take on the role and responsibilities or coordination of the cluster – during the pandemic
- Capacity building amid the pandemic – meaning the trainings and interaction will have to be conducted remotely until feasible to meet physically.
- Timing and transition – transitioning in a protracted crisis is complicated as a lot are unknown regarding the conflict and the reversing of gains made. Transitioning in the

¹¹ The IASC is the forum for coordination, Policy development and decision-making involving the UN and non-humanitarian partners.

amid the pandemic is also difficult due to the restrictions, new humanitarian needs because of the pandemic.

Difficult to assess the residual needs during an ongoing pandemic

Viability of transferring of cluster responsibilities, managing expectations and the reputational risk if the FSLC fails with the transfer.

The FSLC will manage the above challenges by ensuring transparency throughout the process and seeking the guidance of the lead agencies when challenges arise. Keeping the FSLC partners sensitized to solicit their buy-in of the process. The FSLC will also encourage dialogue, document lessons learnt and closely monitor the transition plan while being flexible to the situation on ground.

4. WORK PLAN FOR THE FSLC TRANSITION PROCESS

Table 2. The transition work plan

#	Action	Timeline
1	Identification of the Governmental agency/national counterpart	Q1, 2022
2	Consultation & designation of the counterpart representatives	Q1, 2022
3	Discussion on the coordination process & capacity assessment	Q2, 2022
4	Capacity building of the national counterparts	Q3- Q4, 2022
5	FSLC Co-chair with counterparts	Q1, 2023
6	Refresher training, coaching, and mentoring of national counterpart	Q2, 2023
	Scale down FSLC direct coordination – increase visibility of govt./ national counterpart	Q3-Q4, 2023
7	Transfer information management tools/equipment	Q4, 2023
9	Evaluation of the process	Q3, 2023
11	Transfer completed – phase out FSLC staff visibility	Q4, 2023

November 2, 2021