FOOD SECURITY SECTOR / LIVELIHOOD TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP
MEETING (DRAFT)

Location: Virtual meeting using Microsoft Teams
Date: 25 March 2020
Time: 11:00 AM

PARTICIPANTS

22 Organizations (44 individuals) in attendance;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>MOAS</th>
<th>IVY Japan</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Solidarites International</td>
<td>BRAC</td>
<td>WFP</td>
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<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>UN Women</td>
<td>SCI</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
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<td>ACF</td>
<td>IOM</td>
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<td>WVI</td>
<td>Prottyashi</td>
<td>FiVDB</td>
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<td>Faith in Action</td>
<td>HSI</td>
<td>LoCOS</td>
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<td>ACAPS</td>
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AGENDA

- Introduction
- FSS/GFA updates
- LHWG updates
- Review of COVID-19 guidance notes
- Review of compiled partner information through the FSS/LHWG survey
- Gender impact of COVID-19
- AOB

SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS

- Partners to adhere to latest guidance by GoB and the humanitarian community (available here)
- FSS to follow up on availability of health professional at distribution points and e-voucher outlets
- Partners currently conducting programming with limited person to person interaction are encouraged to brainstorm on contingency plans to maintain programming after the government shutdown should Bangladesh still be at heightened precaution for an extended period of time.
- Partners are requested to share COVID-19 contingency plans with FSS team for harmonization
- Partners are requested to adopt mobile money transfers where possible
- Partners interested to produce face masks, scrubs, or protective aprons to contact FSS for coordination/approved technical specifications
- Partners to reach out to FSS if support needed on advocacy and reprogramming
- Partners to contact the Logistics Sector Coordinator (cameron.kiss@wfp.org) and Information Management Officer (priya.pradhanang@wfp.org) for support with procuring hygiene items
- FSS to provide regular updates on developments concerning COVID-19
- FSS / LHWG to hold bi-weekly virtual meetings to provide updates
- Partners interested in linking beneficiaries with the UNW women’s market to contact UNW focal point: nadira.islam@unwomen.org

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>PROCEEDING</th>
<th>ACTION POINTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Welcome and Introduction</td>
<td>Partners to adhere to latest guidance by GoB and the humanitarian community</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This meeting was held on Microsoft Teams platform, participants were requested to introduce themselves by entering their name and organization name in the chat</td>
<td>FSS to follow up on availability of health professional at distribution points and e-voucher outlets</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>FSS Updates</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Multisectoral Preparedness and Response Plan</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Each sector provided inputs for the intersectoral preparedness plan – led by the Health Sector – response plan is to adapt based on scenarios in Cox’s Bazar and Rohingya refugees</td>
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<td>- People have been isolated and one case has been confirmed in Cox’s Bazar (Host community)</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>ISCG Weekly Situation Report</strong> includes key highlights, preparedness and response activities, sector updates, and gaps and challenges (Update #1 17 March) (Update #2 25 March)</td>
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<td><strong>Main advocacy points from the humanitarian community</strong> are:</td>
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<td>- Rohingya refugees to be included in National Preparedness and Response Plan (NPRP), which is currently in its fifth version (<a href="#">link</a>)</td>
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<td>- To resume 3G/4G services in the camps</td>
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<td>- To establish Covid-19 testing and treatment facilities and capacities in Cox’s Bazar</td>
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<td><strong>WHO Bangladesh provides regular updates at both national and Cox’s Bazar level</strong> –</td>
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<td>- One case has been reported as of 24 March (please see the latest update <a href="#">here</a>)</td>
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<td>- Isolation capacity in the district is being built – partners added that 47 beds are currently available, and they are strictly for isolation and not for intensive care</td>
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<td><strong>MoFA circular as of 22 March</strong> (<a href="#">link</a>)</td>
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<td>- GoB ordered a lockdown in all districts of Bangladesh which will begin on 26 March to 4 April</td>
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<td>- Limited services (kitchen shops, grocery stores, and pharmacies) will remain available</td>
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<td><strong>RRRC issued an advisory stating, in refugee camps:</strong> (<a href="#">English</a>) (<a href="#">Bangla</a>)</td>
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<td>- Only essential assistance and services will be allowed in camps to minimize the exposure of refugees to Covid-19 – only food, LPG distribution, nutrition, WASH, site management (50%), protection, and health services to continue with preventative measures, namely handwashing and social distancing, in place</td>
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• CiCs will be present in a rotational basis
• Only grocery shops will be open
• These measures will be in place for initial 15 days

ISCG has identified essential services and critical services (link)

WFP Prevention and Risk Minimization Measures for General Food Assistance in Context of COVID-19 (link)
• Door-to-door mobilization will stop on 25 March, households will instead receive a permanent monthly distribution token
• To avoid congestion, one person per household will be allowed to access in-kind food distribution points and e-voucher outlets once per month to receive one-month ration – Handwashing before entering WFP premises, mandatory for everyone
• Social distancing through physical demarcation
• Fingerprint verification lifted
• SCOPE household realignment with GoB-UNHCR database postponed
• Farmers market operation to be suspended until further notice and scale up is also put on hold

Q: How long will these measures be in place?
A: It will continue until further notice, if the situation deteriorates, the process will be revised, and in the extreme scenario the authorities or military may play bigger role

Way forward
• Impact on prices have already been seen in the field, impacts on prices, markets and food security will be monitored
• Partners are requested to adhere to latest guidance notes and guidelines by GoB and the humanitarian community
• FSS and LHWG will hold bi-weekly meetings
• Request for funding at global level is focusing on Health, WASH and Logistics
• In Cox’s Bazar, additional funding for activities outside of JRP 2020 has been requested for Health, WASH, CwCWG

Q: Have we taken into consideration where the local authorities may approach the UN and livelihood partners to provide additional support to vulnerable host community populations who are being supported by the local authorities in the context of the COVID-19 outbreak?
A: There are channels for the authorities to approach UN agencies and partners at Dhaka and Cox’s Bazar level to request support

Q: What is your recommendation for livelihood interventions given the context of COVID-19 and government restrictions?
A: Ensure that programming is in line with MOFA/ISCG - essential and critical programming should continue and follow prevention and mitigation measures. Partners should evaluate current programming and see how they can reduce person to person interactions once the government shutdown is over and programming continues under the prevention and mitigation measures/heightened caution.
Essential livelihoods activities can include agriculture, DRR/cyclone preparedness, tailoring of medical related clothing, production of hand sanitizer – however all of these activities would have to be coordinated through the sector and approved by ISCG and abide by the prevention and mitigation measures.

Q: Please give an update on the distribution of fresh food
A: Farmers’ market project has been suspended and scale-up plan has been put on hold, Complementary Food Voucher assistance by World Vision and Faith in Action is recommended to be suspended as per RRRC recommendation

Q: Every beneficiary’s body temperature will be checked with an infrared thermometer, can partners request support from Health Sector to have a health expert on site?
A: Yes, FSS will follow up with partners on the details

3 Livelihood Working Group updates

Agricultural activities are not restricted in many countries

Open discussion on cash for work programming with minimal contact with others
- EETWG will reach out to partners who are interested in implementing CfW with minimal contact for tree planting, which will be essential for preparedness for the upcoming cyclone season
- Use of bKash (mobile money) is being piloted by partners, to limit cash-in-hand distribution
- Sharing of proposed contingency plans is encouraged to harmonize approaches

Q: Do you have a recommendation for mitigation scheme constructions?
A: Gathering of groups over 10 people are restricted, and non-essential (non-WASH, Health related) construction activities have been suspended

Q: What are the next steps to run other livelihood & self-reliance interventions? e.g. gardening, CBT based on training, inputs distribution?
A: Being in later stages of the project cycle allows more hands-off support to ensure social distancing provided that restrictions by the GoB are lifted, it is more challenging if projects are in the beginning stage e.g. distribution of in-kind inputs will be restricted from 26 March – we encourage partners to review contingency plans and see how they can operate programmes in smaller groups/with limited person to person interaction after the government shutdown ends

Open discussion on Face Mask Initiative
This initiative is to be taken as a minimum preparedness action or minimum protection measure as opposed to a health response

Partners currently conducting programming with limited person to person interaction are encouraged to brainstorm on contingency plans to maintain programming after the government shutdown should Bangladesh still be at heightened precaution for an extended period of time

Partners are requested to share COVID-19 contingency plans with FSS team for harmonization

Partners are requested to adopt mobile money transfers where possible

Partners interested to produce face masks to contact FSS for coordination

Partners to reach out to FSS if advocacy support is needed

Partners to contact the Logistics Sector Coordinator (cameron.kiss@wfp.org) and
MOAS and Prottyashi received approval from the civil surgeon, military, DC, and ISCG to begin working with the host communities to produce face masks for preparedness.

Out of several prototypes shared, one design and fabric of the face mask was approved by the Civil Surgeon – it is not surgical grade and therefore to be treated as a “piece of clothing” for minimal protection as opposed to a medical item.

Partners interested in supporting the production must align with the approved design and coordinate through the LHWG.

These items will be stockpiled for distribution in case of a widespread outbreak – messaging for use of the masks will come from the Civil Surgeon.

All production sites are currently in the host community.

Messaging on how to use and clean the masks will be disseminated with support from Translators Without Borders.

United Purpose has 17 producers of tailoring products who are interested in taking orders for mask production.

Q: Could you share the face mask design approved by the Civil Surgeon?
A: Prototype was shown by Prottyashi during the presentation, interested partners are requested to contact FSS team.

Q: What will be our action if lockdown time is extended?
A: Life-saving food assistance will continue, livelihood/self-reliance partners to reconsider possibilities after the 4th of April, proposed end date of the lockdown.

Q: Except LPG distribution, are there other non-food assistance activities considered critical?
A: As of 23 March, for Food Security Sector, only food assistance, nutrition assistance are considered essential or critical (see the full list here).

Q: If the masks are not surgical grade, is production worthwhile? It may create contamination risk from unsafe disposal
A: MOAS replied: Self-made masks are not for prevention nor protection against COVID but for preventing further spread of the virus, substantial global research (article 1) (article 2) shows that self-made masks can assist in person to person transmission by approximately 60%, masks are designed to be reused and will be supplied with washing instructions as approved by the Civil Surgeon.

Q: What steps are being taken to reduce the risk of exposure by the people producing the masks? How are people specifically working and how are sewing machines being set up? Are the masks being quality checked?
Answer by MOAS: Equipment is being transported at this moment, set up will be completed within the 24 hours, everyone will have to wash their hands before entering the premises, and throughout the day - cleaning chemicals available on the market will be procured, what’s available in Shamlapur as opposed to Cox’s Bazar due to difficulty in transportation.
Answer by Prottyashi: training hub has been established and 10 women have been trained, 5 women will work in 1 room with more than 2 meters apart.
materials will arrive within the next 24 hours and expected production is 1,000 – 1,200 masks per day

Q: How can partners procure hygiene items? They are not available on the market
A: Please contact the Logistics Sector Coordinator (cameron.kiss@wfp.org) and Information Management Officer (priya.pradhanang@wfp.org)

Q: How many masks will a person receive?
A: Civil Surgeon has asked to stockpile, distribution arrangement is under discussion. Initial idea is that each person receives 2, one for wearing and one for washing.

Q: What are the donor guidelines or is there any suggestion on alternative initiatives within the same approved budget?
A: Donors in general have requested actors in the field to be flexible. Recommendation is to talk to one’s donor(s) and request budgets to be re-programmed to prioritize interventions with minimal risk

Q: Are we allowed to distribute seeds or other inputs at the moment?
A: With approval from UNO, partners were distributing inputs at household level to avoid a gathering and are working to complete all distributions before the lockdown (host community only). Distributions for refugees in the camps are not considered critical and therefore restricted as of now.

Q: Can FSS support partners with drafting a letter to donors?
A: Please reach out to FSS for support on advocacy

Q: Were there any measures taken by agencies to consult with Rohingya population about how they could adjust their programs in response to COVID-19?
A: Analyses are conducted on a monthly basis to take into account perceptions of beneficiaries

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<tr>
<th>4</th>
<th><strong>Covid-19 guidance notes</strong> are disseminated through the FSS mailing list and stored on FSS Covid-19 folder on Google Drive (<a href="#">link</a>)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Recommendation for distributions</strong> was jointly developed by Health, WASH, Food Security, Protection, Site Management, and Shelter/NFI Sector and is applicable for all distributions (<a href="#">link</a>)</td>
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<td>• <strong>Poster on important precautions</strong> by CwCWG (<a href="#">English</a>, <a href="#">Bangla</a>) are to be used for awareness raising on importance of handwashing</td>
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<td>• <strong>General guidelines and recommendations by theme</strong> by Global Food Security Cluster e.g. operational continuity, cash-based transfers, pregnancy (<a href="#">link</a>)</td>
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<td>• <strong>9 rules to reduce risk of COVID-19 when travelling to camps in Ukhiya and Teknaf</strong> by WHO – partners are requested to strictly adhere to WHO guidelines (<a href="#">link</a>)</td>
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<td>• Guidance for the humanitarian community v.3 by ISCG (<a href="#">link</a>)</td>
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**Review of FSS / LHWG survey results**

Partners were requested to fill in the survey on the impact on their programmes and responses to COVID-19 outbreak, there were 13 responses in total.

### Impact on partners’ programmes
- 4 partners’ programme have been suspended
- 4 partners re-programmed to prioritize their response to Covid-19
- 3 partners’ programme are not set to start in the next month
- 1 partner had begun procuring and preparing for the response

### Preference for meeting frequency
- 9 partners preferred to have a virtual meeting on a bi-weekly basis
- 3 partners preferred to meet on a monthly basis

### How can FSS better support partners?
- Majority of partners (6) found that regular updates would be useful
- Regular communication and virtual meetings (2), and sharing of other partners’ experiences (2) were also requested
- Other support requests were for awareness training for partners’ staff (1), coordination of partners (1), guidance (1), and technical backstopping (1)

### Partners’ responses to the COVID-19 outbreak
- **Food assistance**
  - Beneficiary sensitization has been done through messaging at outlets and distribution points
  - Adopted social distancing measures through marking queues, ensuring beneficiary flow, and decreasing the number of people in shops at all times
  - Mandatory handwashing or use of hand sanitizers by everyone
  - One distribution (in-kind) or one visit per month (e-voucher)
- **Self-reliance**
  - Distributions and skill trainings suspended
  - Covid-19 awareness sessions as per GoB/FSS guidance
  - Limiting staff movement to the camps
  - Planning to provide hygiene kits to beneficiaries
  - Distribution of masks to beneficiaries
- **Livelihood support**
  - Messaging on hygiene and Covid-19 prevention
  - Piloting mobile money transfers
  - Adjusting seeds distributed to allow for seasonal planting
  - Adjusting distribution schedules for social distancing
  - Avoiding gathering at community level through distribution at the door
  - Limiting activities to Covid-19 awareness sessions only
  - Providing training through printed materials as opposed to in person to avoid gathering
  - Training of trainers in smaller groups

FSS to provide regular updates on developments concerning COVID-19

FSS / LHWG to hold bi-weekly virtual meetings to provide updates
### Gender Impact of Covid-19 – Gender Hub presentation

- Epidemics often exacerbate burdens of unpaid care work on women and girls
- In the case of Ebola outbreak in DRC, the majority of fatalities consisted of women (56%), and children (28%). Adult men constitute just 11% of deaths.
- Women’s economic status and livelihood activities relative to men could impede their access to information. Women working outside of the home during the day would miss the opportunity to listen to sensitization messages or programmes

**Recommendations**

- Strengthen the leadership and meaningful participation of women and girls in all decision-making processes in addressing the COVID-19 outbreak
- Ensure that women are able to get information about how to prevent and respond to the epidemic in ways they can understand
- Develop targeted women’s economic empowerment strategies, or explore cash transfer programming for unpaid care
- Psychosocial support should be available for women and girls who may be affected by the outbreak and are also GBV survivors.

**Examples of tools and resources for gender-sensitive programming are:**

- Minimum Standards for Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies Programming ([link](#))
- Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action ([link](#))
- IASC Gender in Humanitarian Action Handbook ([link](#))
- Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action ([link](#))

For more information, please reach out to FSS Gender focal point Rimu Byadya (rimu.byadya@wfp.org) and Nadira Islam (nadira.islam@unwomen.org)

### AOB

- Joint ACAPS-CwCWG report on what Rohingya community consider essential and non-essential will be published soon
- Applications for women’s market project UN Women has been extended until the 9th of April
- Official circular from RRRC outlining essential activities to continue 26 March – 4 April to be circulated

Partners interested in linking beneficiaries with the UNW women’s market to contact UNW focal point: nadira.islam@unwomen.org