Meeting Minutes

Location: Online, Microsoft Teams at 10:00AM
Date: 29/05/2020

Agenda

• WHO: Presentation on the current COVID19 situation and on the new WHO COVID19 Technical Guidance
• FSL Cluster: Update on HRP COVID19 Addendum projects
• FSL Cluster partners: Updates from the field
• AOB

Participants


Discussion

1. WHO: Presentation on the current COVID19 situation and on the new WHO COVID19 Technical Guidance

Overview

There are already over five million cases globally. As South Africa is one of the most affected countries, there are high chances of spill over into Zimbabwe. At the time of the meeting, there are 149 cases with most recent cases emanating from quarantine centres.

Programming at the quarantine centres need to be maintained.

WHO is currently drafting operational plans focusing around 8 pillars focusing in surveillance and risk communication. Each pillar is coming with national guideline with the response.
It is important to note that the pandemic is not only a health issue and therefore clusters joint efforts are welcome to help to mitigate further risks.

Questions:

Q: Looking at the increases in COVID19 cases, could you explain what is happening at the quarantine centres. There have also been escapees which might mean there is a problem, is it a food issue, is it a jail kind of?
A: Government and partners are concerned in what is happening. A quarantine centres assessment has been done. The report should be out today, and the findings will be disseminated by next week. IOM, WHO and the government are in charge of this assessment.

Q: How is WHO working with the government in terms of policy direction especially taking into consideration what is happening in the quarantine centres and implications on the general population?
A: At the government level, WHO is working with the government on SOPs which should be available next week. WHO do share also good practices and lessons learnt from other countries.

Q: May we know how interventions in malaria regions are being addressed as COVID19 and malaria have similar symptoms
A: In terms of malaria, from week 10, we have seen upsurge of cases. Being in an outbreak as a country but there was a reduction from week 13. In terms of the symptoms for malaria, it is true that they are very similar to those of Covid-19. Health workers have been trained on triaging and case management to screen properly, so people have access to right treatment. Districts will continue with interventions at the levels.

Q: Can you comment on the testing capacity of the country in general, given that we have done less than 40000 tests so far?
A: There are two types of tests at the moment: RDT and PCR tests. There is a need to scale up and increase number of tests and to make sure the labs are to the speed. Testing has always been done at the national level but now they are being done regionally to ensure testing is done adequately. As figures are expected to increase, there is room to improve in terms of testing capacity such that most people have access to tests.

Q: There is an increase in food distributions by a lot of actors including politicians. To what extent is WHO monitoring compliance to WHO guidelines on the food distributions?
A: In terms of social distancing, the ministry is on the ground to help to reduce transmission and the risk communication pillar helps to ensure social distancing. In terms of PPEs, there is a global inadequacy and the logistics pillar is working so that there should be enough for health workers. There should also be rational use of PPEs so that those who require them have priority.

Q: Is the food being distributed trickling down to the quarantine centres, so that these people do not give excuses for running away from the centres?
A: So far we know that the returnees get lunchboxes within the centres.
Q: Are the adolescent girls and unaccompanied children rights being catered for in the quarantine centres as they are unconfirmed reports that some of the inmates at the centres are ex-detainees?
A: There is competence and expertise and it’s a matter of ensuring that there is collaboration to offer comprehensive package including protection issues. This calls for working together more.

Q: In Plumtree we have an increase in border jumpers who are not being tested. Is this issue of testing border jumpers being looked into?
A: Testing focus on returnees. However, the border jumpers become difficult to track.

2. FSL Cluster: Update on HRP COVID19 Addendum projects

Three NGOs have not uploaded their projects yet, OCHA has been offering their assistance and keep helping throughout this morning today.

For proposals editing, acknowledging the deadline is too tight, the projects are welcomed to be edited until Monday COB.

3. FSL Cluster partners: Updates from the field

- Trocaire
  - Trocaire’s rural partners (Caritas Bulawayo, Caritas Masvingo, Dabane Trust and Zimbabwe Project Trust – ZimPro) provide COVID19 risk communication and hygiene kits.
  - Activities include:
    - Risk communication
      - Production and distribution of IEC material (Flyers and posters) placed on strategic points like farmers’ marketplaces.
      - COVID 19 message dissemination in communities through bulk SMSs and WhatsApp
      - Radio jingles
      - Radio programmes – HEVOI FM in Masvingo
    - Hygiene kits
      - The hygiene kits target farmers’ markets, public infrastructure such as boreholes and gardens. This include water buckets/containers, soap and hand sanitisers.
  - Trocaire’s urban partners (Jesuit Communications, Youth Alive and Caritas National) provide COVID 19 awareness:
  - Activities include:
    - Flyers for FDPs, farmers’ markets, transport sector and truck drivers.
    - Jingles for playing during the awareness activities to strengthen messages and posters.
    - Radio podcasts
    - Use of social media to disseminate COVID-19 information, bulk SMS, WhatsApp.
    - Short videos on promoting washing of hands and social distancing.
- WVI
  - WFP LSA: In-Kind food distributions in Gokwe North, Buhera, Kariba, Mt Darwin, Mudzi, Hwange and Nkayi Districts targeting a total of 673,953 beneficiaries.
  - ECHO project: CBT project ending in May, covering in Mbire a total of 9,905 beneficiaries.
  - In terms of COVID 19 awareness raising WVI have distributed PPEs and COVID 19 posters provided by NGO Amalima and USAID in all WVI LSA implementing areas.
  - World Vision has also secured a slot on the National Television News hour to promote protection services in the communities and for children and communities on child protection risks mitigation that may increase during the COVID 19 pandemic.

Q: Retrospectively, would it be better to switch to in-kind or the beneficiaries are still satisfied with cash in the current situation?
A: What has been noticed is that people still prefer cash. The needs have changed and thus it is necessary to re-evaluate the change. Beneficiaries still appreciate cash. The cash has also been a relief to some communities especially due to loses in income.

- OXFAM
  - In partnership with WFP, Oxfam implemented May food distributions in Bulilima and Mangwe reaching out to 44,000 beneficiaries with in kind food assistance.
  - With UNICEF support, Oxfam respond to COVID19 in Harare and Chipepe through borehole rehabilitation for improved access to clean and safe water. Oxfam is supporting quarantine centres in Harare with WASH NFIs as well as risk communication through jingles, radio talk shows, IEC material and door to door campaigns.
  - Oxfam secured $USD300K for drought response in Gutu district. The project will focus on meeting food needs of the most vulnerable people through cash/food distribution as well as improving livelihoods through asset rehabilitation. The activities aim at improving food and income security in the district.
  - Partner with UNDP, Oxfam in Harare support livelihoods and resilience building. The project aim to improve market places in the COVID19 context in Glenview, Dzivarasewa and Budirio.

- Plan International
  - PI secured SIDA funds to respond COVID19 needs in Epworth and Stoneridge with WASH activities including distribution of NFIs to vulnerable populations targeting 12,000 beneficiaries as well as installing hand washing facilities at major centres. The project includes also protection mainstreaming.
  - PI is also pursuing funding for CBT targeting young people who were affected by the lockdown and also youth led enterprises affected by the demolitions with start-up capital.
  - WFP –FFA Kwekwe ongoing program
  - Cash distributions in Harare were completed last week of May. A total of 884 households were reached (females-535 and males -349). One Exit Survey was administered in Ward 17.

- Practical Action
  - PA managed to procure PPEs for 78 farmer groups face masks and reached out to 60 AgriTex extension officers in Manicaland.
  - Bulk SMS via Econet platform and WhatsApp messaging reached 49000 farmers.
  - Breastfeeding campaign targeting pregnant and lactating women.
  - Working with Diamond FM to bring out messages on COVID19.

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