

## Minutes of

### IASC AGRICULTURE & LIVELIHOODS CLUSTER MEETING

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2009 from 09.30am to 12.45pm

Jacaranda Hotel, Westlands

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## Agenda

1. Opening remarks and review/endorsement of minutes.
2. Prioritisation of CAP 2009 Proposals in the Agriculture and Livelihoods Cluster component of the CAP 2009 (Output from the Inter-Cluster Prioritisation Task Force).
3. Presentation to Cluster: Update on the Humanitarian Response Fund.
4. Process for Review of Proposals submitted through the Cluster
5. Presentation to Cluster of anticipated CERF-Funded FAO Project: "Integrated Cash for Work and Productive Assets Rehabilitation/Transfer in Support of Populations in Food Security Crisis in Mudug and Galgaduud Regions of Central Southern Somalia"
6. Presentation to Cluster on Progress on Project Implementation for Swedish Government – Funded FAO Project: "Integrated Intervention to Strengthen the Capacity to Respond Effectively to Disaster in Somalia"

## 1. Opening remarks and review/endorsement of minutes.

- The meeting was chaired by Dr Andrew Harberd. He welcomed participants to the meeting and apologized for the change of venue. He acknowledged the presence of Mr Ahmed Nur the Galmudug State Minister for Finance who attended the meeting.
- There was a round of introductions. Representatives of 44 local NGOs, 5 international NGOs, 2 UN agencies and 1 government representative attended the meeting. In total, 71 people attended the meeting.
- The agenda was reviewed, and it was agreed that agenda items 1 to 4 would be discussed, then a coffee break taken. In the end, agenda 6 and 7 were not discussed and will be discussed during the next cluster meeting which will be held in the coming weeks.
- Minutes of the previous meeting which was held on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> January were reviewed and endorsed as a true reflection of the discussions that took place during the meeting.
- The chair informed meeting participants that in order to strengthen the cluster, a Technical Support & Monitoring and Evaluation Officer Dr Ibrahim Dagane Ali has been recruited by FAO Somalia. In addition, OCHA is in the process of recruiting a National Cluster Support Officer (NCSO).

Action points from the previous meeting were reviewed as follows:

- Andrew Harberd and Mario Samaja will follow up with OCHA to defend the prioritisation work already done within the cluster and by the cluster members – *A follow up meeting was held and there were discussions on prioritization.*
- Andrew Harberd to revisit the prioritisation process and come up with a new proposal over the weekend for consideration by the cluster at a special meeting of the IASC Agriculture and Livelihoods cluster on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> January. – *Andrew developed a proposal and this was discussed at the special cluster meeting.*
- Sergio Innocente (Project Manager, World Bank – funded FAO project) will review the CERF project before starting the World Bank project in the Lower Shabeelle as interventions by the World Bank RRRRLP will be similar, especially in L Shabeelle – *Done.*
- Presentation to cluster of results, achievements and lessons learned for the CERF funded FAO project 'Integrated Cash and Food for Work in Support of Populations in Food Security Crisis in Middle and Lower Shabeelle Regions of Southern Somalia' to be circulated to cluster members – *Circulated.*
- NGOs interested in implementing activities foreseen under World Bank project shall directly contact Sergio Innocente RRRRL project manager *ad interim*

[Sergio.innocente@fao.org](mailto:Sergio.innocente@fao.org) – Many NGOs contacted Sergio and 5 local NGOs are participating in the World Bank project.

- Presentation on the World Bank funded FAO project 'Rapid Response Rehabilitation of Rural Livelihoods Project' to be circulated to cluster members – *Circulated*

**2. Prioritisation of CAP 2009 Proposals in the Agriculture and Livelihoods Cluster component of the CAP 2009 (Output from the Inter-Cluster Prioritisation Task Force).** (*Refer to attached report of the CAP 2009 Prioritisation Task Force Meeting of 06.03.09 for more details*)

- The Agriculture and Livelihoods Cluster was in agreement that the process of cluster prioritisation proposed by OCHA of selecting just 4 out of the 73 projects in the CAP 2009 Agriculture and Livelihoods Cluster was not workable or logical. It was decided instead that prioritization should be on the basis of requesting a proportion of the CAP 2009 funding requirement for the cluster portfolio. On 6<sup>th</sup> March 2009, an inter-cluster CAP 2009 Prioritisation Task Force meeting was held to discuss prioritization methodology. The inter-cluster working group and the IASC agreed that prioritization will be done using the following criteria:
  - A. Cluster specific criteria (critical/life-saving interventions, technical considerations)
  - B. Level of emergency (AFLC, HE, IDP)
  - C. Areas with additional exacerbating factors (i.e. food shortage, recent displacement)
  - D. Track record/assessed capacity of the implementing agency

and based on each occasion on making a prioritised request for funding based on up to 20% of the CAP 2009 portfolio budget for each cluster.

- Donors have emphasized the importance of repeatedly reviewing and re-prioritising the CAP 2009 in relation to a rapidly changing humanitarian situation in Somalia. It is planned that the prioritization of the CAP will be done in January, April and September. The 4<sup>th</sup> prioritisation will in effect be the development of the CAP 2010. On each occasion, the prioritized list of projects will be sent to donors for consideration for funding. In the first round of prioritization in 2009, there has been interest from a donor to fund 3 NGOs. Andrew Harberd worked with the 3 NGOs to develop full proposals out of the one page CAP sheets, and the full proposals have now been submitted to the interested donor. The outcome is awaited.
- With the first CAP prioritization which was done in January 2009, the Agriculture and Livelihoods Cluster prioritised 30 different projects. It was agreed that presentation is an important issue, and that, in the event of a large number of projects being prioritised for submission to donors, that cluster leads will find a way to collapse the projects into a presentation of 4-5 rows of a matrix.

- The next CAP 2009 prioritization will be done in April. It is expected that before the prioritization in April, funding results from the first round of prioritization will be analysed and presented.

### **3. Presentation to Cluster: Update on the Humanitarian Response Fund.**

- Ivana Unlouva the HRF/Donor Relations Manager at OCHA Somalia presented to the cluster an update on the Humanitarian Response Fund (HRF). She circulated a sheet indicating 2009 HRF allocations by sector.
- Approximately USD 4.7 million currently remains available to the HRF for 2009. This is the lowest amount of funding in the HRF since it started in 2004 with a donation from DfID for the drought crisis in Sool/Sanaag and reflects the overall funding situation in Somalia. The reasons for poor funding of the HRF for Somalia in 2009 are not known. So far, for 2009, USD 2.6 million has been disbursed by OCHA and almost USD 1 million is currently under consideration.
- The Humanitarian Coordinator/Resident Coordinator has had 2 donor meetings to see if there is funding anticipated for the HRF. The Swedish Government has pledged to give to the HRF the same amount of funds that it gave last year. Last year the Swedish Kroner converted to US\$ 1.2 million. However, the funds this year will be less by 20% due to currency fluctuation.
- 3 Projects funded in the Lower Jubba recently for health and water needs. WASH, Food Aid, Nutrition and Health clusters have received funding from the HRF. Five clusters have not received funding and the HRF is under pressure from these clusters.
- On 2<sup>nd</sup> April a meeting with donors will be held, at which the funding of the first prioritised projects list will also be discussed. Dr Andrew Harberd will participate in the meeting and will update cluster members on the outcome.
- The Humanitarian Coordinator has earmarked the following priority clusters that are considered to be lifesaving: nutrition, health and water. The geographical areas of focus are Galgaduud, Gedo and the Afgooye corridor; the latter because of the large numbers of IDPs and strategic closeness to Mogadishu. A more recent focus on Lower Juba is due to the deteriorating humanitarian situation. In 2008, the Agriculture and Livelihoods cluster received just 15% of the funding allocated through the HRF. The WASH cluster has received the bulk (57%) of the HRF funding. The HRF Funds are insufficient in relation to the needs and funds are being allocated to most urgent interventions. WASH is top priority as it is life saving and will complement health and nutrition interventions.
- This year, 45% of the funds have been disbursed to National NGOs. This is a higher proportion than for international NGOs or the UN. There is a lot of room for improvement and increasing the capacities of national partners. It was noted that more funding to LNGOs requires better capacity for the NGOs so that they are able to account properly for the funds, and effectively implement, monitor and evaluate projects.

- Dr Harberd noted that while there is consensus that the cluster approach has generally improved transparency and efficacy in the delivery of humanitarian assistance, a repeated criticism has been that inadequately resourced clusters cannot be effective. This is recognised by the Agriculture and Livelihoods Cluster and increased resources are being invested in the Agriculture and Livelihoods cluster through recruitment of an FAO Technical Cluster Support Officer (TCSO) and an OCHA National Cluster Support Officer (NCSO). The TCSO has already started and is Dr. Ibrahim Dagane Ali; The NCSO is expected to start from 01<sup>st</sup> May 2009.
- A workshop on the proposed Common Humanitarian Funding (CHF) was held on 05<sup>th</sup> February. A pooled fund of possibly around US\$ 150-200 million is envisaged; the HRF would then remain as the purely emergency response element of this funding, and might be re-named the “Emergency Response Fund” (ERF). The consultation process has taken longer than envisaged. At this point, it seems that because of the general lack of funding, it’s hard for donors to earmark substantial money for the Somalia CHF. Plans are being made to have one more round of consultations with donors to see if they will set aside money for the CHF. However no decision has been made at this point.
- OCHA wants to receive proposals to the HRF that are written in English, with a proper logical framework, a brief and detailed summary of the situation, information of needs assessment done or information that has led to the design of the project. OCHA will revise the template for proposals so that in future, they receive proposals that have a maximum of 5 pages. Proposals should also clearly show the impact on the beneficiaries.
- A question was asked as to whether OCHA intends to build the capacity of local NGOs in proposal writing. Capacity building/training on proposal development would reduce the amount of work that has to be done on proposal revision. Ivana reported that at the moment, the HRF cannot spend money on capacity building. However, the issue has been discussed by the IASC and will be tabled at the donor meeting. Donors will be requested that part of donor funding goes to capacity building of national partners. In addition, OCHA intends to hire a dedicated monitoring and evaluation officer for the HRF.
- Dr Harberd informed participants that Swedish funding of the FAO Project: “Integrated Intervention to Strengthen the Capacity to Respond Effectively to Disaster in Somalia” has a small budget on training and capacity building. He requested national NGOs, interested in training on effective proposal writing, to express interest. The person in the NGO, who is most involved in proposal development is the one who should be trained. The funds have to be spent by the end of September 2009. Andrew can be contacted on [Andrew.harberd@fao.org](mailto:Andrew.harberd@fao.org)

**Action points:**

- National NGOs which are interested in training/capacity building on proposal development to contact Dr Andrew Harberd.

- Dr Andrew Harberd to update cluster members on the meeting that will be held with donors on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2009.
- Ivana Unluova to request donors to avail funds for capacity building of national NGOs.

#### **4. Process for Review of Proposals submitted through the Cluster**

*Agenda point 4 was included on the agenda at the request of Abdi Raghe of AFREC:*

- Abdi Raghe: The Agriculture and Livelihoods cluster proposal review process is time consuming. The HRF is an emergency fund but the process is very bureaucratic. He said that the FAO Emergency Coordinator takes months to review proposals but this was strongly disputed by other meeting participants.
- Ivana, informed meeting participants that for projects that are really urgent, the proposal review process and disbursement of funds is fast tracked. E.g. the Humanitarian Coordinator endorsed a WASH proposal in a day and OCHA disbursed the funds in 4 working days. Ivana noted that Agriculture and Livelihood cluster interventions are usually not *per se* “live saving” interventions.
- The chair explained to meeting participants that in the past, all proposals would be sent directly to the HRF and the HRF together with the organization submitting the proposal would review it after which it would be sent to the HRF Secretariat board for comments.
- At the end of 2008, the HRF Secretariat decided that clusters should be the primary place where proposals are reviewed. During the 18<sup>th</sup> December 2008 meeting of the Agriculture and Livelihoods Cluster, cluster members, agreed that proposals may be presented during the cluster meeting and then circulated to cluster members by email, so that those who miss the meeting comment confidentially on the proposal. In addition, FAO as cluster lead agency is required to review and comments on the proposal – Usually done by the FAO Emergency Coordinator or by other FAO staff, and will increasingly involve now a team including the Technical Cluster Support Officer and National Cluster Support Officer.
- The current process of reviewing proposals is as follows: once Dr Harberd receives a proposal, he either (at the request of the submitting organisation) reviews it in track change and returns it to the submitting organisation for consideration, or circulates through the mailing list of the Agriculture and Livelihoods Cluster for comment. Generally, 48 hours is allowed for comment to be received from cluster members. The proposal is then subsequently forwarded to the HRF with the comments received and the comments of the cluster lead agency. If Dr Harberd, in the process of reviewing the proposal track makes grammatical changes, the proposal it is returned to the submitting organisation for consideration and to ensure the intended meaning has not inadvertently been altered. Proposals written in clear unambiguous and correct English are obviously more easily understood by the recipient donor organisation – and it is clear that a well-written proposal (that is also justifiable and technically sound) stands a better chance of being accepted for funding.

- Ivana noted that the quality of proposals received from the Agriculture and Livelihoods cluster are usually of a higher quality than those received through other clusters – and that this may be a consequence of the subjection of proposals to a more thorough review process. The HRF Secretariat counts on the cluster to continue in this way. This is very important because the Secretariat is small and doesn't have the technical expertise to review proposals.
- Abdi Raghe said that the Somali NGOs are not comfortable with the process because it is time consuming, and bureaucratic: the cluster lead reviews the grammar in the proposal instead of the technical soundness of the proposal and the Somali NGOs are not comfortable with the process of sending proposals to all cluster members. At the same time, he would want Somalis to be more involved in the process. Raghe proposed that 4-5 cluster members review the technical soundness and relevance of proposals. He added that proposals should be reviewed within 24 hours.
- Risper Were (Oxfam Novib) felt that the current system is good, transparent and fast enough.
- Dr Harberd noted that following the strengthening of the cluster, in future proposals will be reviewed by a team including the Technical Cluster Support Officer, the Emergency Coordinator and the National Cluster Support Officer.
- Joan Tucker (UN OCHA) noted that those conducting a preliminary review of the proposals must have the technical expertise to do so.
- Massimo Castiello (FAO Livestock Sector Coordinator) observed that it is difficult to have people reviewing proposals while they have submitted proposals because there is an evident conflict of interest. He added that there should be criteria for reviewing proposals that should be known to all. The criteria should be transparent, should ensure that all proposals are technically sound and the process should be representative of the Somali participants. Proposals should be reviewed and accepted or rejected on the basis of criteria.
- Dr Dagane (FAO TCSO) added that those whose proposals are rejected should not personalize issues if their proposal is rejected because there is a limitation of funding while it is true agriculture, livestock and fisheries projects are highly technical areas, thus require to be reviewed in order to ensure that they are technically sound, relevant, visible to the target beneficiaries and justifiable in terms of costs. He requested from all participants professionally conduct during meetings and if any one has a burning issue he should personally discuss with the concerned cluster team members or put in writing.
- Following a lengthy discussion on the process for reviewing proposals, it was agreed that Abdi Raghe will write a proposal on how the cluster should review proposals submitted through the Agriculture and Livelihoods Cluster to the HRF.

**Action point:**

- Abdi Raghe Abdi will develop a proposal to the cluster on how best to conduct the review process for proposals submitted through the Agriculture and Livelihoods Cluster to the HRF.
- 5. Presentation to Cluster of anticipated CERF-Funded FAO Project: “Integrated Cash for Work and Productive Assets Rehabilitation/Transfer in Support of Populations in Food Security Crisis in Mudug and Galgaduud Regions of Central Southern Somalia”**
- Francesco Baldo the Project Manager of the CERF-Funded FAO Project: “Integrated Cash for Work and Productive Assets Rehabilitation/Transfer in Support of Populations in Food Security Crisis in Mudug and Galgaduud Regions of Central Southern Somalia” presented the project to cluster members.
  - The project is a response to the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Somalia. It is targeting 19,850 direct beneficiaries and 110,000 indirect beneficiaries. Of the direct beneficiaries, 6,000 will be poor pastoralist households, 11,250 - households with malnourished children, 300 butchers, 300 destitute pastoralist households and 2,000 Bantu small scale riverine farmers. At least 60% of the beneficiaries will be women. The project will also target IDPs and returnees.
  - FAO will concentrate on cash for work activities in Central regions. WFP will be contacted to discuss how to coordinate and eventually jointly implement food for work related activities. Local and International NGOs will be considered to implement activities in the intervention area. OCHA will be updated regularly on the progress of implementation of the project.
  - NGOs which are working in Hiiran, Mudug and Galgaduud were contacted and requested to express interest to implement project activities. 95 NGOs responded to the call to express interest. By Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009, the format for submission of project proposals will be circulated to **selected NGOs only**. The NGOs will be expected to submit proposals by 05.00pm on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2009. The contact persons are Francesco Baldo [Francesco.baldo@fao.org](mailto:Francesco.baldo@fao.org) and Maximilla Omengo [maximilla.omengo@fao.org](mailto:maximilla.omengo@fao.org)

**Action point**

- Selected NGOs to submit proposals for funding to FAO Somalia by 05.00pm on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2009.

**6. Presentation to Cluster on Progress on Project Implementation for Swedish Government – Funded FAO Project: “Integrated Intervention to Strengthen the Capacity to Respond Effectively to Disaster in Somalia”**

- This agenda item will be discussed during the next IASC Agriculture and Livelihoods cluster meeting.

**7. Presentation to Cluster by SOADO on CAP 2009 Project proposal: “Strengthening the Capacity of Food Production in Jalalaqsi District through the Principles of Conservation Agriculture”**

- This agenda item will be discussed during the next IASC Agriculture and Livelihoods cluster meeting.

**8. AOB**

- Dr. Harberd closed the meeting by thanking not only for the large attendance (71 persons), but also for the active participation of members, and thanked Abdi Raghe for the kind e-mail he sent to him on 12<sup>th</sup> January stating “It is very obvious that we are moving to the right direction and that is the result of your commitment and good leadership. Please Keep on”.