

Nutrition Working Group/IASC Nutrition Cluster

Minutes of meeting held at 11:30 hrs, Tuesday June 3rd, 2008

Kalson Towers, SSS Conference Room

Participants

Fatuma Abdirahman	ACF	Hassan Bulle	HDC
Danka Pantchova	ACF	Nicoleta Buono	Italian Cooperation
Abdi Tari	CISP	Lucy Maina	IMC
Francesca Gerri	COSV	Claire Orengo	MEDAIR
Faita Awino	ECHO	Irene Bosire	Mercy USA
Aadrian Sullivan	ECHO	Katumwa Bagunda	UNICEF
Ahono Busili	FSAU/FAO	James Kingori	UNICEF
Ahmed Nur Hussein	FSAU/FAO	Lynette Sudi	UNICEF
Louise Masese	FSAU/FAO	Mohamud Hersi	WFP
Abukar Yusuf Nur	FSAU/FAO	Mawadri Michael	WFP
Marijka van Klinken	FAO	Hala Suliman	WFP

1. Introduction and Background

The meeting commenced with self introduction of the members present. In total, 22 members from 12 agencies participated. The status of the action points from the May meeting were then reviewed (see back page)

Action points from the June 3rd, 2008 meeting

Action Point	Who	When
Nutrition situation and response update across the border with Ethiopia (neighbouring Goldogob and Abduwaq)	Nutrition Cluster Coordinator	Feedback to be provided in the next meeting and if possible earlier.
Request the health and WASH sector/ cluster contribution in the nutrition technical and coordination discussion to realize integrated response	Nutrition Cluster coordinator/OCHA	Subsequent Nutrition Cluster/ WG meetings
Revision of the Nutrition Assessment Guidelines	FSAU to lead	Feedback to be provided in the next meeting and if possible earlier.
Dissemination of findings from 10 nutrition assessments conducted in May 2008.	FSAU	FSRD meeting; Nutrition Update;
Dissemination of FAO E-learning materials (on CD) shared in the meeting (<i>Nutritional status Assessment and Analysis; Food Security Information Systems and Networks; Reporting Food Security Information</i>). This information is available on the website below: www.foodsecinfoaction.org	FSAU	Feedback to be provided in the next meeting and if possible earlier.
Circulation of a soft copy of 'birth report' for comments from partners	FSAU	Feedback to be provided in the next meeting and if possible earlier.
WFP to link up with WHO/UNICEF regarding capacity for health facilities; and monitoring for low birth weight babies	WFP	Feedback to be provided in the next meeting and if possible earlier.
WFP scheduled to conduct a four day training to its partners in supplementary feeding, from June 16 th	WFP	Feedback to be provided in the next meeting and if possible earlier.
FSAU to compile feedback from partners on experiences from piloting of IEC materials	FSAU	Feedback to be provided in the next meeting and if possible earlier.
From the May 08 meeting		
1. Task force on CMAM	UNICEF, ACF, Concern, IMC, WVI, Medair	UNICEF to convene a meeting to discuss issues around new strategy for CMAM including reviewing Kenya material for scale up in May – report back in June NWG
2. Highlight concerns of very low measles and other vaccinations coverage to next EPI working groups – need to identify short term solutions for areas where acute malnutrition is high. To inquire EPI campaign report for Wajid.	Dr Kamran SSS Health Coordinator	Next EPI working group – feedback at June Nutrition Cluster/ Working Group Meeting
3. Highlight ACF concerns over lack of Kalazar drugs from WHO	Dr Kamran SSS Health Coordinator	Next Health working group – feedback at June NWG/NC meeting

2. Situation Update

2 (a) Food Security situation update

The Gu season was below normal, although in the last ten days of May, there have been good rains in most areas of the country and have restored pasture. In the central regions where there has been a lot of concern, it has rained in the Eastern areas of Galgadug and Southern Mudug, while rains in other parts remained poor. Hiran has also seen little rain in the last ten days. Areas of Puntland and Somaliland have received normal to above normal rains in the last few weeks.

Due to the increased rains in recent weeks, there have been livestock deaths reported in the lower Shabelle due to deteriorated body conditions. The rains have increased the pasture and availability of water, however recovery of livestock will take time due to the current weak body conditions. Nevertheless, there is already a notable increase in milk production, which has contributed to decreased milk price in most urban centres. Furthermore, livestock prices have increased in some areas but remain low in central region due to the continued weakness of the livestock. There has also been increased export of chilled meat to the United Arab Emirates, with an estimate of 12,000 head exported from the north-west. However, factories in Beletweyn and Galkayo are still closed due to insecurity.

Crop conditions are mixed throughout the country. Planting has commenced in some areas, while in the Riverine zone of the lower Shabelle, crop establishment is already in the second weeding stage. The Agro-Pastoralists in Bay region have crops at knee high stage already, while the sorghum is at the milking stage already. The water needs of plants at the milking stage is high, so if the rains continue in the trend of the last 10 days, there should be a good harvest in this region.

Cereal prices continue to rise, which is especially impacting the poor households, who have no cereal stocks and depend on market purchases

Although labour opportunities have increased as a result of the rains, the terms of trade with cereal has continued to decrease due to the high cereal prices and devaluation of the Somali Shilling. The terms of trade with livestock has also continued to decrease, despite their improving body condition

FSAU is planning their seasonal assessment of the Gu season. A planning meeting will be held either on the 15th or 18th of June with partners (to review the assessment plan and tools), with the expectation of travelling to the field in the last 2 days of June and holding the regional planning meeting in the first three days of July. The fieldwork is tentatively scheduled from the 4th to 21st of July, with the regional analysis taking place from the 22nd to 27th July. Included in the seasonal assessment are crop surveys, livestock surveys and nutrition. There will also be a rapid urban assessment.

2 (b) Nutrition Update

In May a total of 10 assessments were conducted and are currently undergoing analysis. There were three assessments conducted in Gedo, in the Pastoral, Agro-Pastoral and Riverine livelihood groups. There were also three assessments conducted in the Shabelle region, in the Agro-Pastoral, Pastoral and Awdale livelihood groups. The Hawd and Addun livelihood groups were also assessed as well as the Galkayo and Garowe IDP's. Analysis of the results is ongoing, with the only preliminary results released for the Hawd and Addun livelihood groups. The results indicate a continuing **critical** nutrition situation with global acute malnutrition (GAM) levels of **19.3%** and severe acute malnutrition (SAM) levels of **2.3%** for the Hawd livelihood zone. The Addun group also indicated a continuing **critical** nutrition situation with global acute malnutrition (GAM) levels of **18.4%** and severe acute malnutrition (SAM) levels of **2.8%**. ACF also conducted a nutrition assessment in Wajid area and findings will be shared in due course.

A query was raised about the figures, and why they were not higher than these levels. It was queried that the GAM rates have been consistently about 15% for quite a number of years, yet with little observation of malnutrition physically observed in the pastoral areas, as compared to agricultural areas. However, it was explained that although there are consistently high GAM rates, the SAM rates are not above the 4% that indicates a real emergency, and there is continuing need for SFP's, with admission rates remaining consistent. It was noted that more analytical explanations of what is happening is needed as well as research on household coping strategies

Other issues discussed/follow up

- NiE training package piloting is still awaiting the 21 modules to be accepted by the global cluster in New York. A consultant will be hired to facilitate the training once it is endorsed
- SFP Guidelines updating is underway with comments to be incorporated by a consultant. The nutrition assessment guidelines updating is also underway, with FSAU taking the lead and adapting it to be consistent with the global guidelines. Initial draft will be given at the next meeting
- FSAU brought to the attention of the meeting the -learning modules developed by FAO's Food Security Information for Action. Various courses are available on CD from FSAU or can be done online at www.foodsecinfoaction.org.
- FSAU also brought up the problem of age determination. They proposed that during their nutrition survey they could write a 'birth card' if they come across recent births where the date is known. The 'birth report cards' were to be sent to the group in soft copy form and reviewed.

Action points from the May 5th 2008 meeting

1. Follow up with food aid cluster on ration sizes, pipeline and basket – **On-going. FSAU to provide more feedback to the Food Aid agencies concerning population in Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis (AFLC) and Humanitarian Emergency (HE).**
2. Task Force on IEC material roll out feedback – **FSAU to follow up with individual agencies who pilot tested the material**
3. Task Force on CMAM convened by UNICEF to discuss issues around a new strategy for CMAM, including reviewing Kenya material for scale up – **No feedback reported**
4. Nutrition Cluster Coordinator to review SFP global guidelines process and convene a meeting to identify possible ToR for consultant to update guidelines – **Done! Meeting on the 26th May revealed a consensus that there is a need to review and accommodate the global developments into the SFP guidelines which were last reviewed in 2004. A consultant will be hired for a 2 to 3 day workshop to consolidate comments from all the agencies. The updated SFP guidelines should be ready in August 2008**
5. Health coordinator to:
 - a. Highlight concerns of the low measles and other vaccination coverage to the next EPI working group meeting and to identify short term solutions for areas where acute malnutrition is high. – **No feedback reported**
 - b. Highlight ACF concerns over lack of Kalazar drugs from WHO – **No feedback reported**
6. Emergency response strategy scale up using Plumpy-Doz, UNICEF to coordinate directly with partners on collaboration – **Done! Partners in Shabelle and Bossasso are ready to participate when the initiative is rolled out. All opportunities will be used to reach the children. The budget is likely to increase from \$7.5 million to \$10 million for the two pilot project areas.**
7. Nutrition Cluster Coordinator to call meeting for the Baidoa strategy meeting – **Meeting planned for Wajid but did not take place due to insecurity. However, Unni Silkoset from UNICEF travelled to Baidoa and prepared a concept note for agencies in Baidoa. More feedback on acute malnutrition coverage through SFP's to come.**
8. FSAU to call a meeting to discuss monitoring and response strategy for Somalia urban centres – **Done! Meeting took place on 8th May. Rapid assessment tools will be used for urban centres. Disseminated to the group for additional inputs and feedback.**
9. IMC to review concerns of a localized area where due to clan conflict, limited access is severely affecting food insecurity and delivery of services – **WFP reported general food distribution to cover gaps.**
10. Pursue with the food aid agencies on their participation on the NWG/NC meeting alongside other forums that require food aid cluster's input – **Done!**
11. Clarification on SFP pipeline, distribution strategy and WFP's admission criteria – **Done! Admission criteria through MUAC, which are given through the CP's every two weeks. Use this list for food release. Questions raised on criteria about women of childbearing age as well as for pregnant and lactating women. Entry point is through MCH clinics, and there appears to be a discrepancy between what is in the guidelines and what is happening on the ground. Discussion between WFP and partners ongoing. Feedback on guidelines and what is happening will be given at the next meeting.**

The next meeting to be held on June 30th, 2008 between 9am and 11am at SSS Kalson Towers