STRATEGIC EVALUATION

FAO/WFP Joint Evaluation of Food Security Cluster Coordination in Humanitarian Action

A Strategic Evaluation

Evaluation Report

August 2014

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Commissioned by the
FAO and WFP Offices of Evaluation

Report number: OEV/2013/012

World Food Programme
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Introduction
Context and Background

1.   The Emergency Relief Coordinator and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) introduced the cluster system in 2005 as part of a wider reform of the humanitarian system. In 2010, the global food security cluster (FSC), co-led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and WFP, was created to coordinate food security interventions in emergencies.

2.   The global FSC has 47 members and a Global Support Team (GST), based in Rome with an average of 12 staff members and a cumulative budget of USD 7 million for January 2011 to January 2014.[1] Global humanitarian funding for food and agriculture over the same period was about USD 12.5 billion.[2] The GST facilitates coordination at the global level and supports both formal food security clusters and other food security coordination systems in more than 40 countries. Structures and resources for coordination vary widely, ranging from situations in which there are no dedicated resources for coordination, to those with coordination and information management teams at the country and hub levels, with direct costs of up to USD 1 million per year.

3.   The global FSC supports country-level coordination mechanisms through surge and support missions, tools, guidance, training and information management. Food security coordination mechanisms at the country and local levels can support all stages of a humanitarian response, including preparedness, needs assessment and analysis, strategy formulation, implementation, reporting and learning. This coordination is expected to improve the capacity of humanitarian organizations to respond strategically and coherently, and to reduce gaps and duplications. Ultimately, it is expected to result in improved services to the populations affected by crises and emergencies.

Evaluation Features

4.   The evaluation, commissioned by the Offices of Evaluation of FAO and WFP, aims to establish accountability and support learning. The evaluation team developed a theory of change (Figure 1) to show how the global and country levels are linked, what food security coordination is intended to achieve, and how. The theory of change, validated at a workshop with the GST, builds on the global FSC's terms of reference, strategy and work plan and on IASC guidance.

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[1] FSC Global Support Team overview of funding sources (unpublished).
[2] Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Financial Tracking Service, available at http://fts.unocha.org/.

Figure 1: Theory of change for food security coordination
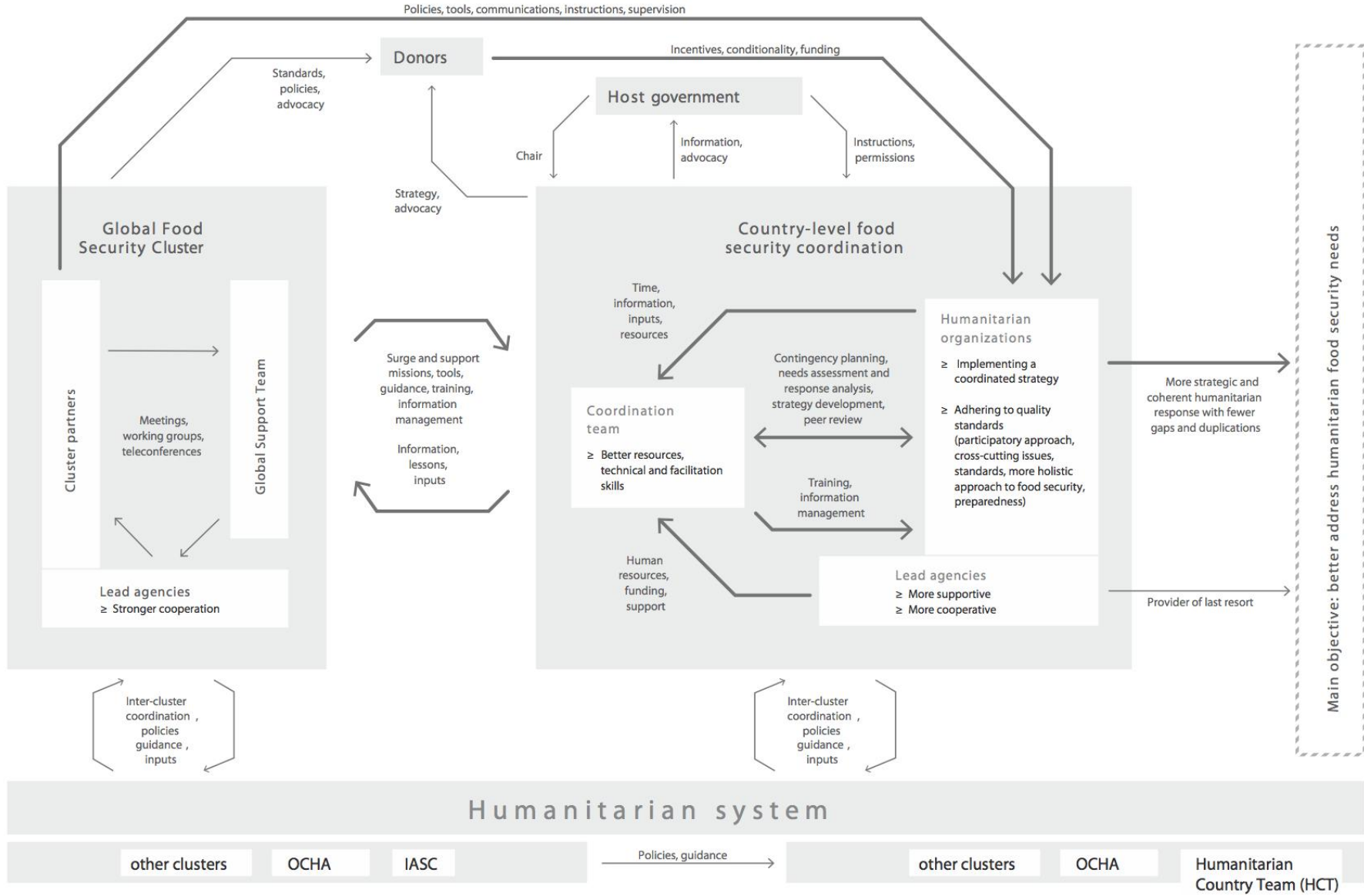
5.   Based on the theory of change, the evaluation examined the effects of food security coordination on humanitarian action, and the factors influencing effectiveness, at three levels:

   i)   effects of country- and local-level coordination on humanitarian organizations and their activities;

   ii) effects of the global FSC on coordination at the country and local levels; and

   iii) potential effects on affected populations, evidenced by changes in the coverage of humanitarian services and the monitoring of effects on beneficiaries.

6.   Conducted between September 2013 and May 2014, the evaluation used predominantly qualitative methods – country case studies and key informant interviews – complemented by survey, documentary and financial analysis. Data were triangulated and interpreted first for each country case study then at the aggregated level. The process involved interpretation by the evaluation team, workshops with key stakeholders and their comments on the draft report.

7.   As the global FSC supports formal clusters and other coordination arrangements at the country level, the evaluation covered different types of coordination mechanism. Eight country case studies – Bangladesh, Chad, Kenya, Lebanon, Mali, Pakistan, the Philippines and Turkey (for the Syrian response) – were selected to cover different regions, coordination arrangements and humanitarian contexts. Four regional hubs in Amman, Bangkok, Dakar and Nairobi were visited to understand the regional aspects of coordination; and interviews were conducted with stakeholders in Rome, cluster partners and individual external experts. The evaluation team consulted 483 people, and an electronic survey was completed by 403 participants involved in food security coordination in 43 countries.

8.   The evaluation was constrained by the limited availability of stakeholders with long experience of coordination mechanisms in the case study countries. Because of security concerns, only eight of the envisaged nine country case studies were implemented. Overall, however, the evaluation team does not believe that these limitations undermine the reliability or relevance of the evaluation's findings.

Findings: Effects of Food Security Coordination at the Country and Local Levels

9.   This section presents findings regarding whether food security coordination had the intended effects at the global and country levels as illustrated by the theory of change: improved needs assessment and analysis, standards and guidance, reporting and learning resulting in fewer duplications and gaps. The following section explains why these effects were or were not achieved.

10.   The country case studies and survey results (Figure 2) show that the overall perceived effectiveness of food security coordination varied from country to country. However, the evaluation found that the benefits created by food security coordination and the limitations encountered were surprisingly similar across the different contexts.

Figure 2: Perceptions of overall effectiveness of food security coordination in countries
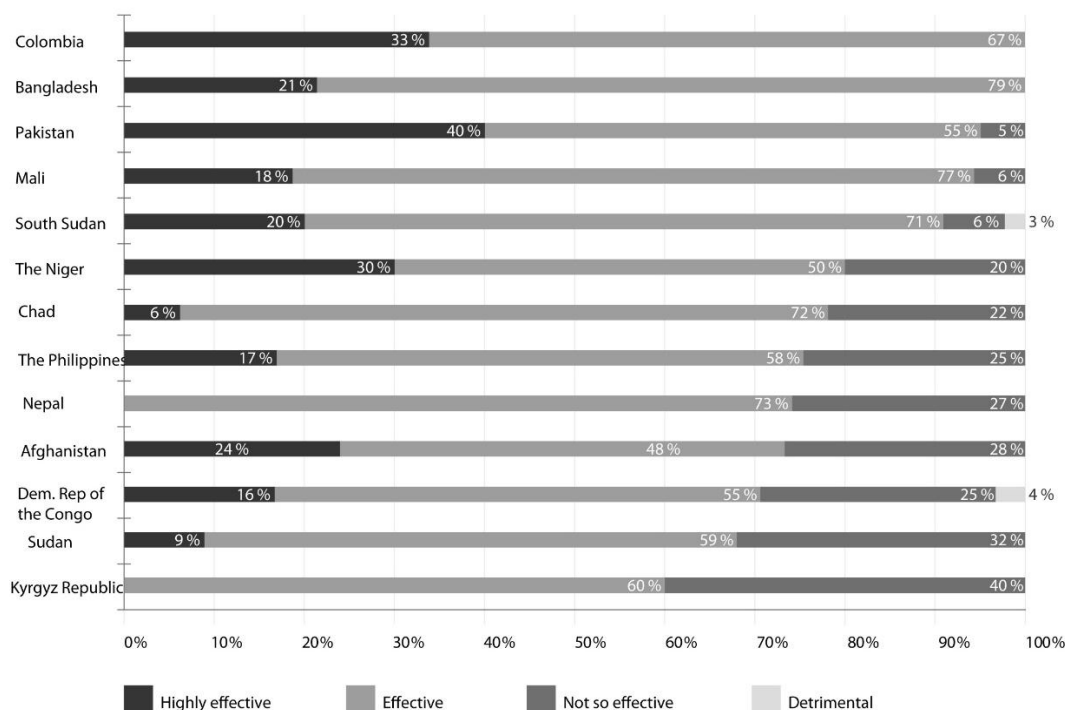
Source: Electronic survey conducted in 43 countries. Results from all countries with more than ten responses – a total of 297 responses – are shown. Differences among countries are significant (Chi-Square 87.163 df=48 p<0.001).

Relationships and Trust

11.   Interviewees in all case study countries emphasized that food security coordination was useful in facilitating networking and enhancing trust among humanitarian organizations. Although this function receives little attention in formal guidance and procedures, it is valuable in facilitating cooperation among organizations and between them and their donors.

Needs Assessment and Analysis

12.   The country case studies show that effective engagement of FSCs in needs assessment and gap analysis reduced the duplication of assessments, provided credible data for funding applications, promoted a fuller understanding of food security, and helped direct partners to underserved areas. In the Philippines, the cluster provided a highly appreciated service in coordinating assessments and disseminating assessment results. In Pakistan, cluster members jointly designed and

implemented integrated food security and livelihoods assessments. In Bangladesh, the FSC implemented a joint assessment with the nutrition cluster, and cluster members did not conduct individual assessments.

13.   However, in most case study countries, cluster partners and coordination teams stated that they implemented few, or even no, activities supporting needs assessments. This mismatch between the importance of coordinating needs assessment and the efforts to do so was reflected in the survey responses shown in Figure 3: about 90 percent of respondents – the outer line – saw activities related to needs assessment as very relevant, but well over half of them considered the activities offered as insufficient, shown in the middle line.

Figure 3: Gaps in activities relating to needs assessment and analysis
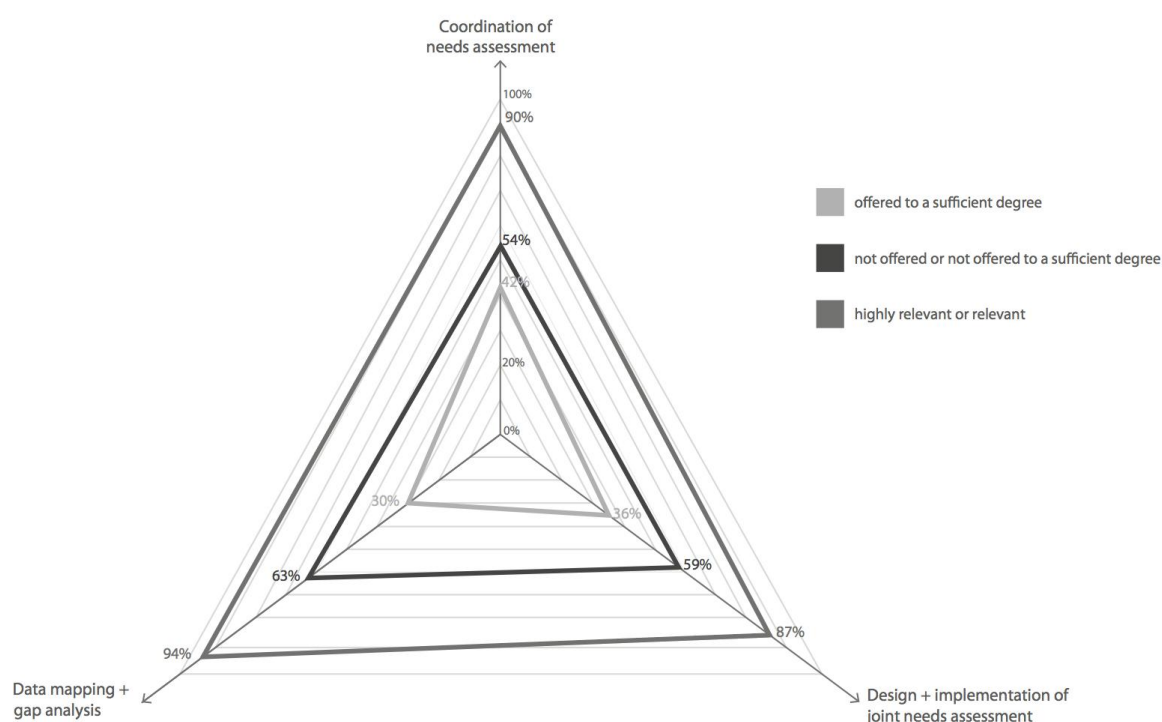
Strategy Formulation

14.   By contrast, coordination teams and partners in most countries stated that they invested much effort in system-wide strategy processes such as consolidated appeals or strategic response plans. As a result, strategy processes were more inclusive and created documents that more fully reflected the approaches of participating organizations. However, the consultations, drafting, revision and monitoring related to these processes dominated the agendas of several of the coordination mechanisms assessed for many months. Interviewees at the country and local levels questioned whether this investment was worthwhile because system-wide strategy documents have little influence on their own decisions.

Standards and Guidance

15.   In half the cases examined – Bangladesh, Kenya, Pakistan and the Philippines – coordination mechanisms provided standards and guidance, often drawing on materials from the global FSC, and achieved positive effects on the quality and consistency of the food security response. In the Philippines, a presentation of FAO's work on fisheries and coastal resources highlighted the complexity of such interventions and led several cluster members to adapt their approaches. In Bangladesh, Kenya and Pakistan, coordination mechanisms provided technical guidelines and training in areas such as market analysis or livestock emergencies. In most cases, however, the guidance covered only a small proportion – and sometimes none – of the relevant issues. In addition, almost all of the coordination mechanisms assessed paid little attention to cross-cutting issues such as gender, age, disability or the environment.

Reporting and Learning

16.   All teams and partners in internationally led coordination mechanisms indicated that collecting and managing information, especially for the "who does what, where and when" (4Ws) matrix, was a priority. With this information, the coordination mechanisms were able to publish more consistent and reliable reports about the food security response, which were appreciated by donors and staff at organizations' headquarters. In Turkey/northern Syrian Arab Republic, the introduction of an FSC-like coordination mechanism in the summer of 2013 led to more consistent reporting standards, enabling the working group to report that only 250,000 people had received the minimum ration, rather than that 2.5 million had received food assistance.

17.   Beyond reporting, the evaluation did not come across any efforts by food security coordination mechanisms to strengthen monitoring and evaluation of effects on affected populations. There were also very few systematic attempts to facilitate learning, which could have had an effect on the quality and consistency of responses. Survey findings reflect this imbalance between strong information sharing and weak learning, as shown in Figure 4: the light-grey line shows that 73 percent of respondents believed that sufficient meetings for information sharing were offered, compared with 50 percent believing that information collection for the 4Ws matrix was sufficient, and only 25 percent that exchanges of good practices and lessons learned were sufficient.

Figure 4: Gaps in activities for exchanging good practices and encouraging lesson learning
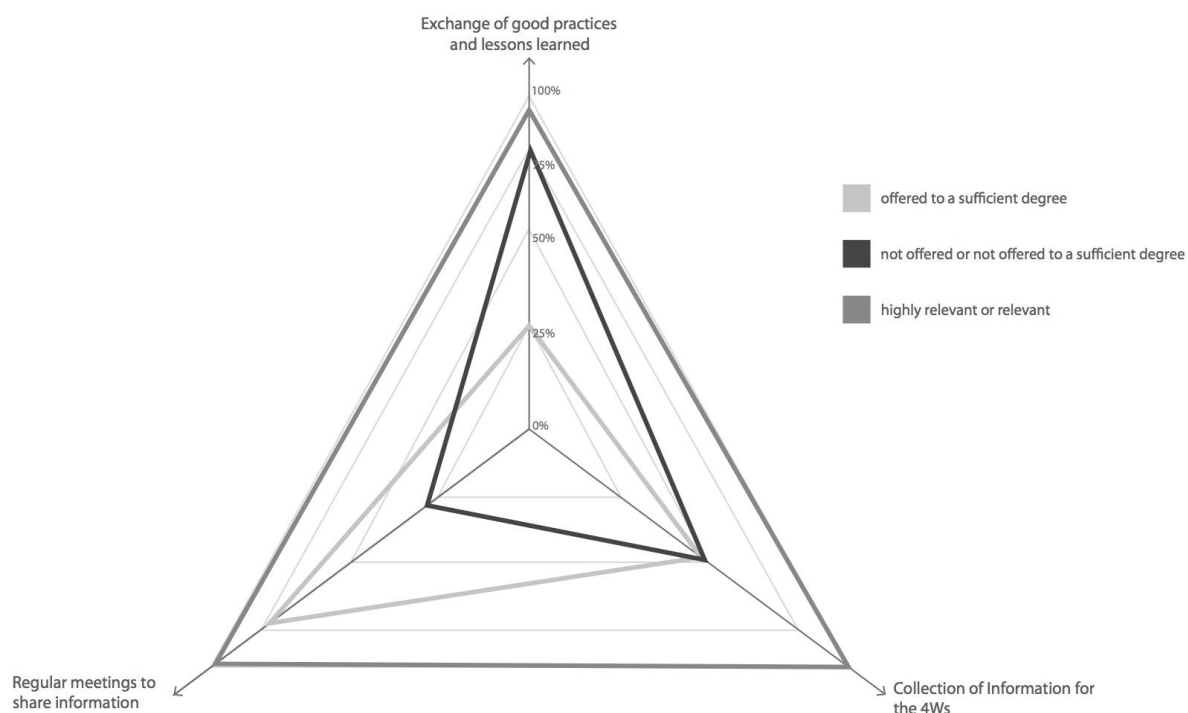
Preparedness

18. IASC guidance foresees that clusters play a role in preparedness. The FSC in Bangladesh focused almost exclusively on preparedness, and showed promising results. The process adopted was highly participatory and created a strong sense of ownership and buy-in among cluster members. The resulting contingency plan was thorough, incorporated lessons from the last emergency and included a sector-wide response strategy, but has still to be tested in a large-scale disaster. In all the other cases examined, food security coordination mechanisms paid very little attention to preparedness, even failing to clarify which coordination arrangements would be activated under different scenarios.

Duplications and Gaps

19. All of the assessed food security coordination mechanisms led by international actors collected information for the 4Ws matrix and exchanged information during meetings, which helped avoid duplication. In Mali, two organizations agreed on the geographical distribution of intervention areas for food assistance after discovering duplications in their plans. In Pakistan, two organizations compared their beneficiary lists and eliminated 1,500 duplications. In the Philippines, two organizations were planning food distributions in the same area and agreed to alternate with each other in that area. In Kenya and Pakistan, coordination structures allocated intervention areas to organizations, thereby avoiding duplication. As humanitarian organizations were able to reallocate resources to other, underserved areas, these findings suggest that food security coordination had a positive effect on the coverage of services provided, although no data are available

to quantify this effect.

20. Most of the humanitarian organizations interviewed indicated that they used 4Ws information to target comparatively underserved areas. However, food security coordination mechanisms did not eliminate all duplication because many local and non-traditional humanitarian organizations were not involved in coordination. Most mechanisms also did little to identify response gaps and organize ways of filling them. Ensuring comprehensive, regular and updated 4Ws information was a major challenge in most cases.

Cost-Benefit Analysis

21. The direct costs of food security coordination relate primarily to FSC staff and activities; the time required for participating in coordination generates additional, indirect costs. While a quantitative cost-benefit analysis of food security coordination is not possible, proxy indicators suggest that investments in food security coordination have been worthwhile overall: i) the direct costs of coordination were only a small fraction of the overall food security budget; ii) in the two cases with alternative, internationally led coordination systems – Lebanon and Turkey/northern Syrian Arab Republic – humanitarian organizations soon called for cluster-like systems with dedicated coordination capacity and more clearly defined roles, responsibilities and processes; and iii) a clear majority of survey respondents perceived food security coordination as a worthwhile investment (Figure 5). However, the bureaucratic processes involved in coordination, and the time required to comply with them were seen as excessive (see following section).

Figure 5: Perceptions on whether a food security coordination mechanism is a worthwhile investment
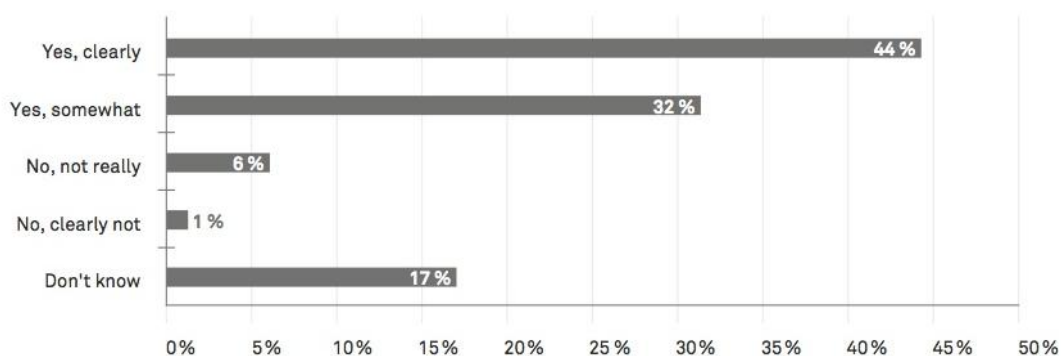
Source: Electronic survey conducted in 43 countries, with 395 responses. Responses weighted by country.

22. A more differentiated analysis shows that a certain level of dedicated funding was important. Countries without dedicated resources, including Lebanon and Mali, struggled to provide adequate and continuous coordination. The case studies and other examples also show that flexible coordination arrangements could generate cost savings, for example by supporting national institutions in their coordination role, as in Kenya; engaging national staff in coordination teams over the long term,

as in Pakistan; and creating slimmer coordination structures with merged clusters and area-based coordination mechanisms at the hub and local levels, as in the Central African Republic compared with the Philippines.

Findings: Factors Influencing the Effectiveness of Food Security Coordination

23.   This section analyses why food security coordination mechanisms did or did not achieve the intended effects.

Focus and Priorities

24.   The country case studies, interviews and survey responses show that the focus and priorities set by the coordination mechanism, were one of the most important factors influencing effectiveness. However, especially where the cluster system was formally activated, coordination teams and partners were concerned that heavy system-wide   demands for data, reports and inputs to broader processes at predefined moments made it difficult to address the needs of actors at the operational level, as stressed in existing guidance. In most country cases, for example, information management activities focused on gathering data and compiling sector-wide reports, but did little to analyse and use the data to guide operational decisions. In the Philippines, where the new, system-wide coordination protocols for Level 3 emergencies were applied, coordinators, cluster members and lead agency staff were unanimous in seeing the demands of these protocols as excessive. Interviewees engaged in other recent Level 3 emergencies, such as in South Sudan and the Central African Republic, shared this view.

25.   The coordination team's experience was a crucial factor. Experienced coordinators, especially those deployed by the GST, tended to have a better understanding of system-wide processes, requirements and timelines, enabling them to cope more easily with the demands. They also tended to have a clearer understanding of their own roles and the operational priorities of coordination, resulting in a clearer focus on the needs of cluster partners.

Inclusiveness and Participation

26.   The evidence reviewed suggests that a second crucial factor affecting effectiveness is the level of inclusiveness and participation in the coordination mechanism. There were marked differences in inclusiveness among case study countries. In general, traditional, international humanitarian organizations were well represented. In Bangladesh, FSC members strongly identified with the FSC and thought of their activities as cluster activities. However, most food security coordination mechanisms – except the one in Kenya, which is led by the Government – struggled to achieve active involvement or leadership from governments and local authorities. There was little participation from local civil society organizations and non-traditional humanitarian actors in most cases, except in the Sindh and

Khyber Pakhtunkhawa provinces of Pakistan, for example.

27. As a result of gaps in inclusiveness and participation, core coordination functions suffered severely in some contexts. Coordination mechanisms were unable to present a complete picture of the response, identify response gaps reliably, or eliminate all duplications. They also missed important opportunities for promoting standards, facilitating mutual learning and supporting transition and exit plans.

Support from the GST and Lead Agencies

28. A third important factor was the level of support provided by the GST and the lead agencies. While gaps persist, both the GST and the lead agencies made clear progress in providing adequate human resources for coordination. Most of the countries analysed had dedicated coordination teams, including coordinators and information managers at the national and, often, the subnational levels. The GST had a critical role in advocating with the lead agencies and standby partners for the deployment of teams with appropriate seniority and coordination experience. In the Philippines, the relatively long-term deployment of an information manager from a standby partner was very well received. The GST deployed its own members to fill gaps or address particularly difficult situations. The experience and skills of these people invigorated coordination mechanisms. As shown in Turkey/northern Syrian Arab Republic, the GST is also exceptional for its willingness and ability to find flexible ways of supporting coordination capacity at the country level.

29. However, the GST had insufficient capacity to extend support to all countries and to fill all important deployment gaps. The training that the GST provided to WFP and FAO staff has not had a major impact on country-level coordination because it focused on familiarizing broader groups of staff members with the FSC, and few trainees have been deployed. There were also gaps in the preparation of coordination teams. The commitment and capacity of the lead agencies' country and regional offices in supporting food security coordination varied widely, as shown in the case studies. The strong commitment of lead agency staff in cases such as Bangladesh and Mali contrasted with concerns that engagement in coordination could distract from the lead agencies' operations and practices, as in the Philippines, where the lead agencies did not adhere to some of the common positions agreed in the FSC. This concern was confirmed by survey results showing that the lead agencies were comparatively sceptical about the effectiveness of food security coordination (Figure 6). Donors also did not always link their own decisions to cluster analyses and recommendations.

Figure 6: Perceptions of effectiveness, by stakeholder group
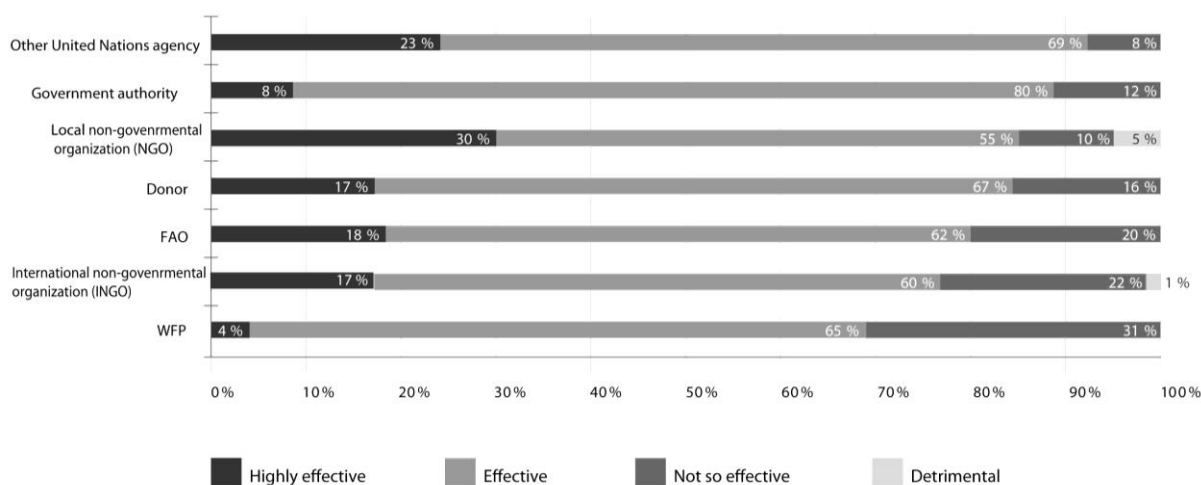
Source: Electronic survey conducted in 43 countries, with 395 responses, all shown. Differences among countries are significant (Chi-Square5 0.497 df=28 p<0.006).

Clarity of Roles, Responsibilities and Boundaries

30. Compared with other, more informal coordination solutions, such as those in Lebanon and Turkey/northern Syrian Arab Republic, formal FSCs have the advantage of more clearly defined core roles and responsibilities. This clarity helps to avoid lengthy and counterproductive discussions about the coordination arrangements and scope in emergencies. However, several boundary issues are still insufficiently clear:

i) Most of the coordination mechanisms assessed lacked exit and transition strategies. They therefore contributed little to building national capacities and creating links with development actors.

ii) Most food security coordination mechanisms also overlapped with other areas such as nutrition, early recovery, livelihoods and cash and voucher programming, requiring further clarification of roles.

iii) The cluster system still lacks viable, standard solutions for moving from a full set of activated clusters, such as at the national level, to a smaller set of merged clusters, such as at the hub level, and to area-based coordination, such as at the sub-hub level.

Conclusions

31. This section summarizes the evaluation's conclusions on the three main questions.

i) What effects do food security coordination mechanisms at the country and local levels have on humanitarian organizations and their activities? How and why?

32. Overall, food security coordination at the country and local levels has had a positive effect on participating organizations. Although performance varied among

countries, the coordination mechanisms assessed made relatively consistent, positive contributions by facilitating networking and helping to build trust; reducing duplication of efforts; enhancing reporting; in some cases, setting and disseminating standards; and supporting needs assessments. Because of these benefits, a clear majority of stakeholders saw investments in food security coordination as worthwhile. However, according to global guidance and stakeholder expectations, food security coordination has to improve in certain areas. Interviewees in the case study countries felt that food security coordination mechanisms could focus more on supporting needs assessments; contributions to system-wide strategy processes were too time-intensive and insufficiently aligned with operational needs; coordination mechanisms could do more to identify and fill response gaps; information management activities could be used more effectively to inform operations and support learning; and contingency planning and preparedness could be integrated more into food security coordination.

33. Having a clear agenda focusing on the operational needs of humanitarian organizations was an important factor for successful food security coordination mechanisms. Such a focus was threatened when the demands of system-wide processes dominate the agenda. Another crucial success factor was the level of participation in coordination mechanisms. The participation of governments, local authorities, local civil society organizations and non-traditional humanitarian actors was of particular concern.

ii) What effects does the global FSC have on coordination mechanisms and humanitarian actors at the country and local levels? How and why?

34. The global FSC helped to improve the availability of dedicated staff for coordination and information management at the country and local levels. The GST played a critical role in mobilizing coordination teams and deploying its own, highly experienced members to fill gaps. Management of both the lead agencies articulated support for the food security coordination mechanisms in circulars and public statements, increasing the sense of responsibility for providing dedicated coordination capacity in both organizations. However, commitment and capacity for supporting food security coordination varied widely among regional and country offices. Human and financial resources were therefore not always adequate, and the lead agencies did not always adopt a coordinated approach in their own operations.

35. Creation of the global FSC has also had a positive effect on country-level coordination by defining standard arrangements and clearer roles and responsibilities for different stakeholders. This could help avoid lengthy discussions and friction. However, issues regarding the coordination architecture have yet to be addressed.

iii) Is there any available evidence on what effects coordination may have had on the food security situation of affected populations

as evidenced by changes in the coverage of humanitarian services and changes in the monitoring of effects on beneficiaries?

36. In all the countries examined, there were clear examples of avoided duplications enabling organizations to use their resources to cover other, underserved areas. It can therefore be inferred that coordination has had a positive effect on the coverage of interventions addressing food security. However, there are no data for quantifying or statistically proving this effect. The evaluation also found no evidence that coordination was enhancing the evidence base by improving the monitoring of effects on the food security of affected populations.

37. The evaluation concludes that effective food security coordination creates clear benefits for humanitarian organizations and increases the coverage of humanitarian services. It is broadly supported by traditional, international humanitarian actors, which see investments in food security coordination as largely worthwhile. However, food security coordination also faces important constraints, which not only prevent coordination mechanisms from reaching their full potential, but also undermine their operational relevance and put their current achievements at risk. Addressing these constraints and strengthening activities that are relevant to operations should therefore be a priority for the lead agencies and the GST.

Recommendations

38. The following strategic recommendations are presented in order of importance. They are supplemented by more detailed suggestions in Annex I of the full evaluation report, and are addressed to the GST, country coordination teams, cluster members, lead agencies, the IASC, humanitarian country teams and the OCHA.

Recommendation 1: Advocate with and support the IASC in revising standard system requirements to make them less time-consuming and more operationally focused.	Addressed to
• Provide the IASC principals and IASC working groups with feedback on experience of the coordination protocols for Level 3 emergencies, and help to make these protocols lighter, more realistic and more focused on operational benefits. • Advocate with the IASC for revising the standard requirements for non-Level 3 emergencies.	FAO and WFP senior management and emergency directors

Recommendation 2: Enhance mentoring for and capacities of coordination teams in focusing on operationally relevant activities.	Addressed to

• Ensure that coordination activities are based on demand, adopt a participatory approach, use adequate formats and have a clear agenda and purpose.
• Strengthen activities related to:
  - analysis and use of data, including needs assessment and analysis, response analysis, gap analysis and filling gaps;
  - the normative role of food security coordination mechanisms, such as in setting standards, preparing guidelines, training and defining common approaches;
  - mutual/joint learning; and
  - facilitation of networking/trust-building.
• Enhance mentoring and guidance for coordination teams at the country and local levels to help them cope with system-wide demands and focus on operationally relevant issues.
	Coordination teams
	
	GST

Recommendation 3: Enhance the GST's capacity and improve the preparation of deployed teams to strengthen coordination capacity.	Addressed to
• Enhance the GST's capacity and ability to mentor country coordination teams and deploy its team members to emergencies, by advocating for donor funding, dedicating lead agency core resources and mobilizing secondments from partner organizations. • Systematically provide newly deployed teams with briefings and a starter kit for food security coordination. • Reduce general training and strengthen mentoring, coaching and targeted training. • Develop a stronger human resource strategy for food security coordinators and information managers. • Deploy coordination team members for longer periods and increase the involvement of national staff members in coordination. • Strengthen learning among coordination teams.	Lead agencies GST WFP and FAO human resources departments

Recommendation 4: Enhance nationally led coordination mechanisms and/or increase the involvement of government actors in food security coordination mechanisms to enhance national ownership and sustainability.	Addressed to
• Strengthen the role of FSCs and lead agencies in preparedness, including informal assessments of government capacity and scenarios for scaling up coordination support. • Use existing contacts between the lead agencies and government offices more effectively to facilitate links with the food security coordination mechanism. • Engage in transition and exit planning early, regularly review coordination arrangements, and include capacity development activities for national institutions where necessary. • In cooperation with humanitarian coordinators and humanitarian country teams, strengthen links with development actors and their activities, especially for capacity development.	FAO and WFP country and regional offices Coordination teams

Recommendation 5: Engage national and local civil society organizations and non-traditional humanitarian actors more closely in food security coordination.	Addressed to
• Strengthen outreach to non-traditional humanitarian actors at the headquarters and regional levels. • Use the existing contacts of lead agencies and coordination mechanism members with civil society and non-traditional humanitarian actors more effectively. • Adopt a more field-based, bottom-up approach to coordination, to identify relevant actors. • Offer concrete, demand-based benefits to local civil society organizations and non-traditional humanitarian actors, and ask them for specific inputs or contributions. • Adapt coordination formats and communication channels to the needs and preferences of local civil society and non-traditional actors.	WFP and FAO partnership/donor relations branches WFP and FAO regional offices Coordination teams

Recommendation 6: Take action to ensure more consistent commitment and capacity of lead agencies in supporting food security coordination, and advocate for enhanced donor commitment to food security coordination.	Addressed to
• Increase efforts to ensure that the regional and country offices of the lead agencies take responsibility for ensuring that adequate human resources are available for coordination and for adopting a coordinated approach in their own operations, for example by including these aspects more clearly in performance appraisals and including coordination in the agendas of regional and global retreats. • Enhance FAO's country and field presence in emergencies, including by developing or improving advance financing facilities where necessary. • Advocate with donors to give more consideration in their decision-making to the analyses, priorities and standards developed by food security coordination mechanisms. • Advocate with donors to provide financial support to food security coordination teams, flexible coordination solutions and coordination activities where required. • Develop standard scenarios of coordination costs in different contexts.	FAO and WFP senior management Regional and country office directors GST

Recommendation 7: Work with the IASC, OCHA and other clusters to clarify roles and responsibilities in the coordination architecture, and promote more efficient coordination arrangements.	Addressed to
• Develop models for linking sector- and area-based coordination mechanisms, such as activation of clusters at the national level, a small number of merged clusters at the hub level, and integrated, area-based coordination at the local level. • Continue to strengthen links between food security and nutrition coordination mechanisms, and with other clusters such as those for health and for water, sanitation and hygiene, and ensure that the information management tools of different clusters are compatible, such as the 4Ws matrix. • Allocate responsibilities for coordinating livelihood activities and cash and voucher programming under different scenarios. • Strengthen compliance with guidance on early recovery as a cross-cutting issue.	WFP and FAO IASC principals Emergency directors GST

1. Introduction

1.1. Context and background

1.   The Emergency Relief Coordinator and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee introduced the **cluster system** in 2005 as part of a wider process of humanitarian reform. The cluster system creates coordination mechanisms for key sectors of humanitarian assistance that operate at global level and can be activated where required for specific emergencies. Each cluster has one or two designated lead agencies that are expected to facilitate coordination and – as much as their resource limitations will allow them – to act as providers of last resort.

2.   Initially, the list of global clusters did not include a **Food Security Cluster** (FSC). The reform process had created an agriculture cluster led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and saw no need for a food or food aid cluster since the World Food Programme (WFP) was already providing strong leadership in that area.[3] At country and local levels, however, various combinations of agriculture, food aid and combined food security clusters were often activated. In 2010, a formal decision was taken to create a global FSC to support country-level coordination structures, promote a holistic approach to food security and improve the relationship between WFP and FAO. The decision was spurred by growing evidence that integrated food security approaches are more effective, by strong political will within WFP and FAO management and by the recommendation of an evaluation to formalise the FSC.

3.   In its current **set-up**, the global FSC is co-led by FAO and WFP and includes 38 partners, two observers and seven associates. Its activities are facilitated by a Global Support Team (GST), composed of an average of 12 staff members, including core staff of the lead agencies and personnel seconded by partner organisations. From January 2011 to January 2014, the GST had a cumulative budget of seven million USD.[4] Global humanitarian funding for food and agriculture over the same time period was around 12.5 billion USD.[5] Global FSC members meet twice a year in global partners' meetings, focus on specific topics in a set of working groups[6] and provide and receive regular updates through phone conferences, the FSC website, email and social media. In addition to facilitating these activities and liaising with relevant global processes, the Global Support Team focuses on supporting coordination teams at country level. This support includes short-term deployments, support missions, remote support and backstopping, training and help in identifying coordinators and information managers who can be deployed to new or evolving emergency situations. These forms of support and other mechanisms supplying coordination for humanitarian food security responses are provided on demand and are available to different kinds of emergency food security coordination mechanisms. Currently, over 40 countries have such coordination systems in place, with wide variations in set-up and capacity for coordination and information management.

4.   At country and local level, clusters, including the food security cluster, are

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[3] The process of humanitarian reform was based on the findings of a system-wide review called *Humanitarian Response Review* (Adinolfi et al., 2005), which identified priority "gap" sectors in need of reinforced leadership.
[4] Source: FSC Global Support Team, overview of funding sources
[5] Source: Financial Tracking Service
[6] The working groups are created on demand. They currently include a working group on cash and vouchers; a working group on food security and livelihoods in urban settings; an inter-cluster working group on food security and nutrition; and a program-quality working group.

meant to perform the following set of **functions**:[7]

- Supporting service delivery, by eliminating duplications and ensuring that it is driven by the strategic priorities agreed upon;

- Informing the strategic decision-making of the Humanitarian Coordinator and Humanitarian Country Team, through needs-assessment and response-gap analysis, which identifies and addresses gaps, obstacles and duplications, and defines priorities for assistance;

- Planning and strategy development, through sectoral plans, the application of standards and guidelines and the support of funding processes;

- Advocacy, by relaying concerns to be reviewed by the Humanitarian Coordinator or Humanitarian Country Team and undertaking advocacy activities;

- Monitoring and reporting of the cluster strategy and its results;

- Contingency planning, preparedness and capacity-building in areas where disaster risk is high and the cluster has sufficient capacity;

- Integrating early recovery from the beginning of a response.

5.   Current food security coordination mechanisms at country and local level vary widely in terms of their set-up and resources. Some countries have no dedicated resources for food security coordination and existing staff members of the lead agencies or partner organisations take over coordination and information management tasks. Other countries have fully dedicated food security coordination and information management teams at country and hub-level with direct costs of up to one million USD per year. Food security coordination also generates indirect costs as participation in meetings and coordination activities requires time. Depending on the response phase, the level of activity of the food security coordination mechanism and the number of clusters or working group an organization participates in, the required time commitment per participant ranges from two to three hours per month to several hours per day.

1.2. Evaluation features

6.   WFP, FAO, their donors and various partner organisations have invested significantly in food security coordination at global and country level. The two lead agencies, FAO and WFP, jointly requested an independent evaluation of food security coordination to understand how it does or does not change humanitarian action and why this is the case. The evaluation's **objectives** are to strengthen accountability by assessing performance, as well as to facilitate learning by identifying opportunities for enhancing the effectiveness and relevance of coordination.[8]

7.   The evaluation team started by developing a **theory of change** for food security coordination, shown in Figure 1. The theory of change draws on various sources, including the FSC's terms of reference and its strategic work plan,[9] and was

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[7] Adapted from the Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at the Country Level.
[8] See Annex 1 for a detailed list of suggested actions for different stakeholder groups and Annex 2 for the terms of reference used in this evaluation.
[9] Relevant sources include the founding documents of the cluster approach, i.e. UN OCHA (2006), *The Four Pillars of Humanitarian Reform*; IASC (2006), *Guidance Note on Using the Cluster Approach to Strengthen Humanitarian Response;*

validated in a workshop with the FSC's Global Support Team. The illustration shows that the global FSC supports country-level coordination mechanisms through surge and support missions, tools, guidance, training and information management. The global FSC also facilitates coordination among its members, including donors, and interacts with the humanitarian system (UN OCHA and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee). At country and local level, food security coordination mechanisms can support all stages of the response, including needs assessment and analysis, strategy formulation, implementation (reduction of duplications and gaps; standards and quality), reporting, learning and preparedness. Through this assistance it is expected that humanitarian organizations improve their capacity to respond strategically and coherently and reduce gaps and duplications. In addition, the cluster lead agencies can use their roles as providers of last resort to fill response gaps. Ultimately, this is expected to result in an improved service to populations affected by crises and emergencies.

8.   The theory of change does not intend to capture all inputs for and details of the work of the FSC. It simplifies a complex mechanism to enable the evaluation team to identify the main evaluation questions. An important assumption underlying this theory of change is that a more strategic and coherent humanitarian response with fewer gaps and duplications can result in humanitarian food security needs being better addressed.

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more specific guidance notes and tools issued by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, especially the recently revised reference module for cluster coordination, which also reflects the priorities of the Transformative Agenda; a generic logic model for the cluster approach that was developed for, and refined during, the second phase of the global cluster approach evaluation; the global FSC's terms of reference and 2013-2014 strategic plan; interviews with the Global Support Team and individuals who supported the introduction of the global FSC.

Figure 1: Theory of change of food security coordination

Policies, tools, communications, instructions, supervision

Donors

Incentives, conditionality, funding

Standards, policies, advocacy

Host government

Chair

Information, advocacy

Instructions, permissions

Strategy, advocacy

Global Food Security Cluster

Country-level food security coordination

Cluster partners

Global Support Team

Meetings, working groups, teleconferences

Surge and support missions, tools, guidance, training, information management

Information, lessons, inputs

Time, information, inputs, resources

Humanitarian organizations

≥ Implementing a coordinated strategy

≥ Adhering to quality standards (participatory approach, cross-cutting issues, standards, more holistic approach to food security, preparedness)

Contingency planning, needs assessment and response analysis, strategy development, peer review

Coordination team

≥ Better resources, technical and facilitation skills

Training, information management

More strategic and coherent humanitarian response with fewer gaps and duplications

Lead agencies

≥ Stronger cooperation

Human resources, funding, support

Lead agencies

≥ More supportive
≥ More cooperative

Provider of last resort

Main objective: better address humanitarian food security needs

Inter-cluster coordination , policies guidance , inputs

Inter-cluster coordination , policies guidance , inputs

Humanitarian system

other clusters   OCHA   IASC

Policies, guidance

other clusters   OCHA   Humanitarian Country Team (HCT)

4

9.   The **guiding questions** for the evaluation are based on the theory of change. They seek to understand what effects food security coordination has and why or why not at three different levels depicted in the theory of change. In order of priority, the guiding questions are:

i.   What effects do food security coordination mechanisms at country and local level have on humanitarian organisations and their activities? How and why? (This corresponds to the central box shown in the theory of change, labelled "country level food security coordination".)

ii.   What effects does the global food security cluster have on coordination mechanisms and humanitarian actors at country and local level? How and why? (This corresponds to the left side of the theory of change showing how the global FSC is meant to support actors at country level.)

iii.   Is there any available evidence on what effects coordination may have had on the food security situation of affected populations as evidenced by changes in the coverage of humanitarian services and changes in the monitoring of effects on beneficiaries? (This corresponds to the right side of the theory change, illustrating how food security coordination is ultimately meant to help better address humanitarian food security needs.)

10.   This means that the evaluation focuses on the utility and effects of food security coordination at country and local level. The evaluation's **scope** is defined by the following parameters:

- It includes a variety of coordination solutions at country and local level, ranging from formally activated FSCs, to informal FSCs, working groups and government-led mechanisms to compare different systems and explore how the global FSC support them.

- It covers a variety of humanitarian contexts, including conflict, sudden-onset disasters, slow-onset or recurring disasters, acute emergency, transition and 'preparedness' settings, as well as different regional settings to allow for an analysis of similarities and differences depending on context (see Figure 2).

- It is restricted to assessing the available evidence in relation the question iii, asking only whether food security coordination has helped to strengthen systems measuring effects on affected populations and whether there is evidence relating to gaps, duplications and coverage. It was agreed during the inception phase that it would be beyond the scope of this evaluation to gather any primary data on the food security situation of affected populations.

- It spans the period between 2009 and 2013-14 to allow for comparisons between the time before and the time after the creation of the global FSC.

Figure 2: Country studies conducted for this evaluation
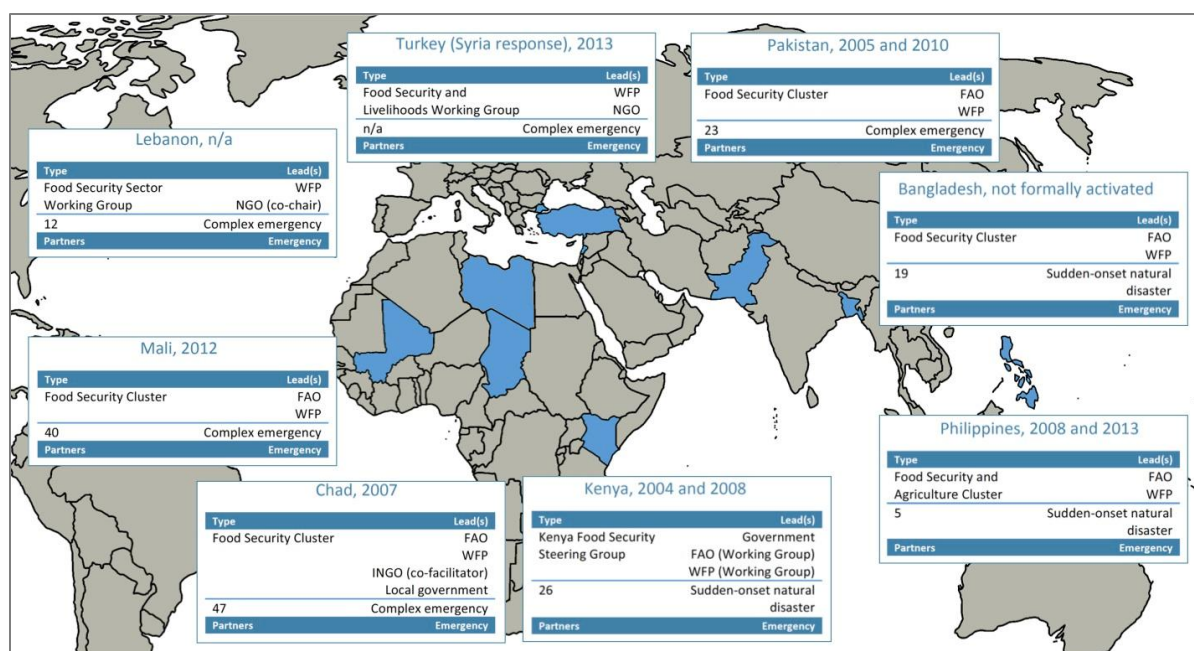
11. The primary **audiences** for this report are the cluster lead agencies WFP and FAO and their respective executive boards / oversight committees; the FSC's Global Support Team; and coordination teams at country and field levels. The results of the evaluation are also relevant for donors, cluster members at country and global level, UN OCHA and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and governments of crisis-affected and at-risk countries.

12. The evaluation builds on and complements **previous evaluations** of the cluster system as a whole and of individual clusters.[10] It considers, tests, and prioritises lessons identified by these previous exercises.[11] It also examines recent changes introduced for example through the Transformative Agenda. The evaluation therefore holds lessons for other clusters and has implications for the overall humanitarian coordination system, notably the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee.

13. The evaluation was carried out between September 2013 and May 2014. It was implemented by a **team** of four senior evaluators and two analysts and supervised by the offices of evaluation at FAO and WFP. The evaluation team used predominantly qualitative **methods**, complemented by a quantitative analysis of survey results and financial data. The team carried out eight country missions[12] to assess food security

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[10] Avenir Analytics (2013), *Evaluation of UNICEF's Cluster Lead Agency Role in Humanitarian Action (CIARE)*; Global Nutrition Cluster (2012), *Nutrition Cluster Evaluation of Pakistan Flood Response – September 2011*; Majewski et al. (2012), *Joint Evaluation of the Global Logistics Cluster*; Steets et al. (2010), *Cluster Approach Evaluation Phase 2*; Stoddard et al. (2007), *Cluster Approach Evaluation*; Reid et al. (2010), *Review of the Global Education Cluster Co-Leadership Arrangement*.
[11] Lessons include: (i) Good relationships between humanitarian actors, effective leadership by the cluster lead agencies, adequate human and financial resources and information-management capacities are key to effective coordination; (ii) Clusters or other coordination solutions should build upon a good understanding of existing national and local coordination capacities and, wherever possible, support them rather than establish parallel mechanisms; (iii) Clusters should define clear operational and strategic objectives and regularly assess progress made and the objectives; (iv) Strengthening quality by promoting adherence to technical standards, systematically considering cross-cutting issues and engaging in inter-cluster coordination are crucial activities; (v) Clusters need to be inclusive, especially of national, local and non-traditional humanitarian actors, but they also need to strike a balance that will keep them effective. Flexible set-ups — steering committees or strategic advisory groups, for example — can be helpful when dealing with a large number of humanitarian partners. Co-lead arrangements can be an important mechanism in strengthening the involvement of a particular group of stakeholders
[12] Pakistan, Bangladesh, Lebanon, Mali, Chad, Turkey (for the response in Northern Syria), the Philippines and Kenya.

coordination at national and sub-national levels. It also visited four regional hubs[13] to interview additional stakeholders and to understand the regional aspects of coordination. In addition, the team reviewed a broad set of documents[14], interviewed stakeholders in Rome and conducted phone interviews with cluster members and experts. In total, 483 individuals were consulted or participated in interviews, and 403 individuals involved in food security coordination in 43 countries responded to an electronic survey.[15]

14. To **ensure the quality** of evaluation results, the evaluation team relied on strong team processes, cooperated closely with the offices of evaluation at FAO and WFP and solicited feedback on interim results (primarily by gathering feedback on aide-mémoires that were written to summarise the results of each country study and circulated among country teams and the Reference Group), as well as draft versions of this report from the evaluation managers, the FSC's Global Support Team, members of the Reference Group and stakeholders consulted for the evaluation.[16]

15. The evaluation encountered certain **limitations**. First, it is very difficult to trace the impact of coordination on beneficiaries. Coordination seeks to influence the behavior and activities of humanitarian organisations. It affects beneficiaries only indirectly. Since many other factors such as weather patterns or changes in the security situation have strong effects on the food security situation of affected populations, it is usually very difficult to attribute improvement in the food security situation to coordination. The evaluation did therefore not try to prove any such causal link, but asked whether coordination strengthened impact monitoring and assessment and whether it had any effect on duplications and gaps in the assistance. Second, assessing the cost-effectiveness of food security coordination also meets significant methodological problems. While the costs of coordination vary significantly, the benefits are very difficult, if not impossible, to quantify. Rather than attempting an 'objective' analysis of whether investments in food security coordination are worthwhile, this evaluation tries to describe both costs and benefits of coordination and asked survey respondents for their subjective assessment. Third, the evaluation team met some technical limitations regarding the availability of stakeholders with a longer-term experience of coordination mechanisms in the case study countries. It also had to change plans for country case study missions due to changing security and humanitarian situations. Scheduled visits to Yemen, South Sudan and the Central African Republic were cancelled and overall, only eight of the envisaged nine country studies were implemented. Overall, however, the evaluation team does not believe that these limitations undermine the reliability or relevance of the evaluation's findings.

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[13] Dakar, Amman, Bangkok and Nairobi.

[14] See Annex 3 for a selection of key documents consulted for this evaluation.

[15] See Annex 4 for more details about the methods used, as well as a breakdown of interviewees and survey respondents. See Annex 5 for a list of interviewees.

[16] Feedback and validation mechanisms used include the following: debriefings with country coordination teams and interested stakeholders at the end of each country mission; circulation of an aide-mémoire on country-level results among stakeholders consulted in the country, the Global Support Team and the evaluation Reference Group; debriefings and/or workshops with the Global Support Team, WFP and FAO management, the Reference Group and the global partners meeting; and an online consultation of relevant stakeholders.

2. Evaluation findings: Effects of food security coordination on humanitarian organisations and their activities

16.   The key questions guiding this evaluation (see §9) focus on the effects of food security coordination and the factors influencing effectiveness. This chapter presents the evidence on coordination effects (or the lack thereof), while chapter 3 focuses on the related factors.

17.   The evaluation covers a broad variety of food security coordination mechanisms in terms of their context, set-up, capacity and focus. Nevertheless, they all have a common core: They bring humanitarian actors working in food security together, facilitate the flow and availability of information and often help the group define common positions. Across the board, interviewees and survey respondents emphasised that they value food security coordination as a platform for **information-sharing** (see Figure 3). The critical question, however, is not whether more information was available, but whether it made a difference to the response and ultimately to the affected population. This chapter therefore begins by exploring the general effects that regular meetings and information sharing have on the relationships between humanitarian actors. It then analyses contributions throughout the humanitarian programme cycle, spanning needs assessment and analysis, strategy formulation, implementation (specifically regarding duplications, gaps, standards and quality), reporting and learning and preparedness. Finally, this chapter provides an assessment of the available evidence of food security coordination effects on affected populations and cost-effectiveness.

Figure 3: Relevance of services and activities offered by the coordination mechanism

Activity	highly relevant	relevant
Regular meetings to share information	56 %	41 %
Collection of information for the 4Ws	54 %	41 %
Data mapping and gap analysis	54 %	40 %
Development of response plans or strategies	52 %	41 %
Exchange of good practices and lessons learned	42 %	50 %
Coordination of needs assessments	45 %	46 %
Tools and guidance to improve assessment and response	46 %	43 %
(Sub-)working groups that focus on specific food security issues	46 %	42 %
Design and implementation of joint needs assessments	45 %	42 %
Trainings for members	37 %	47 %
Creation of links to donors and dissemination of funding opportunities	41 %	39 %
Compilation of appeals	29 %	43 %
Inputs in the management of pooled funds	32 %	29 %

395 responses, weighted per country (43 countries)

2.1. Stronger relationships and trust among organisations

> Main findings: Partners strongly appreciate the networking and trust-building function of food security clusters and similar coordination mechanisms. In the formal guidance and the standard procedures of the food security cluster, however, this function receives relatively little recognition. >>> Recommendation 2

18. A basic effect of the personal interactions and information exchange in food security coordination mechanisms is the facilitation of relationships among humanitarian organisations and the strengthening of trust between them. This function may be difficult to pin down in "objective" terms, but it can have far-reaching consequences and forms the basis for most of the other effects discussed below.

19. In all contexts, operational actors use meetings to get to know others working in a similar field and to identify potential partners. Often, donors also use the meetings to get an overview of the organisations that are operating in a certain area. More detailed discussions for coordination, partnering or funding then take place bilaterally. In the *Philippines*, for example, some donors were able to expand their portfolio very quickly because coordination meetings offered them a very effective and quick way to get to know relevant players. The networking function is most relevant for newcomers. It is therefore most valuable in situations where many organisations are setting up or increasing their presence and where the turnover of humanitarian staff is especially rapid – in other words, sudden-onset emergencies, sharply deteriorating situations and hardship duty stations.

20. More importantly, coordination mechanisms can also help to build **trust** (see Figure 4). They do so by enabling regular personal interactions among individuals, helping them to get to know each other and to identify common interests. They also do so by encouraging and facilitating the exchange of information, thus making processes and operations more transparent. Just how essential trust is for an effective and cooperative humanitarian response becomes clear in cases where trust is lacking. In *Lebanon* and *Turkey/Northern Syria* – two situations that initially did not have clusters or cluster-like coordination mechanisms and where operations take place under difficult circumstances – the lack of trust and the competitive spirit between humanitarian organisations created a fragmented response and conflicts about appropriate approaches. This led to significant losses in the efficiency, consistency and quality of the response. Especially in *Turkey/Northern Syria*, working group members note that the creation of a dedicated, cluster-like coordination team has led to important progress in terms of building trust and creating a more cooperative and transparent atmosphere.

Figure 4: Agreement with statement "coordination has increased trust between different actors"

395 responses,
weighted per country (43 countries)
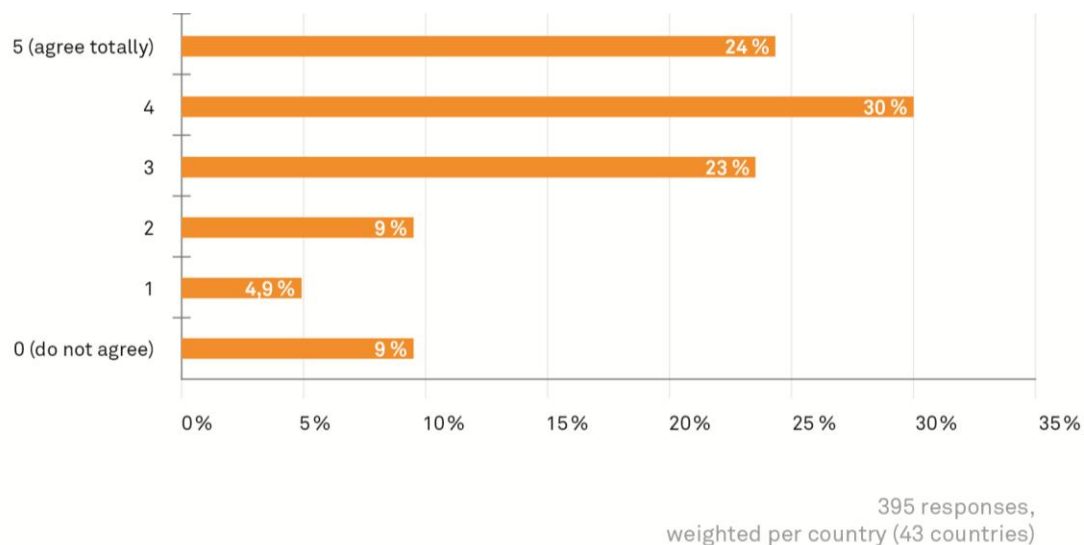
21. Competing or overlapping mandates and the resulting tension between humanitarian organisations often undermine trust. Therefore, an important advantage of the cluster system is that it created clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Alternative coordination mechanisms such as the NGO Forum in *Turkey/Northern Syria* and the coordination mechanisms led by UNHCR in *Lebanon* resulted in drawn-out discussions about the coordination set-up. While the cluster system has not yet addressed all issues regarding the coordination architecture (see Section 3.4 below), it clearly reduces the tensions created by discussions around coordination mandates and set-ups and thereby improves conditions for building trust. Survey responses show a statistically significant correlation between the clarity of responsibilities and trust-building (see Figure 5).

Figure 5: Correlation between clarity of responsibilities and trust-building[17]

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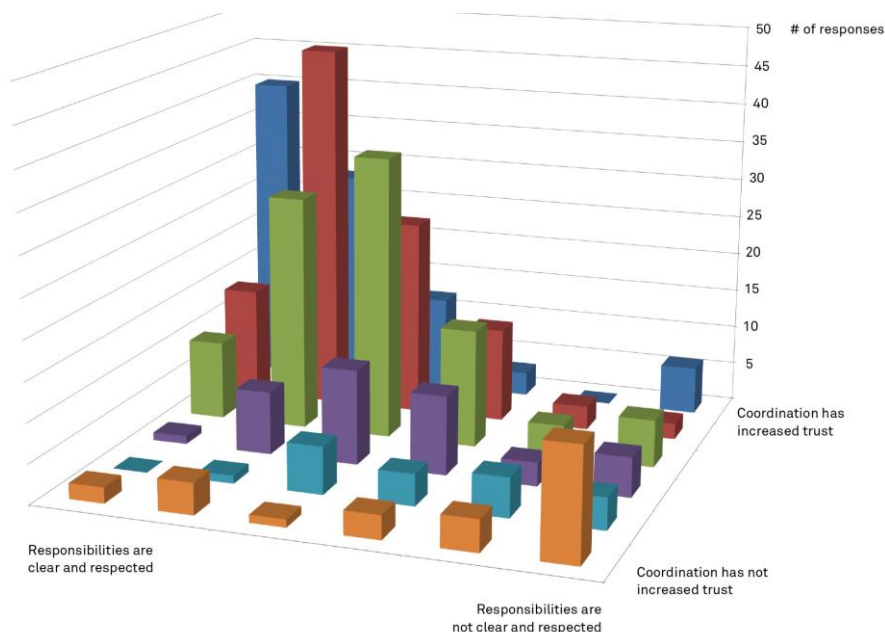
[17] The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. The Spearman correlation is 0.494, based on a sample of N=380.

22.   The country cases also show that **leadership arrangements** influence where food security coordination mechanisms create most trust – between FAO and WFP, between the UN and international NGOs or between local and international actors. Part of the rationale for having a cluster co-led by FAO and WFP was to help improve the relationship between these two core organisations in food security. Most interviewees believe that effective co-leadership can make a positive contribution to the relationship between WFP and FAO, but that many other factors are more decisive. In other cases, the level of trust between NGOs and UN agencies was a larger concern. For example, in *Lebanon* and *Turkey/Northern Syria*, members felt that the establishment of co-lead arrangements with NGOs was beneficial. In *Chad* and *Mali*, where strong concerns about NGO-UN relationships were not mentioned, NGO co-leadership was more a demonstration of NGOs' commitment to support food security coordination and a means to mobilising NGO participation than a trust-building measure. Finally, members in politically sensitive environments felt that it was important to have a space for discussion without the permanent, direct involvement of government representatives or in some cases, donors. In *Kenya*, strong government leadership in food security coordination was also successful in trust-building, whereas members in politically sensitive environments like *Chad* felt that it was important to have a forum for discussion without the permanent presence of government or donor representatives.

23.   According to the survey, other factors that show a statistically significant positive correlation with the trust-building function include (see Table 1): Effective leadership skills of the coordinator; adequate human resources of the coordination team; adequate representation of national and local organisations; and a clear distinction between the lead agencies' own and the coordination mechanism's interest.

Table 1: Factors correlated to trust building

Factor	Significance level	Spearman correlation	N
Effective leadership skills of the coordinator	99%	0.443	383
Adequate human resources of the coordination team	99%	0.334	386
Adequate representation of national and local organisations	99%	0.393	384
Clear distinction between interests of lead agencies and coordination mechanism	99%	0.376	385

2.2. Crucial, but inconsistent contributions to needs assessment and analysis

Main findings: Clusters and other food security coordination mechanisms have demonstrated that they can provide substantial benefits by supporting needs assessments and conducting gap analyses that are used by members for programming – except perhaps in highly politically sensitive environments. In practice, however, not all coordination mechanisms assessed for this evaluation contribute to needs assessments and analysis. Of those that do, most do not use the full range of options at their disposal. >>> Recommendations 2 and 3

24.   The food security coordination mechanisms assessed for this evaluation have different ways of engaging in needs assessments and analysis. The examples listed below illustrate that performance in this area varies strongly and that existing coordination mechanisms typically only cover a small share of the possible range of activities. They include the following options:

- **Dissemination and compilation of existing needs assessments and other analyses.** All observed coordination mechanisms encourage members to share their plans to conduct needs assessments and other forms of analysis – such as Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis (EMMA) – as well as their results. They provide space for sharing plans and results during coordination meetings, circulate reports or share them on a website or document-sharing platform. How successful this form of information sharing is depends on how willing members are to share their assessment plans and results. In politically sensitive situations such as *Turkey/Northern Syria*, the willingness to share information is limited. In some situations, coordination teams make an important contribution by taking a more proactive role in collecting and disseminating needs-assessment information (see Box 1).

- **Contribution of indicators to multi-sector needs assessments.** Another common form of engagement of the assessed food security coordination mechanisms is to contribute indicators to and at times support the implementation of multi-sector needs assessments such as the Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA). The FSC has also developed a set of core indicators at global level that provide guidance for this.[18] In some contexts, however, these multi-sector needs assessments were either blocked (for example, in *Pakistan*, where the government did not authorise them) or seen as limited in use (for example, in the *Philippines*, where the timing of the assessments did not fit the organisations' planning needs).

- **Design and implementation of sectoral needs assessments.** In some cases, food security coordination mechanisms also conducted their own needs assessment. In *Pakistan*, for example, cluster members jointly designed and implemented integrated food security and livelihoods assessments. In *Bangladesh*, the food security cluster participated in joint needs assessments with the nutrition cluster, building on the support of the Assessment Capacities Project (ACAPS). Cluster members refrained from implementing individual assessment. A common needs assessment was also implemented in *Chad* and at sub-national level in *Mali*. Joint cluster assessments are enabled in areas where donor funding for cluster activities is available, where members strongly identify with the coordination mechanism and where coordination teams played a strong role in pooling resources of members.

- **Contribution to government-led food security needs assessments.** In *Mali*, food security cluster members contribute to regular food security assessments conducted by the Early Warning System of the Food Security Commission. In *Kenya*, participants of the national food security coordination mechanisms are actively involved in the bi-

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[18] See http://foodsecuritycluster.net/document/food-security-cluster-indicators (last accessed June 2014).

annual food security assessments organised by the government-led food security coordination mechanism in Northern Kenya.

- **Response analysis.** Building on needs assessment information, food security coordination mechanisms can play a critical role by analysing and discussing what response options are most appropriate in which areas and at what times. Relevant guidance has been developed at global level.[19] At country level, the food security cluster in *Pakistan*, for example, provided elements of a response analysis by publishing guidance on which kinds of agricultural interventions were most suitable where, as well as an analysis of where cash and voucher programmes were appropriate and where not. Generally, however, the assessed food security coordination mechanisms did not conduct systematic response analyses covering all response options.

- **Analysis of response gaps.** Finally, food security coordination mechanisms can play an essential role by analysing how known needs compare to the existing response across the entire range of response options from food assistance to agricultural recovery and livelihoods programmes. This form of gap analysis is very important for guiding new projects and funding decisions. However, the evaluation team found very little evidence of systematic gap analyses with the exception of a food and cash gap analysis in *Bangladesh*[20] or analyses of individual gaps, such as gaps in supporting coconut farmers in the *Philippines*[21]. In most of the other cases, the information on planned projects collected in the "Who does What Where When" (4Ws) was not complete or reliable enough and/or available data was not sufficiently used for identifying gaps.

Box 1: Good practice in disseminating needs assessment findings

During the response to Typhoon Yolanda, the food security cluster in the *Philippines* made strong efforts to support the analysis of food security needs. The cluster helped design and implement the Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment. It also helped coordinate assessments implemented by cluster members and disseminate their findings. More specifically, the cluster systematically uploaded assessment reports on its website and it produced maps showing what assessments were done where and by whom. In the sub-national hub of Tacloban, the cluster additionally summarised assessment findings for the area. Cluster members highly appreciated this service as it provided them with synthetic, easy to access and easy to use information on food security needs that informed their own programming and/or guided their own assessment activities.

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25. Coordinating needs assessments and analysis can involve considerable challenges. It can be difficult, for example, to harmonise assessment approaches, to arrive at a joint interpretation of data and to agree on the implications of the analysis – regarding, for example, the severity of a crisis or whether to launch an appeal. In *Mali* and *Chad*, divergent views created some tension between members of the coordination mechanisms. Generally, however, all case studies and correlations in

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[19] See for example DG ECHO and FAO (2011), *A Response Analysis Framework for Food and Nutrition Security Interventions at Inter-Cluster and Cluster Level.*
[20] The cluster prepared the gap analysis for the response to the tropical storm Mahasen (July 2013). It is available for download here.
[21] A related joint agency briefing not is available here.

the survey responses show that coordinated needs assessments and the provision of gap analyses create considerable **benefits**. They help to avoid duplications in needs assessments – for example in *Bangladesh, Pakistan, Mali and Chad* – increasing the efficiency of operations and reducing assessment fatigue among beneficiaries. It points humanitarian organisations – especially newcomers and organisations expanding their programmes – to gap areas and thus supports a better-balanced and targeted response. It provides humanitarian organisations with credible needs data that support funding applications. And, in cases where assessments and analysis cover different aspects of food security, it promotes a more integrated and holistic understanding of food security. The survey data show a clear, positive correlation between joint needs assessment and the emergence of a common vision.[22]

26.   Yet, as the discussion about the different possible forms of engagement and the frequency of their use above (§24) shows, there is a mismatch between the importance of these activities and the level priority they are given by many food security coordination mechanisms. The survey responses also highlight the gap between the perceived relevance of activities relating to needs assessments and analyses as shown in Figure 6: Around 90% of respondents, shown in the most external, yellow line, see activities related to needs assessments as very relevant, but well over half the respondents consider these activities as insufficient (middle, red line).

Figure 6: Gaps in activities relating to needs assessments and analyses

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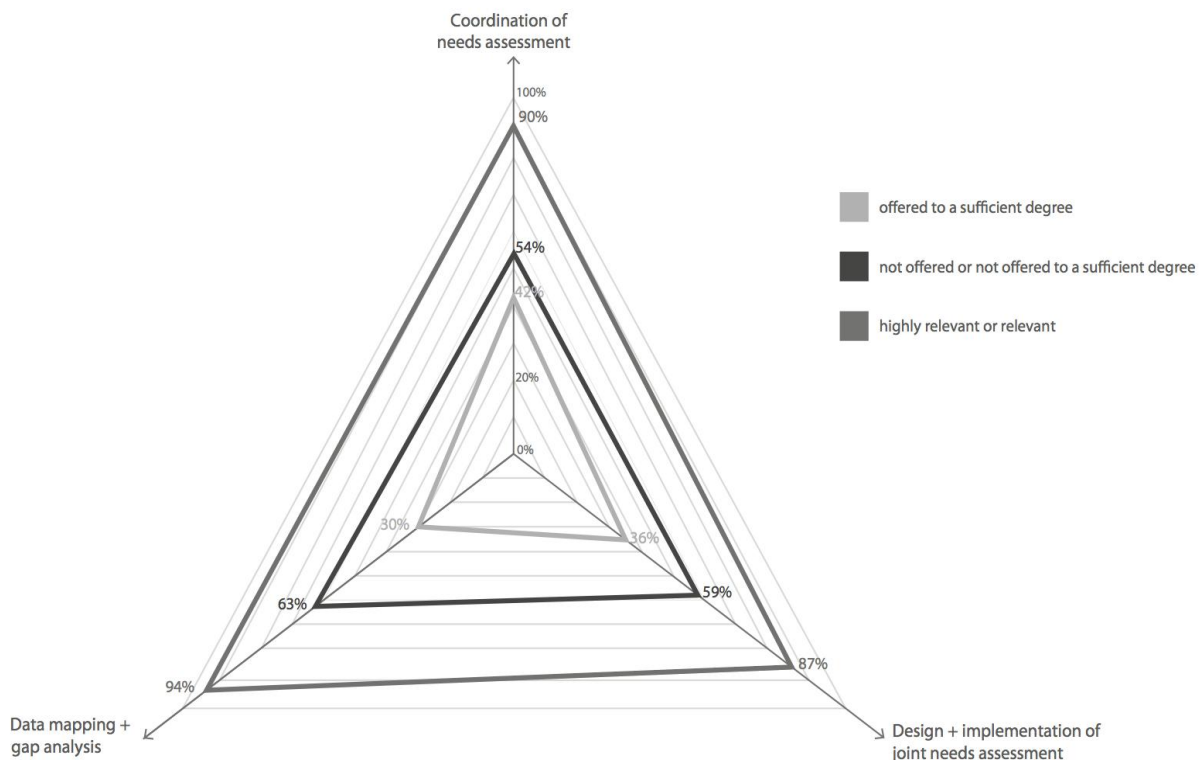
[22] The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. The Spearman correlation is 0.323, based on a sample of n =392.

2.3. Strong engagement in strategy formulation with limited results

> Main findings: Most stakeholders acknowledge that the involvement of food security coordination mechanisms in strategy processes can have benefits, especially when it results in more balanced funding for the food and agriculture/livelihoods components of the response. However, interviewees criticised system-wide strategy-formulation processes as heavy, time-consuming and dominating the agenda and doubted whether it was a worthwhile investment. >>> Recommendation 1

27.   In most of the contexts analysed for this evaluation, **strategy formulation** is a very important part of the activities of food security clusters or similar coordination mechanisms. They contribute the sector-specific sections to system-wide strategy and appeal documents such as the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP), Strategic Response Plans (SRPs) and national plans, like the National Food and Nutrition Policy and Draft Strategy in *Kenya.* In *Bangladesh*, the food security cluster developed its own sectoral strategy as part of the sector-wide contingency plan.

28.   When asked about system-wide strategy-development processes led by UN OCHA and the Humanitarian Country Team, most stakeholders' first response is to emphasise that it is an extremely **time-intensive process.** It typically involves numerous consultations and workshops, first for the formulation of the strategy, then for its periodic review and adaptation. In many cases, members feel that these processes dominate the agenda of the coordination mechanism, leaving little room for addressing other issues. In *Chad* and *Mali*, for example, the preparation of the coordinated appeal required most of the cluster's work over three months, but did not result in any funding for proposals submitted by NGOs.

29.   That said, the case studies show that the **process of strategy formulation clearly benefits** from the involvement of food security coordination mechanisms. Most of the assessed coordination mechanisms facilitate processes that are much more inclusive and participatory than they would otherwise be. As a result, members have greater ownership of the strategy documents, and the sector strategies are more detailed and more representative of the priorities and approaches of different partners. While partners generally acknowledge these benefits, many **question the operational significance** of system-wide strategy documents and therefore doubt whether they are a worthwhile investment. Rather than building their own planning on the strategies, most partners focus on reflecting their existing plans and approaches in the strategies, and it is mainly for newcomers and new projects that the strategies serve as an orientation point. In addition, humanitarian organisations believe that an increasing share of donor funding – from both traditional and non-traditional donors – is allocated outside of the centralised strategy and funding documents.

30.   In food security, an important concern is whether the joint approach promotes a more integrated and holistic understanding of the **concept of food security** that covers food availability, access, stability and utilisation. An integrated understanding of the concept is important, as neglecting one or another aspect can lead to inappropriate interventions. Such an understanding also shows that a range of different sectors or areas of the response have an impact on food security, including food aid, agriculture, livelihoods and nutrition. Encouraging a holistic understanding was a key motivation behind the creation of a joint global FSC, as opposed to separate food aid and agriculture clusters. The needs assessments and strategies

developed by food security clusters or working groups co-led by FAO and WFP do reflect a good, integrated understanding of the different components of food security. In practice, however, the effect of the joint coordination mechanisms on the conceptual understanding and the activities of members seems limited, for the following reasons:

- Many food security coordination mechanisms treat the different aspects of food security – in this case, mainly food aid and agriculture/livelihoods – side-by-side, sometimes even in a sequential manner. In the *Philippines,* for example, many stakeholders at local level believed that the cluster was a "food cluster" led by WFP in the beginning of the response and that its focus should change only when the response moves into the recovery phase and FAO takes over the coordination function. If both aspects are discussed in the same meeting, organisations can develop a broader understanding of food security through mutual exposure. Yet, there were very few efforts in any of the contexts analysed to directly discuss the concept and its practical implications. Likewise, as stated above, a systematic response analysis, examining which response options from across the entire field of food security are most appropriate in any given situation, was almost entirely lacking.

- Many of the members of food security coordination mechanisms, especially national and international NGOs, but also members of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and some donors, have long adopted integrated approaches to food security by combining food, voucher, cash, agriculture and livelihoods interventions and including resilience considerations in chronic emergencies. While they welcome integrated food security coordination, their approach is therefore little affected by the cluster.

- The links between emergency food security coordination and longer-term approaches and actors (including disaster risk reduction, resilience and development) were weak, including in chronic or frequently recurring emergency situations such as *Mali* and *Chad*. Humanitarian Coordinators, Humanitarian Country Teams, UN OCHA and the clusters could all play a role in strengthening such links.

- WFP, with its clear mandate for food-oriented programmes, has been undergoing an important shift in its concepts and approaches over recent years. Thus, it moved from the concept of "food aid" to that of "food assistance," encompassing a greater variety of response modalities. It is also gradually expanding its reach, not only by taking into account the longer-term effects of its food purchase policies ("purchase for progress"), but also by adding agricultural components like kitchen gardens and seed distributions to some of its programmes. These developments, however, are part of a larger process of organisational change driven by a multitude of factors, including global developments. The food security cluster is supporting this process, but it is not a major factor at play. This is supported by the fact that the evaluation could not identify any specific examples of joint food security coordination leading to better practical cooperation between WFP and FAO.

31.   An important practical obstacle for implementing an integrated food security response is **funding**. Traditionally, agriculture has been one of the least-funded areas, while food aid or food assistance has been one of the best-funded targets of humanitarian response. In this respect, joint food security coordination mechanisms are making a positive contribution. Globally, the funding imbalance between food and agriculture/livelihoods has become more difficult to track since both elements now appear under food security in OCHA's financial tracking system. The evidence available at country level suggests that there still is a clear imbalance, but that joint food security coordination has in some cases helped to alleviate it. Similarly, the survey data show a relatively weak but positive correlation between the development of joint response plans and the balance between food aid and agriculture and livelihoods projects (see Figure 7). Interviewees in several countries examined for this evaluation believe that it has become somewhat easier to mobilise funding for agriculture and livelihoods projects early on in the response when WFP, through the cluster or working group, lends its weight to an appeal and advocates for a more integrated food security response. In *Somalia*, for example, the funding balance improved over time. In the *Sahel*, by contrast, interviewees saw little change. In addition, in some cases, such as *Pakistan*, the food security cluster used pooled funds to cover underfunded areas in the agriculture and livelihoods response. However, the funding imbalance remained a serious concern in all cases. Interviewees stressed that FAO's weak operational presence in many emergency contexts was an important obstacle to mobilising more funding for agriculture and livelihoods projects – just as the lack of funding prevents FAO from strengthening its operational presence.

Figure 7: Correlation between the development of common response plans and the balance between food aid and agriculture[23]

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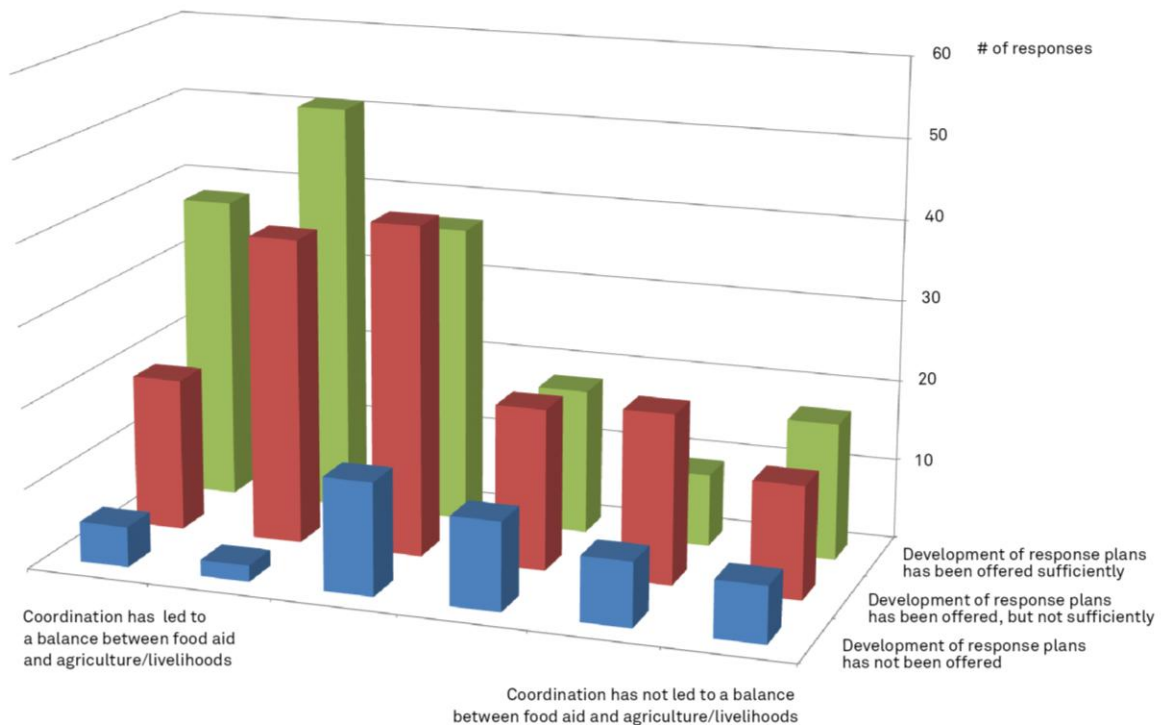
[23] The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. The Spearman correlation is 0.241, based on a sample of N=388.

2.4. Duplications avoided, little active role in addressing gaps

Main findings: Food security coordination has a clear, positive effect on reducing duplications. Yet duplications persist, and most coordination mechanisms do not play the role they could in identifying and helping to address response gaps. >>> Recommendations 2, 5 and 6

32.   In all of the case studies analysed and in many of the countries covered by the survey food security coordination mechanisms make a valuable contribution, as they **help to identify and reduce duplications** in the response. In most cases, humanitarian organisations identify potential areas of overlap by sharing information on ongoing and planned operations in coordination meetings and through the 4Ws matrix. The concerned partners then usually resolve the issue bilaterally. In some cases, the coordination mechanism facilitates a resolution – for example in *Pakistan*, where the cluster helped to allocate local areas among operational agencies.

33.   The evaluation team collected numerous concrete examples of duplications being avoided. In the *Philippines*, for example, two organisations were planning food distributions in the same area and agreed to serve the area on a rotating basis. In *Mali*, two organisations agreed on a geographical distribution of intervention areas for food assistance. In *Kenya*, the devolved coordination structures allocate different intervention areas to different organisations and thereby avoid duplications. In *Pakistan*, two organisations compared their beneficiary lists during the response to the Khyber displacement crisis and eliminated 1,500 duplications. In all of these cases, the concerned organisations were therefore able to use the freed-up resources to cover other response gaps. In addition to these concrete and documented examples, a majority of the humanitarian organisations interviewed for this evaluation stated that they used the information products provided by the food security coordination mechanism to inform their own planning and target their assistance to comparatively underserved areas. It is not possible to quantify what effect these mechanisms have on the coverage of food security interventions since most successfully avoided duplications are not recorded. Since each case study was able to demonstrate at least some examples of avoided duplications and subsequent re-allocations of resources, we can be certain that effective food security coordination has a positive effect on coverage.

34.   While reduced, **duplications still persist**. In *Lebanon*, for example, local organisations reported that certain beneficiaries had received the intended food ration up to six times. In *Mali*, one of the major food providers was not aware that an NGO had established a parallel pipeline in the same area. In *Chad*, two NGOs only discovered the duplication when they began their projects in the same community. In the *Philippines*, a Taiwanese Buddhist foundation was delivering assistance at a reportedly fairly large scale, but the food security cluster as well other clusters had no information about the kind of assistance it delivered and where.

35.   The main reason for these observed ongoing duplications is that local and non-traditional humanitarian actors are still largely not participating in food security clusters or similar coordination mechanisms (for more details, see Section 3.2 below). In places where local organisations act merely as implementing partners for UN agencies or international NGOs, coordination mechanisms can collect most information about their activities. But in places where they have independent

funding, duplications are very likely to occur. Therefore, the problem is particularly acute in areas that see large investment by non-traditional donors – for example, the Gulf States and in middle-income countries where significant resources can be mobilised locally. Another reason for persisting duplications is that the 4Ws matrix has shortcomings, particularly when it comes to regularly updated information about planned projects, which is often incomplete and unreliable (see §24 above and §64 below).

36.   Beyond avoiding duplications, many stakeholders expect clusters and similar coordination mechanisms to play a more active role in identifying response gaps and helping to address them – be it by directing partners to gaps, by advocating for more resources, by organising joint action and drawing on the resources of several partners to fill gaps or by relying on the role of lead agencies as providers of last resort. A majority of interviewed humanitarian organisations indicated that they use the 4Ws information to target comparatively under-served areas. Beyond that, however, most coordination mechanisms assessed for this evaluation could have been **more active in addressing gaps**. The most positive case among the eight country studies was Pakistan (see Box 2). The contingency plan designed in *Bangladesh* also looks promising in this respect, as the lead agencies plan to intervene in areas not covered by other organisations. Other positive examples can be found in *Mali*, where a joint assessment by the sub-national cluster of a localised looming crisis triggered responses to the identified gap, and *Kenya*, where the last short-rains assessment triggered a relatively fast government response to affected countries.

Box 2: Good practice on actively addressing gaps

The FSC in Pakistan is a good practice example of how to identify and actively address coverage gaps. There were several examples at subnational level where the cluster identified gaps in the food security coverage through meetings or the 4Ws matrix. After discussing their project proposals in the cluster, cluster members or consortia then directed new interventions to areas and people in need that were not yet covered by aid. In Sindh, the cluster created a needs and coverage map and used it to convince the government that response gaps in the province were severe. It thereby gained the government's support for launching an appeal, which helped to address some gaps. There is, however, no comprehensive, country-wide overview of response gaps.

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37.   Unfortunately, most food security coordination mechanisms remain too passive in identifying and addressing gaps. Interviewees highlighted several factors explaining why this is the case: First and foremost, most food security coordination fora (along with other clusters) see themselves as platforms for information exchange, rather than as mechanisms for taking decisions and organising a joint response to gaps, even though guidance related to the Transformative Agenda suggests otherwise. In the absence of strong leadership from the Humanitarian Country Team and the Humanitarian Coordinator, this leads in most cases to the lack of a collective agenda for action. Second, most food security coordination mechanisms remain weak at providing analyses of coverage gaps, be it because the data they collect are too incomplete or because they don't sufficiently use available data to identify gaps. Third, most coordination mechanisms do not discuss new project proposals (as was the case in Pakistan), unless they relate to a pooled funding

mechanism. Fourth, important donors do not always link their own decisions as closely to cluster analyses and recommendations as was the case in Pakistan and the Sahel and humanitarian organisations often lack the necessary flexibility to adapt their plans to new information. Finally, the originally intended function of cluster lead agencies as providers of last resort has been strongly reduced over time and plays only a very small role today.

2.5. Effects on technical standards variable, little attention to other quality issues at country level

> Main findings: Food security coordination mechanisms can have a clear, positive effect on the quality and consistency of humanitarian action where they define or disseminate technical guidance. There are, however, many cases in which the coordination mechanisms either provide no technical guidance or cover only a small share of relevant issues. Most of the coordination mechanisms assessed also pay little attention to cross-cutting issues. >>> Recommendations 2 and 5

38. Another important function of coordination is to promote the consistency and quality of programmes. The performance of the assessed food security coordination mechanisms was highly variable in this respect.

39. In most contexts – including *Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Philippines, Turkey/Northern Syria, Lebanon* and *Kenya* – the food security coordination mechanism developed **technical guidance** to promote harmonisation of approaches and compliance with relevant standards. This includes guidance regarding the composition of food baskets; guidance on when, where and how to use cash and vouchers; guidance on the rates to be used in cash programmes; guidance on what kinds of agricultural interventions are appropriate and at what times and in what areas; guidance on how to implement appropriate kitchen-garden programmes; guidance for livestock programmes and other similar issues. In some cases, the guidelines were supplemented by technical trainings offered by the coordination mechanism on areas like market analysis or the livestock emergency guidelines and standards (for example, in *Pakistan, Bangladesh* and *Kenya*). In *Kenya*, the website of the food security coordination mechanism also provides links to technical guidance elaborated elsewhere.

40. In several cases, these guidance documents and the related discussions and trainings had demonstrable **positive effects** (see also Box 3). In *Turkey/Northern Syria*, for example, the working group defined a threshold for food packages that were deemed sufficient. This led to much more consistent and realistic reports about how many people were reached with sufficient food parcels, as well as an increase in the proportion of sufficient packages. In the *Philippines*, many organisations adopted a common standard for cash for work rates, linked to the minimum wage. In addition, a presentation of FAO's work on fisheries and coastal resources highlighted the complexity of such interventions and led to several cluster members adapting their approaches.

> **Box 3: Good practice in providing guidance for cash & voucher interventions**
>
> Cash and voucher programming is a crucial area in which the FSC in *Pakistan* has been providing technical guidance. With very active participation of leading organisations in cash interventions, the cluster's cash working group has created and disseminated guidelines detailing under what conditions cash interventions are appropriate and what transfer modalities can be used. The cluster also facilitated links between humanitarian actors and banks and telecommunications companies that can facilitate cash transfers. The guidelines were supplemented by highly appreciated technical trainings, for example on market assessments.
>
> The use of and compliance with the guidelines and the trainings is high. This is because humanitarian organisations saw a clear need for this kind of guidance, the guidelines reflect the approaches of the major cash providers, they are not too prescriptive, and major donors request adherence to them. Several organisations reported that they had changed their plans for implementing cash programmes in areas that the cluster characterised as not suitable (for example for landless farmers in Sindh who are highly indebted and would have to use cash to repay loans). As a result, cash and voucher interventions have become relatively widespread in Pakistan and are not used in certain areas where they would be problematic.
>
> As the cash working group is a sub-group of the FSC, it mainly involves food security actors. The challenge of liaising and coordinating with other sectors for which cash and vouchers are also relevant has still to be solved. Another remaining challenge relates to the harmonisation of the level of assistance. While the guidelines provide some general orientations, no specific amount is mentioned leading to substantial variations in actual practice, with contributions ranging from 5.000 to 8.400 rupees.

41.   However, stakeholders also emphasised that there were significant **gaps** related to technical guidance and standards. First, several countries, including *Mali* and *Chad*, did not define any common stances and only had some discussions on technical issues during coordination meetings. In some other contexts, including *Lebanon* and *Turkey/Northern Syria*, technical guidance was very restricted, either in terms of thematic coverage (considering, for example, mainly food-basket composition) or in terms of applying to only part of the response (for example, responding to registered refugees, but not to non-registered refugees, returnees, Palestinian refugees or the host population – groups that received very different levels of assistance). Second, technical guidance usually did not reach those organisations that were not actively participating in the coordination mechanisms. Local and non-traditional humanitarian actors that have often not been involved in global discussions about technical standards were in particular unable to benefit from the jointly defined guidance. Third, compliance by active members of the coordination forum varied. Compliance was high in contexts with strong member buy-in and donor support, such as *Pakistan*. In the *Philippines*, by contrast, compliance with guidance on cash for work rates was low, as even one of the lead agencies applied its own standard, rather than adopting the common one. Guidance developed for boat construction methods was little used, as the proposed solution was not well accepted within affected communities.

42. The food security cluster in *Bangladesh* provides good practice in this respect, as it explicitly defines its own role as ensuring that participants are aware of and their responses in line with policy guidelines, technical standards and relevant commitments established by the government.[24]

43. Compared to technical standards, the observed coordination mechanisms paid little attention to other, cross-cutting quality issues such as gender, age, disability or the environment. While it was relatively common for dedicated focal points hosted by OCHA or other humanitarian organisations to participate in coordination meetings and to give presentations, these issues were little reflected in strategies or activities. A notable exception was a case in the Philippines, where a local organisation contributed information about the gender roles in fishing communities through the cluster, which led to changes in the design of livelihood programmes to ensure they would benefit both men and women. The key difference from other interventions related to cross-cutting issues was that the information provided was concrete, new and of direct operational relevance.

2.6. Much stronger reporting, little learning

> Main findings: Food security coordination mechanisms, especially those supported by dedicated information-management officers, have clearly improved reporting, satisfying some of the demands for greater accountability expressed by donors and promoted through the Transformative Agenda. They have, however, not lived up to their potential for promoting learning. >>> Recommendations 1,2, 3 and 5

44. Food security coordination mechanisms play a central role in collecting and collating data about the activities of their members. In the great majority of the cases analysed for this evaluation (except in *Kenya*, for example), the coordination teams – also in other clusters / sectors – spend much of their time convincing members to regularly update the information about their programmes in the 4Ws matrix (which remains an issue in all contexts, see §64), cleaning the submitted data and mapping the results. As a result, **more regular and more reliable reports** about the food security assistance provided by member organisations have become available. The clearest example of this effect is *Turkey/Northern Syria*, already referred to above, where more consistent reporting standards after the introduction of a "cluster-like" coordination structure led to a shift from reporting that a total of 2.5 million people had received some kind of food assistance to reporting that only 250,000 had received the minimum ration. Donors in particular strongly appreciate these improvements in reporting and believe that it strengthens the accountability of food security responses.

45. Typically, food security coordination mechanisms collect information provided by their members, but conduct **little monitoring** themselves. Exceptions include cases in which the coordination mechanism plays a strong role in supporting pooled funds and becomes involved in joint monitoring visits (for example, in the Sindh province in *Pakistan*) or where they contribute to joint monitoring reports related to Strategic Response Plans (for example in the *Philippines*). While these reports focus on compiling overview information on the response, the food security cluster in the *Philippines* also conducted a community consultation exercise. The exercise strongly involved local partner organisations and served to identify gaps and priorities to

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[24] As defined in the terms of reference of the food security cluster in Bangladesh.

inform operational recovery planning.

46. Most stakeholders believe that a more formal, direct monitoring or even evaluatory function would contradict the spirit of partnership in which coordinators play a neutral, facilitating role. A less controversial role for food security coordination mechanisms would be to encourage members to strengthen or improve their efforts to monitor and evaluate the effects of their interventions on beneficiaries. However, the evaluation team has not been able to identify any such case. Similarly, of the observed coordination mechanisms, only the *Kenya* Food Security Steering Group provides regular assessments of the food security situation that allow for an analysis of the impact of the response.

47. Crucially, the evaluation also found very **little evidence that coordination mechanisms supported learning** from existing data and evaluations beyond information-sharing during coordination meetings. Only in *Bangladesh* did the food security cluster explicitly recognise and include lessons learned – namely, the need to formalise coordination arrangements at local level – into its new plan. In several other cases, including *Chad* and *Mali*, coordinators encouraged members to present insights about their activities or the local context. At the same time, however, the coordination teams in these countries were not aware of the relevant experiences of coordination mechanisms in other countries – for example, with the highly appreciated cash and voucher guidelines in *Pakistan*. The observed food security coordination mechanisms also made little effort to identify lessons or share relevant monitoring or evaluation results of individual organisations. The survey responses reflect this imbalance between strong information sharing and weak learning, as shown in Figure 8: The blue line shows that 73% believe that a sufficient level of information sharing meetings were offered, as compared to 50% for information collection for the 4Ws and only 25% for exchanges of good practices and lessons learned. The efforts of the global FSC to collect and disseminate lessons are particularly important against this background.

Figure 8: Gaps in activities to exchange good practices and encourage lesson learning
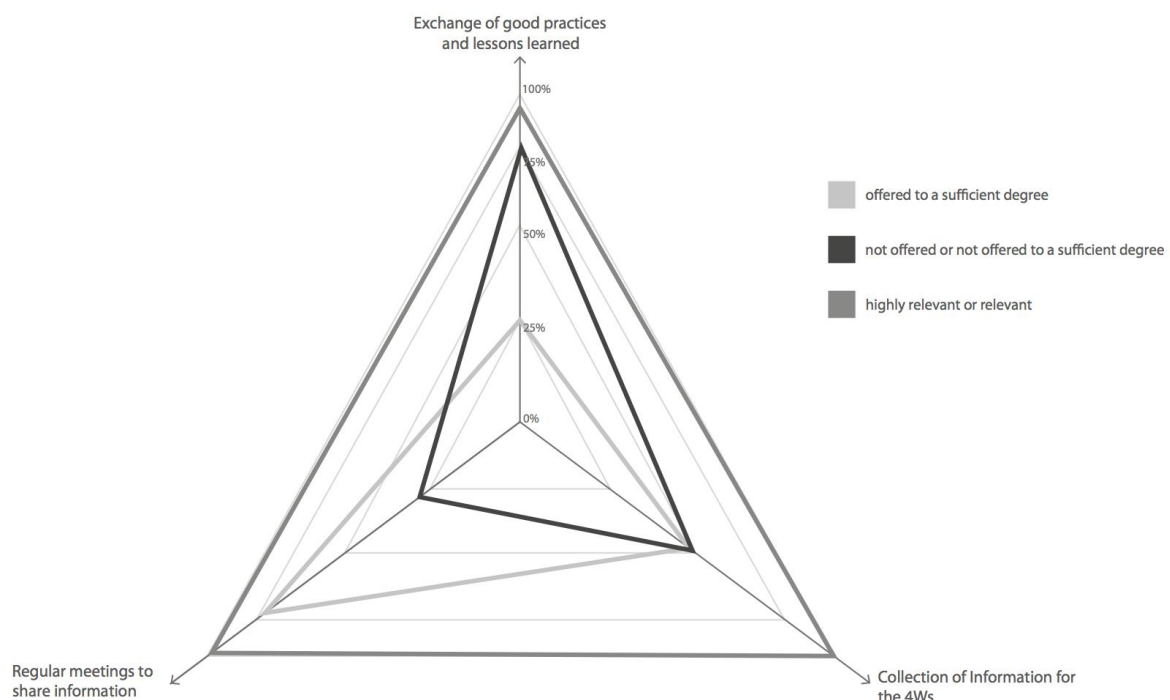
2.7. Little engagement in preparedness, with promising pilots

Main findings: Overall, preparedness activities of food security clusters and similar coordination mechanisms remain weak. The example of the cluster in Bangladesh is encouraging and offers important lessons for other contexts, even though its products have not yet been tested in practice. >>> Recommendation 4

48.   According to the guidance developed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, preparedness is meant to be an ongoing process, underpinning all stages of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle, including times before and after a crisis.[25] Depending on the context, clusters and other sector-based coordination mechanisms have different responsibilities for supporting preparedness. In countries with a Humanitarian Coordinator, in-country coordination mechanisms are meant to support planning, information management, capacity mapping and potentially training to promote preparedness. In high-risk countries without a Humanitarian Coordinator, global clusters are meant to support Resident Coordinators in identifying which clusters will be activated in which scenarios and in contingency planning. Global clusters are also meant to support sectors and potential cluster lead agencies in implementing Minimum Preparedness Actions and Emergency Readiness Actions.[26]

49.   Despite this guidance, the **role of clusters in preparedness remains unclear** for most food security coordination teams and members (see Section 3.4 below). Among the case studies, efforts of food security coordination mechanisms to strengthen preparedness – be it by clarifying coordination arrangements or by strengthening national systems and capacities – are relatively rare. In cases where they do happen, the effects of these activities are uncertain.

50.   Among the food security coordination mechanisms analysed for this evaluation, most – including those in *Chad, Mali, Lebanon and Turkey/Northern Syria* – did not play an active role in preparedness at all. The level of engagement in other countries varied greatly. The cluster in *Pakistan* supported some capacity-building measures through trainings at local level. In the *Philippines*, clusters co-led by the government and UN agencies existed before typhoon Yolanda, while the current food security cluster in *Bangladesh* mainly focuses on preparedness.

51.   **Preparedness pilots are encouraging, but their effects are still uncertain**. The primary "preparedness case" in the evaluation's sample of case studies is *Bangladesh* (see Box 4). While it counts as a good practice example for contingency planning, its relevance and effectiveness have yet to be tested in practice. The case of the *Philippines* suggests that some caution is necessary. It was beyond the scope of this evaluation to assess whether the pre-Yolanda clusters helped to strengthen national capacity. However, the Yolanda response clearly shows that they did not manage to define an effective coordination set-up. The clusters activated in the aftermath of the typhoon did not match the existing architecture, existed in parallel to the government-UN co-led clusters for a period of time and led to a range of mandate questions, especially regarding the relationship between agriculture and food, as well as the boundaries between the food security, early recovery and livelihoods clusters.

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[25] See IASC (2012), *Inter-Agency Standing Committee Transformation Agenda Reference Document 5. Responding to Level 3 Emergencies: The Humanitarian Programme Cycle*, PR/1212/4224/7 and IASC (2013), *Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at the Country Level.*
[26] IASC SWG on Emergency Preparedness (2012), Inter-Agency Minimum Preparedness Actions.

Box 4: Good practice in contingency planning

The (not formally activated) food security cluster in *Bangladesh* decided to concentrate its work on preparedness. Given that Bangladesh is one of the world's most disaster-prone countries, this focus is very relevant. What is more, both the process and the results of the cluster's contingency planning for cyclones count as good practice. The process was highly participatory. As a result, food security cluster members have a strong sense of ownership and buy-in on the plan and the resolutions it contains. Cluster members, for example, take responsibility for ensuring that food security focal points are available at district level in case of an emergency.

The contingency plan itself is also very thorough. It builds on five scenarios for cyclones of different scales. For each, it defines a strategy for the food security cluster response (understood as a joint undertaking), with clear objectives and priorities, guiding principles, an assessment plan, a response plan outlining different response modalities and their standards, as well as a definition of functions and standard operating procedures for engaging with the government and other clusters. A first version of the contingency plan has been tested during the Mahasen Tropical Storm in May 2013, and lessons have been incorporated into a new version. However, the plan and the compliance of cluster members with it still have to be tested in a large-scale disaster.

2.8. Effects on beneficiaries and cost-benefit

Main findings: Not enough data are available to assess what effect coordination has on the food security situation of affected populations and coordination mechanisms have done little to change this. Yet, it is plausible to assume that coordination has a positive effect on beneficiaries as is reduces duplications and increases coverage.

Both food security coordination costs and performance vary strongly between countries. Overall, the majority of stakeholders believe that benefits outweigh costs. The case studies show that some level of dedicated coordination funding is crucial. Beyond that, the level of experience of the coordinators and their clarity of purpose are more important factors. Flexible coordination solutions offer opportunities for cost savings. >>> Recommendations 2, 4, 6 and 7

52. This Section first summarises the effects of food security coordination on humanitarian organisations. It then asks what these findings mean. Is there any evidence that food security coordination ultimately has a positive effect on beneficiaries? Are the investments in improved coordination paying off? And are the costs proportionate to the benefits?

53. As detailed above, food security clusters and similar coordination mechanisms have various **effects** on the different stages of the humanitarian programme cycle. The case studies selected for this evaluation reflect diverse contexts and coordination set-ups. Accordingly, the perceived overall effectiveness of the coordination mechanisms varies (see Figure 9).

Figure 9: Overall effectiveness of food security coordination in countries with at least 10 responses

Colombia: Highly effective 33 %, Effective 67 %
Bangladesh: Highly effective 21 %, Effective 79 %
Pakistan: Highly effective 40 %, Effective 55 %, Not so effective 5 %
Mali: Highly effective 18 %, Effective 77 %, Not so effective 6 %
South Sudan: Highly effective 20 %, Effective 71 %, Not so effective 6 %, Detrimental 3 %
Niger: Highly effective 30 %, Effective 50 %, Not so effective 20 %
Chad: Highly effective 6 %, Effective 72 %, Not so effective 22 %
Philippines: Highly effective 17 %, Effective 58 %, Not so effective 25 %
Nepal: Effective 73 %, Not so effective 27 %
Afghanistan: Highly effective 24 %, Effective 48 %, Not so effective 28 %
DRC: Highly effective 16 %, Effective 55 %, Not so effective 25 %, Detrimental 4 %
Sudan: Highly effective 9 %, Effective 59 %, Not so effective 32 %
Kyrgyzstan: Effective 60 %, Not so effective 40 %

Legend: Highly effective | Effective | Not so effective | Detrimental

297 responses // only countries with at least ten responses // differences between countries are significant (Chi-Square 87.163 df=48 p<0,001)

54. Across this diversity, the coordination mechanisms make relatively consistent, **positive contributions** by:

- Strengthening relationships between humanitarian organisations;
- Making information available;
- Contributing to broader humanitarian strategy and appeal documents (where they exist);
- Helping to avoid duplications;
- Facilitating technical discussions;
- Improving reporting for the sector.

55. Due to the factors discussed in the next chapter, most food security coordination mechanisms do, however, not reach more ambitious coordination goals, even if good practice examples exist for at least some of them. Therefore, positive **effects in the following areas are rare**:

- Creating effective links to local and non-traditional humanitarian actors;

- Filling knowledge gaps regarding the situation and the needs of affected populations;

- Fully eliminating duplications;

- Facilitating joint action to fill response gaps;

- Promoting broader quality issues and learning;

- Enhancing preparedness.

56. **Effects on beneficiaries:** Humanitarian coordination seeks to influence the behaviour and activities of humanitarian organisations. It affects beneficiaries only indirectly, and it is usually very difficult to attribute changes in the food security situation of affected populations to coordination. Rather than trying to prove any such causal link, this evaluation first asked whether coordination strengthened impact monitoring and assessment. As discussed above (§44), food security coordination clearly improves collective reporting of how many beneficiaries receive what kind of assistance. However, the evaluation identified **no initiatives to conduct or improve outcome or impact monitoring**.

57. Second, the evaluation asked whether duplications and gaps had decreased or coverage increased due to coordination. As detailed above (Section **Errore. L'origine riferimento non è stata trovata.**), most of the case-study countries were able to offer concrete examples of **avoided duplications**. Fewer duplications mean that humanitarian assistance is delivered in a more equitable way and that scarce resources can reach a greater number of people. While this effect is difficult to quantify, it is reasonable to assume that effective food security coordination has a positive effect on beneficiaries by increasing coverage.

58. **Cost-benefit analysis:** Assessing the cost-effectiveness of food security coordination also meets significant methodological problems. As Table 2 shows, the direct costs of food security coordination vary considerably. In addition, there are significant indirect costs, such as the time partners need to attend meetings and provide information. What's more, the benefits of coordination are very difficult, if not impossible, to quantify. This makes impossible an "objective" or "scientific" analysis of whether investments in food security coordination are worthwhile. Since different institutions and individuals attach varying degrees of priority to different issues, this judgment will always be subjective. That said, the evaluation collected a number of observations suggesting that a clear **majority of traditional humanitarian actors believe that benefits outweigh costs**:

- First, the survey conducted for this evaluation included an explicit question regarding the cost-effectiveness of food security coordination. While we must bear in mind that the answers most likely reflect a self-selection bias (with more active and more convinced participants of coordination mechanisms likelier to respond to the survey), the answers are still quite clear. 44 percent perceive the coordination mechanism as a clearly worthwhile investment and 32 percent as a somewhat worthwhile investment, with only 6 percent seeing the investment as not really worthwhile and 1 percent seeing it as clearly not worthwhile (see Figure 10).

Figure 10: Perceptions on whether or not the food security coordination mechanism is a worthwhile investment

Yes, clearly — 44 %
Yes, somewhat — 32 %
No, not really — 6 %
No, clearly not — 1 %
Don't know — 17 %

395 responses // weighted per country // 43 countries
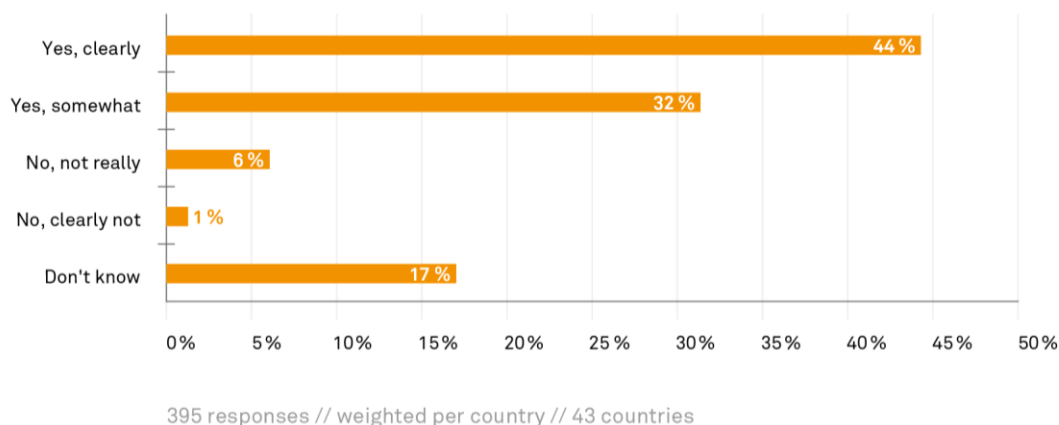
- Second, the sample of case studies included two cases that initially did not have a cluster-like coordination structure: In *Lebanon*, the response was initially coordinated by UNHCR, and in *Turkey*, operations in Northern Syria were initially coordinated by an NGO forum. In both cases, humanitarian organisations quickly started calling for cluster-like coordination systems involving WFP and/or FAO as co-leads and featuring dedicated coordination capacity.

- Third, members of food security coordination fora can "vote with their feet." Since participation in meetings and other coordination activities is voluntary, partners can opt not to attend if they do not think it is worth their time. A large majority (78 percent) of survey respondents indicated that they participate regularly in cluster meetings. An analysis of meeting minutes from the case-study countries[27] and interviewees confirm a relatively regular participation of traditional partners like international NGOs that are major providers of food security programmes – very often at a level of seniority that is appropriate for sharing information, but not for making joint decisions. Moreover, some organisations – like the International Committee of the Red Cross – that initially took a sceptical stance towards the cluster system and only participates as an observer, are now participating more regularly and more actively.

- Finally, donors are in many cases willing to provide dedicated funding for cluster-coordination costs, suggesting that their decision-makers see the added value of coordination. There is, however, an intense debate between donors and lead agencies on who should bear predictable coordination costs.

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[27] An analysis of the attendance lists of the food security cluster meetings in Bangladesh, Pakistan and Mali shows that the attendance rates are highest among large international organisations (organisations that are present in all three contexts participated on average in over 60% of the meetings). For local and national organisations, the attendance lists provide no information on how many organisations never attend any meeting. They show, however, that most local or national organisations only attended once or a few times, whereas a very small number of them attends almost every meeting.

Table 2: Overview of food security coordination capacities and funding

Country & coordination mechanism	Coordination capacity	Dedicated donor funding	Overall committed/contributed food security budget in 2013[28]
Food Security Cluster, Pakistan	7 dedicated international and national staff members (3 in Islamabad, 2 in Sindh, 2 in Peshawar). 2 part-time staff (Islamabad).	€ 600,000 for one year	USD 115 mio
Food Security Cluster, Bangladesh	4 dedicated staff members (3 national, 1 international). Position of coordinator jointly assumed by WFP and FAO deputies. Part-time support of VAM officer.	€ 231,000 for one year	USD 5,6 mio
Food Security Working Group, Lebanon	No dedicated staff until October 2013. Since then, 1 dedicated coordinator (standby partner) and rotating NGO co-lead (not dedicated).	None	USD 28,8 mio
Food Security and Livelihoods Working Group, Turkey	3 dedicated international staff (2 coordinators, 1 information manager).	N/A	USD 8,6 mio
Food Security Cluster, Mali	No dedicated capacity until January 2013. Since then, 2 dedicated staff (variously from WFP, FAO, standby partner, early warning mechanism) and co-facilitation from an NGO.	None, currently seeking funding	USD 129 mio
Food Security Cluster, Chad	2 dedicated staff members and 1 part-time co-coordinator. Co-facilitation by NGOs.	€ 200,000 for 10.5 months	USD 172,5 mio
Food Security and Agriculture Cluster, Philippines	7 dedicated international staff, with deployment gaps (3 in Manila, 2 in Tacloban, 2 in Roxas).	$ 540,000 of dedicated WFP special operation for 7 months received	USD 157 (for 2014, by August 2014)
Food Security Working Group, Kenya	No dedicated international staff. FAO staff members have coordination tasks in their terms of references. Kenyan government with dedicated structure leads the coordination mechanism.	None	USD 231 mio

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[28] Data source: Financial Tracking Service

59. **Cost-effectiveness and funding modalities:** Table 2 shows that coordination capacities vary strongly among the different case study countries. Accordingly, the different food security coordination mechanisms require very different levels of funding. They also have different ways of covering these costs, ranging from dedicated donor funding, to contributions through the lead agencies' core budgets, to government funding. Relating these differences to the relative effectiveness of these coordination mechanisms yields the following insights:

- Where internationally-led food security mechanisms lacked any dedicated funding, they often struggled to fulfil even basic cluster functions. Interviewees explained the linkages as follows: Dedicated donor funding – because it does not require lead agencies to choose between their own operations and the common service of facilitating coordination – enables clusters to have more clearly dedicated coordination teams with less turn-over and fewer staffing gaps in place. This is crucial for avoiding conflicts of interest and for delivering basic coordination functions and the associated benefits.

- Once the minimum level of coordination capacity is covered (which varies depending on the complexity and size of the emergency), the case studies show that more capacity and funding do not automatically lead to proportionally better results. Given how different the country cases are in terms of their coordination capacity and context, it was surprising that all food security coordination mechanisms provided similar kinds of benefits and encountered similar kinds of limitations. In the very conducive context of the *Philippines*, for example, the food security cluster encountered similar limitations in terms of involving government actors, local civil society and non-traditional actors as most of the other case examples. Similarly, some of the achievements in *Chad* in terms of reducing duplications and conducting needs assessments are similar to those in *Pakistan*. A more important factor for explaining differences in the effectiveness of the coordination mechanisms was how clearly their sense of purpose and direction was defined in terms of reacting to the needs of operational humanitarian organisations (see also Section 3.1). This, in turn, depends a lot on the level of experience of the coordination teams.

- The case studies and other examples show that flexible coordination solutions offer potential for cost savings. They include, for example, seconding coordination staff to national institutions (as done for example in *Kenya*), engaging national staff on a long-term basis in coordination teams (as done for example in *Pakistan*) and creating slimmer coordination structures by relying on merged clusters and area-based coordination mechanisms at hub and local level (as result, the coordination mechanism created in *Central African Republic* was significantly leaner than that used in the response to typhoon Hayian in the *Philippines*).

3. Factors influencing the effectiveness of food security coordination mechanisms

60. This evaluation set out to explore not only what effects different food security coordination mechanisms have or do not have, but also why they manage to achieve certain results, while they fail to reach others. Some reasons and factors were already mentioned above to explain differences in performance or limits to the effectiveness of certain activities. This chapter pulls the most important factors together and explores them in greater detail. Later, this analysis will form the basis for most of the recommendations. The analysis therefore concentrates on factors that can be influenced by food security coordination mechanisms and their main stakeholders, rather than on external factors that are beyond the control of the main addressees of the evaluation. In order of priority, the most important factors identified by the evaluation are (1) the focus, priorities and activities of the coordination mechanism; (2) the extent of involvement and participation of different actor groups in food security coordination; (3) the support and creation of an enabling environment by the global Food Security Cluster, especially the Global Support Team and the lead agencies FAO and WFP; and (4) the clarity of the thematic and temporal boundaries of food security clusters and similar coordination mechanisms.

3.1. Focus and priorities of the coordination mechanism

> Main findings: FSC members and coordination teams are concerned that food security coordination is too process-oriented. This is driven by systemic demands, in some cases combined with a lack of operational focus on the part of the coordination teams. System-wide process issues absorb a large share of time and coordination capacities, and while this process focus satisfies political, donor and headquarter demands, it does too little to improve operations on the ground. In the medium- to long-term, process focus, if unchecked, risks undermining the operational relevance and credibility of coordination mechanisms like the food security cluster.
> >>> Recommendations 1, 2 and 3

61. A common concern across all case-study countries was that **coordination mechanisms are too focused on bureaucratic processes** (including food security coordination mechanisms), catering more to system-wide and political demands than to the needs of operational agencies. Humanitarian organisations active in food security strongly voiced this concern in all countries, with greater or lesser urgency depending on the context. They often used expressions such as "bureaucratic overload," "feeding the machine" or "extractive information mining" to describe what they perceived as the wrong priorities. Several coordination teams shared this impression. According to them, other meetings and the demands for information, analyses and other products from UN OCHA – that are often informed by information demands from donors – take up too much of their time, leaving little room for addressing the specific needs of their members. A crucial factor in this context is the level of experience of the coordinator or coordination team. Across the case studies, experienced coordinators – particularly those deployed by the Global Support Team – tended to have a better understanding of system-wide processes, requirements and timelines, which enabled them to cope more easily with process demands. They also tended to have a clearer understanding of their own role and the operational priorities of coordination, resulting in a clearer focus on the operational needs of cluster partners.

62.	The process-orientation of the observed coordination mechanisms manifests itself in the more detailed criticisms made by stakeholders. In many cases, the evaluation team could confirm these issues related to the effectiveness of formal meetings, the approach to information management and the application of the new coordination protocols for level 3 emergencies through direct observation, including in the *Philippines* and *Turkey/Northern Syria* cases.

63.	In all case-study countries, formal meetings are a central pillar and, for many members, the primary manifestation of food security coordination. Meetings are held on a regular basis, be it weekly, bi-weekly or monthly, at national, usually sub-national and sometimes local levels. Especially at national level, however, **coordination meetings in several cases lacked a clear sense of purpose** and agenda. In many of the meetings attended by the evaluation team, for example, various parties would make presentations and share information. Only rarely, however, were these inputs followed by a targeted discussion on their possible implications for the group or individual members. In *Bangladesh*, by contrast, the meeting had a clear agenda and purpose and allowed an in-depth discussion on a pressing issue. Similarly, in *Mali* and *Chad*, meetings were well organised, with clear agendas and purposes (see Box 5).

Box 5: Good practice in having a clear purpose for meetings and other coordination activities

In *Chad* and *Mali*, food security cluster meetings at national and sub-national level were well prepared, organised and structured. They had clearly defined agendas and focused on operationally relevant issues such as presentations and discussions of assessment results, updates on the Strategic Response Plan process, sharing of agency news, and discussions on issues such as protection or safety net programmes. The meetings were appreciated by cluster members and managed to mobilise substantial rates of attendance among UN agencies, government institutions, organisations implementing food security projects and donors.

The food security clusters in both countries had launched reflections on their focus and goals. By defining clear objectives and detailed work plans with calendars of activities, the clusters aimed to adopt a more strategic approach to cluster coordination. In the case of Mali, a multi-agency Comité d'Orientation Stratégique (committee for strategic orientation) supports the cluster coordinator in this task.

Despite these efforts, challenges persist in mobilising active contributions of participants. They range from high staff turn-over and a lack of dedicated resources for coordination, to limited capacities to contribute to the cluster and its technical working groups and the lack of results-oriented discussions on the implications of the issues presented for the group and its members.

64.	Issues raised regarding **information management** point in a similar direction. There remain technical problems regarding the main information-management instrument, the 4Ws matrix. Despite efforts to standardise formats, different clusters often still use different reporting formats, and at times even food security clusters or working groups in a country use different formats at national and sub-national levels and often change their reporting formats over time. This creates additional work for partners and members, especially those reporting to several sector-based coordination mechanisms. More importantly, however, **stakeholders question how the gathered information is used**. In several cases – for

example, in *Chad*, *Mali* and *Pakistan* – the 4Ws information collected was not made easily available to members. As mentioned above (§24), the 4Ws are usually strong at recording past activities (who *did* what where) and at improving reports for donors and the headquarters of agencies. They are, however, much weaker at capturing operationally more important, forward-looking data (who *will* do what where). In addition, coordination teams tend to focus on gathering and compiling data and information, while they put less emphasis on analysis, interpretation and dissemination. As a result, available information is not used as effectively as possible.

65.   Finally, the case study on the *Philippines* offers important findings regarding the newly developed **protocols for level 3 ("L3") emergencies**. While the country teams were relatively successful at complying with the protocols and delivering the various requested products in time, interviewees for this evaluation were unanimous in viewing the demands on coordination mechanisms as **excessive**. In Manila, five to eight hours of formal meetings were held every day in the beginning of the response. Moreover, many of the products demanded were driven by externally defined timelines, rather than the needs and the developing situation in the country. As a result, they were of limited relevance to the response. Overall, the operational benefits of coordination in the *Philippines*, at least in the area of food security, are very similar to those observed in other countries. At the same time, the deployed coordination capacities were stronger, with dedicated coordinators and information managers at national and hub levels for all clusters, as well as over 150 UN OCHA staff on the ground. The internal Operational Peer Review of the response confirms these findings and highlights that many stakeholders questioned the cost-benefit ratio of the overall coordination system in this context.

3.2.   Inclusiveness and participation

Main findings: The participation of traditional humanitarian organisations – both donors and operational organisations – in food security coordination is relatively well established, even if certain frustrations about the effectiveness and efficiency of meetings persist. There are, by contrast, major gaps regarding the involvement of and links to governments and local authorities, as well as local civil society organisations and non-traditional humanitarian actors. These gaps undermine the basic functions of food security coordination: Coordination mechanisms are not able to present a complete picture of the response, reliably identify response gaps or fully eliminate duplications. They also miss important opportunities for promoting standards, facilitating mutual learning and supporting transition and exit plans. >>> Recommendations 4 and 5

66.   Food security coordination mechanisms bring humanitarian actors together and provide information and other services to them. Therefore, their effectiveness depends critically on who does (or does not) participate and how actively. The situation can be a virtuous or a vicious cycle: Effective coordination will strengthen participation, which will make coordination more effective – and the other way around.

67.   There are clear differences between the cases assessed for this evaluation in terms of the breadth and depth of participation. In *Bangladesh*, for example, food security cluster members strongly identify with the cluster and think of their activities and plan as "cluster activities." In the Sindh and Khyber provinces of *Pakistan*, the food security clusters are relatively small, but have good participation from local organisations. In *Lebanon*, the food security working group is largely a

meeting of WFP's implementing partners. In some countries without acute current emergencies – covered through additional interviews, not as case studies – food security clusters exist on paper, but do not meet regularly. While these differences are marked, the cases show similar patterns regarding the participation of different actor groups, namely traditional international humanitarian organisations, donors, governments, local organisations and what we might call "non-traditional actors," for lack of a better term.

68. **Traditional, international humanitarian organisations**: Many experienced, international, humanitarian NGOs and members of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement met clusters with considerable scepticism when they were first introduced in 2005-06. This stance has changed markedly. Today, none of the international NGOs or Red Cross members consulted has any principled objections. Most important food security organisations **actively participate** in the global food security cluster, and many have policies or internal instructions encouraging participation at country and local levels. If they choose not to attend national or local meetings, they do so largely for pragmatic reasons: Meetings take too much time, are held in locations that are difficult to reach or are not effective or badly facilitated. If this is the case, international humanitarian organisations often try to participate in different ways – for example, by consulting the information circulated among members or by providing updates on their operations for the 4Ws matrix.

69. In several of the countries assessed for this evaluation, international NGOs were co-facilitating the food security coordination mechanism. NGO co-facilitation was strongly encouraged in the earlier stages of the cluster approach to increase NGO buy-in.[29] NGO co-facilitation is still seen as valuable where relationships between the UN and NGOs were problematic, such as in *Lebanon* and *Turkey/Northern Syria* (see §22). In other areas, including *Mali* and *Chad*, members consulted for this evaluation saw little added value in this arrangement, given that the NGOs were not as active as expected in facilitating coordination.

70. Donors: Three of the most important traditional donors – the European Commission's Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO), the British Department for International Development (DFID) and in some areas the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) – play a central role in supporting food security coordination mechanisms and in encouraging participation in them. In several cases (see Table 2), they, as well as other traditional donors in some cases, provide dedicated funding for food security coordination costs. This funding ensures that dedicated coordination capacity is available and enables longer-term capacity planning. As a result, the food security clusters in Pakistan and Chad benefit from more stable coordination teams, while the cluster in Mali, for example, suffered from rapid turn-over. In some cases, such as in Pakistan, these donors also request that their partners adhere to cluster strategies and standards. Obviously, this makes discussions and decision-making processes in the coordination mechanism more relevant. However, **the close association between donor decisions and cluster plans still remains an exception, rather than the rule**.

71. In some of the case studies, donors channel a share of their contribution through **pooled funds** (see Figure 11). While they involve some trade-offs, the food security coordination mechanisms that played a role in advising pooled funds benefitted from that activity, especially since they did so through specialised

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[29] See Steets et al. (2010), *Cluster Approach Evaluation Phase 2*; Stoddard et al. (2007), *Cluster Approach Evaluation*.

committees with UN, NGO and local representation. While interviewees described related processes as heavy and at times as dominating the cluster agenda, they acknowledged that an involvement in funding processes invigorates cluster processes. Through their link with the fund, cluster strategies and guidelines gain immediate operational relevance, and clusters can actively fill gaps they have identified. Where pooled funds are open to applications of local organisations they encourage local participation. The Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) is more ambivalent in this context. Only UN agencies are eligible for CERF contributions. Where relationships between cluster members are very good, clusters can go through their lead agencies to apply for contributions and use them to address gaps. However, this increases the tension between the lead agencies' roles as facilitators and funders. Where relationships are less than ideal, the availability of CERF funding can therefore reinforce a tendency, especially of WFP, to treat the coordination mechanism as a meeting for implementing partners.

Figure 11: Pooled funds as part of total humanitarian funding in the case study countries

Syria (country visited: Turkey)
CERF / ERF
2014 $563 | 2013 $1,430 | 2012 $429 | 2011 $37 | 2010 $163

Pakistan
CERF / ERF
2014 $117 | 2013 $277 | 2012 $468 | 2011 $499 | 2010 $3,177

Lebanon
CERF / ERF
2014 $288 | 2013 $1,029 | 2012 $161 | 2011 $44 | 2010 $179

Bangladesh
CERF
2014 $17 | 2013 $26 | 2012 $32 | 2011 $66

Mali
CERF
2014 $118 | 2013 $687 | 2012 $220 | 2011 $276 | 2010 $16

Philippines
CERF
2014 $815 | 2013 $739 | 2012 $86 | 2011 $35 | 2010 $34

Chad
CERF
2014 $37 | 2013 $346 | 2012 $401 | 2011 $377 | 2010 $365

Kenya
CERF / ERF
2014 $41 | 2013 $428 | 2012 $634 | 2011 $645 | 2010 $418

= pooled funds
= other funds
$ = total humanitarian funding in million

72.   Governments and local authorities: Governments and local authorities have the primary responsibility to ensure that crisis-affected people receive adequate assistance. In theory, the international humanitarian system is only meant to become active in places where authorities lack the capacity or will to provide or coordinate the delivery of assistance. With regard to coordination, the available guidance is very clear in this respect: Clusters should ideally support national mechanisms for sectoral coordination or complement existing systems. They should also plan their transition strategies early on and, where necessary, provide capacity-building for their national counterparts.30 In addition, in places where governments and local authorities provide assistance related to food security, they are important members of an effective coordination mechanism.

73.   In theory, there consequently is widespread agreement that food security coordination mechanisms should either be led by governments and local authorities or should strongly involve them – at least in settings where natural disasters pose the greatest hazard. In practice, **the food security cluster has made only limited progress in involving or supporting governments and local authorities**. The limited involvement of line ministries, disaster-management authorities and local authorities was a consistent finding from all case-study countries, except *Kenya*, where the government leads the food security working group (see Box 6). Generally, the problem was more pronounced at national than at sub-national level and it occurred not only in conflict settings, but also in natural disaster contexts.

74.   In *Bangladesh*, for example, the food security cluster produced excellent work on preparedness, but its link to government bodies and processes was weak in practice – a problem the cluster itself recognises and is attempting to remedy. In this case, links with central government were stronger than at district level. In the *Philippines*, a food security cluster was activated as part of he system-wide activation for the response to typhoon Yolanda that was initially not linked to the existing agriculture and food/non-food clusters, despite the fact that they all involved WFP and/or FAO as same co-lead agencies. Consequently, the coordination team reported that it was very difficult to achieve an active participation of the government, especially from the side of the Department for Social Welfare and Development, which was designated as responsible for several of the clusters. In addition, none of the observed food security coordination mechanisms was active in supporting capacity-building of their national counterparts. On the contrary, by establishing parallel systems, they probably undermined whatever capacity for coordination existed.

75.   Context is crucial for defining what kind and level of engagement with governments and local authorities is expected and deemed appropriate. If the government is a party to the conflict, humanitarians will limit their engagement to protect the neutrality and impartiality of humanitarian action. In other cases, governments may lack the capacity to lead a response or engage effectively with humanitarian actors. It is therefore in contexts like the ones mentioned above – characterised by chronic or recurring disasters, governments with relatively strong capacities and comparatively little concern about the humanitarian principles – that the expectations for government and local authority involvement are strongest.

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30 IASC (2012), *Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at the Country Level.*

> **Box 6: Good practice in supporting national coordination mechanisms**
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> The Food Security Steering Group in *Kenya* is a successful example of a food security coordination mechanism that is led by the government and supported by international actors. The Steering Group is co-chaired by Kenya's National Disaster Management Authority and FAO and government leadership is well established and recognised. The Steering Group acts as a technical advisory body to the policy body, the Kenya Food Security Meeting, and to organisations working in the areas of drought management and food security. At national level, the Steering Group regularly brings together relevant actors and the great majority of national and international humanitarian food security actors are aligned with the coordination mechanism. Working relations are good and yield concrete results, especially with regard to regular, joint food security analysis and need assessments in arid and semi-arid lands. While the coordination mechanism faces challenges (including overlaps and gaps in food security coordination, gaps in 4Ws information and analysis and limited engagement in standard setting and quality assurance), there is general agreement that it is not necessary to activate traditional, internationally-led clusters in case of an emergency.

76.   Since the importance of national and local systems in chronic and recurrent crisis contexts has been recognised for so long, it is interesting to explore in greater detail why the coordination system as a whole and food security coordination mechanisms in particular have not been able to make more progress in this area. The case studies conducted for this evaluation emphasise the following factors:

- In places where the authority of governments is disputed or where they are involved in a conflict, such as *Syria*, humanitarian organisations are afraid that too intimate an involvement with them may undermine their independence and impartiality. This is a legitimate concern, highlighting how necessary it is to maintain flexible coordination set-ups. Even where authorities play a highly controversial role, however, food security coordination mechanisms should find ways to communicate with them effectively, outside of a cluster co-lead role or regular participation in coordination meetings.

- Governments in least-developed countries such as *Chad* or *Mali* often have severe capacity constraints and thus cannot participate in or effectively lead coordination meetings. At the same time, most humanitarian organisations do not view the strengthening of government capacity as their mandate. Therefore, even in chronic crisis context like *Mali* or *Chad*, humanitarian assistance does little to increase national capacity in the longer term. Little progress has been made so far in either rethinking the mandate of humanitarian organisations or in strengthening links to development actors.

- As UN agencies, WFP and FAO have a mandate to work together with governments, and they have a presence in many countries before the outbreak of a crisis. As co-lead agencies of the food security cluster, they are very well positioned to create links between incoming humanitarian actors and national structures. In the assessed cases, however, the two agencies do not sufficiently use their special position for this purpose. This includes the case of the *Philippines* where parallel international clusters

were created despite the fact that WFP and FAO were co-chairing the pre-existing clusters.

- As discussed above (Section 3.1), the activities and discussions of food security clusters and similar internationally-led coordination mechanisms often focus on international processes and requirements. Many interviewees from governments or local authorities therefore stated that they did not see the relevance of these discussions and had little incentive to attend coordination meetings.

- Interviewees also stressed that the modalities used by food security coordination mechanisms make effective communication with government officials difficult. This includes meetings that are often held in places that are difficult to access for government officials; communication in an international (usually English, French or Spanish) and highly technical language; and communication relying mainly on e-mails and websites, whereas governments often work with hard copies or use social media (for example, in the *Philippines*).

77. **Non-traditional and local humanitarian actors**: In recent years, non-traditional humanitarian actors – including, for example, the governments of Gulf States, and India, Turkey and China, as well as their implementing partners – have started to play a more important role in humanitarian response.[31] In addition, national and local civil society organisations have built significant capacity, especially in Asia, as the example of BRAC in *Bangladesh* illustrates. While all coordination mechanisms assessed for this evaluation are keenly aware of the importance of involving both non-traditional and local actors more actively, very few have made real progress in achieving this. As a result, the core coordination functions suffer severely in some contexts. Where local and non-traditional humanitarian actors provide a significant level of humanitarian response, food security coordination mechanisms cannot deliver a meaningful picture of the response, reliably identify response gaps nor eliminate duplications. Moreover, they miss important opportunities for promoting standards and facilitating mutual learning. The few available good practice examples show how beneficial a stronger involvement can be: In *Pakistan*, local organisations benefitted strongly from trainings offered by the food security cluster, be it on technical issues or practical skills such as proposal writing. In the *Philippines*, the involvement of local organisations enabled other cluster members to better understand the local context and gender roles and to adapt their programming accordingly.

78. In addition to the issues mentioned above (§0), additional factors constrain the participation of local civil society and non-traditional humanitarian actors:

- In some contexts, there are simply too many local NGOs that often are small and do not have any effective umbrella organisations. Involving all of them in coordination meetings would make targeted and decision-oriented discussions impossible.

- Local civil society organisations often do not understand why they need to

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[31] Binder et al. (2010), *Humanitarian Assistance: Truly Universal? A Mapping Study of Non-Western Donors*; Meier et al. (2011), *India's Growing Involvement in Humanitarian Assistance*; Al-Yahya et al. (2011), *Saudi Arabis as a Humanitarian Donor: High Potential, Little Institutionalization*; Binder et al. (2013), *From Dwarf to Giant – Turkey's Contemporary Humanitarian Assistance*.

attend meetings. In interviews, many stressed that this attitude is not only related to what the coordination mechanism has to offer (access to partners and funding in particular). Many also wonder what they could contribute to the coordination mechanism and its members – be it local access and presence, implementation capacity or local knowledge.

- Another important constraining factor is that local civil society organisations often do not have any representation in the capital, and many non-traditional actors have no formal representation in the country at all. Therefore, it is difficult to establish contact with coordination teams that are mainly based in the capital or in larger hubs and have little opportunity to visit communities.

3.3. Support by the Global Support Team and the lead agencies

Main findings: The commitment and capacity of the lead agencies' country and regional offices to effectively support coordination remains variable. Overall, the lead agencies, helped by the Global Support Team, have enabled food security coordination mechanisms at country level to enjoy improved human resources for coordination. In this context, direct deployments of experienced members of the Global Support Team achieve better results than efforts to train a broad roster of people. >>> Recommendations 3 and 6

79. Another important factor influencing the effectiveness of food security coordination mechanisms is the level of support they receive from the food security cluster's Global Support Team and from the two lead agencies, WFP and FAO. This support is most relevant for three areas: ensuring that adequate coordination capacity is available at country and local levels; demonstrating commitment to a coordinated approach; and helping to address broader and more systemic issues.

80. The global food security cluster has made **clear progress with providing adequate human resources for coordination**. Most of the analysed countries have dedicated coordination teams, including coordinators and information managers at national and often also sub-national levels. The Global Support Team plays a critical role in this respect. On the one hand, it advocates for the lead agencies and their standby partners to deploy teams with appropriate seniority and coordination experience. In the *Philippines*, for example, the relatively long-term deployment of an information manager by a standby partner was very well received. On the other hand, the Global Support Team deploys its own members when necessary, to fill gaps or to address particularly difficult situations. All direct **Global Support Team deployments were highly praised**. The experience and skills of these deployees visibly invigorated the coordination mechanisms. The food security cluster's Global Support Team also stands out for its willingness and ability to find flexible ways of supporting coordination capacity at country level. In *Turkey/Northern Syria*, for example, UN agencies are not involved in cross-border operations in Northern Syria. The food security cluster was the first to determine that there was nevertheless a need for dedicated coordination capacity and to deploy a coordinator and information manager, hosted initially by another organisation. Months later, other clusters followed suit.

81. While the human resources available for food security coordination have clearly improved and are strong in comparison to those of other clusters, **gaps and areas for further improvement remain**. The Global Support Team has not had the

necessary capacity to extend support to all countries and fill all important deployment gaps. The country case studies showed the following additional gaps and the reasons for them:

- The buy-in of the lead agencies' regional and country offices is variable. In some contexts, such as Bangladesh, WFP and FAO country offices believe so strongly in the added value of food security coordination, that their core operational and management staff manage to facilitate highly effective coordination. In Mali, WFP and FAO went through great lengths to provide dedicated coordination capacity in the absence of dedicated donor funding for coordination. In other cases, the commitment is lower. In the Philippines, for example, WFP, despite the advocacy of the Global Support Team, deployed a national cluster coordinator without sufficient coordination experience and often asked the coordination team to fulfil agency requests. In Chad, the management expressed little interest in the activities of the food security cluster. Survey responses confirm this concern. They show that the lead agencies, in particular WFP, see the food security cluster more sceptically than other stakeholder groups (see Figure 12).

Figure 12: Effectiveness rating of the FSC by stakeholder groups

395 responses // differences between organizationsare are significant (Chi-Square 50,497 df=28 p<0,006)
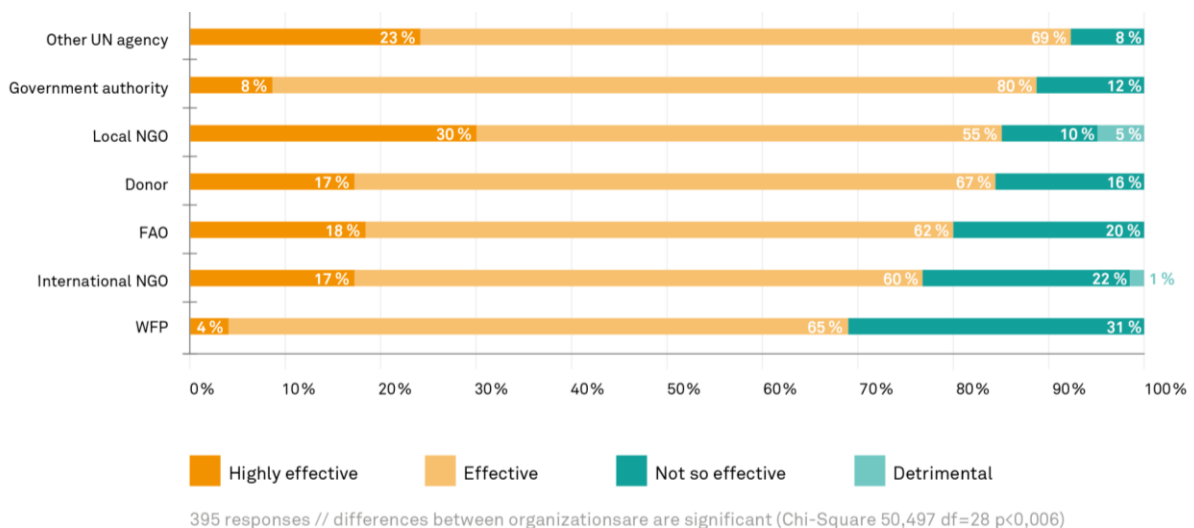
- Even in places where **FAO** management is committed to food security coordination, it sometimes **lacks the organisational presence and available surge capacity** to effectively respond to emergencies and to fulfil completely its responsibilities as a lead agency. In the *Philippines*, for example, FAO lacked presence at the local level, leading to a perceived dominance of WFP in the cluster and exacerbating gaps and delays in the deployment of coordination teams.

- In recent years, the global food security cluster has invested heavily in providing coordination and information-management training to staff members of WFP, FAO and some partner organisations, including standby partners of the lead agencies. According to available information, a total of 187 people were trained in eight regional training workshops in 2011 and 2012, and 37 of them reported having had cluster experience. While trainees rated the trainings highly and appreciated their benefits, the trainings served more to familiarize a broader group of staff members with

the food security cluster and few only very **few trained staff members have been deployed** as members of coordination teams to date. Of the coordinators met in the context of the evaluation, only one had participated in the training. The trainings thus served more to introduce representatives from a broad range of organisations to the newly created food security cluster and increase the overall number of people with a good background in coordination, than to train future coordination team members. The training recently has been revised to focus on roles and responsibilities in level 3 emergencies.

- At the same time, there are **gaps in the preparation of coordination teams**. For example, many coordination team members interviewed for this evaluation had not been briefed before their deployments, do not receive coordination briefing kits (e.g., relevant guidance, templates and background information on the context) or coordination starter packs (e.g., facilitation materials, a computer with necessary software, a generic e-mail address). Other clusters are more advanced in this respect. The shelter cluster, for example, provides various online resources including both explanatory and ready-to-use documents as well as a "cluster in a box" checklist that summarises the equipment necessary for setting up a cluster quickly and effectively.[32]

- Finally, several country teams, including *Pakistan*, have had very positive experiences with training and deploying national staff members as cluster/working-group coordinators or information managers. The involvement of national staff makes it easier to create links to local organisations, reduces turnover and is usually more cost-effective. Nevertheless, the **involvement of national staff in coordination teams remains relatively rare**.

82. Lead agencies are not just responsible for ensuring adequate human resources for coordination. They are also members of food security coordination mechanisms and as such are responsible for adopting a coordinated approach in their own operations. This matters because WFP and, to a lesser extent, FAO usually provide an important share of the food security interventions. It is also important because the behaviour of lead organisations signals to other members how seriously coordination should be taken; in other words, the lead agencies are expected to lead by setting an example. The **adherence of lead agencies to a coordinated approach varies strongly** among the case-study countries. On the whole, the case examples show that FAO finds it easier to fulfil that part of its lead role, while WFP still faces significant challenges. In *Bangladesh* and *Mali*, both lead agencies strongly support the cluster and align their activities with cluster discussions and decisions (see Box 7). In *Lebanon*, by contrast, WFP has been treating the working group largely as a meeting for its implementing partners. This means that WFP uses coordination meetings to explain its own positions and decisions to partners, rather than to develop them jointly. In the *Philippines*, WFP's activities directly contradicted the efforts of the food security cluster in several instances. Thus, at the time when cluster partners were working to reduce the overall food security appeal, WFP increased its appeal for funds significantly. The organisation also adopted a different rate in its cash for work projects, despite the cluster's agreement on a specific payment level.

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[32] Available at https://www.sheltercluster.org/References/Pages/CoordinationToolKit.aspx (last accessed May 2014).

Box 7: Good practice in providing strong leadership

The food security cluster in *Bangladesh* provides a particularly good example showing the merits of strong leadership by the cluster lead agencies. Both WFP and FAO demonstrate strong leadership and commitment in this case, evidenced among others by the fact that coordination was until recently facilitated by the deputy representative of FAO and the deputy country director of WFP. While the coordinators thus fulfilled a dual function (they were "double-hatted"), they clearly separated agency and cluster agendas. This has contributed to creating a relatively high level of ownership of and commitment to the cluster by members. The result is a cluster with a high degree of common purpose, a shared vision of food security and activities that are highly relevant to cluster members. The positive dynamics also reflect on the relationship between WFP and FAO, who have adopted a relatively joined-up approach to food security programming.

83.   Similarly, the Global Support Team has a much wider range of responsibilities. This evaluation did not assess all activities of the Global Support Team, but focused on those that directly affect country-level coordination. The support provided to coordination teams in a country is highly demand-driven. As a result, the inputs and missions provided are strongly appreciated. However, the support is highly uneven between countries, and some country teams do not even know they can ask for it. Several country teams emphasised that they would be most interested in more activities supporting mutual learning, especially between coordination teams operating in similar regions. Several case studies also brought broader political issues to light that coordination teams cannot address at country level, but that should be raised to global level. These include issues related to advocacy work with donors and the global humanitarian system, the coordination architecture and relationship-building with non-traditional humanitarian actors.

3.4.   Clarity of roles, responsibilities and boundaries

Main findings: By defining clear roles and mandates, the global FSC has created clear benefits when compared with locally developed coordination solutions. However, the case studies show that a range of boundary issues remain open: A lack of a broad understanding as to when and how lead agencies and the Global Support Team can support other coordination solutions; gaps in transition and exit planning; weak links and missing integration with development actors, as well as preparedness, disaster-risk reduction, resilience and nutrition; and little practice in developing intelligent solutions for combining different issue areas and transitioning to area-based coordination systems at local level. >>> Recommendation 7

84.   The cluster system defines relatively clear mandates, roles and responsibilities for clusters, their lead agencies and their members. The case of *Turkey/Northern Syria*, which initially had a locally defined, NGO-led coordination system, demonstrates that this is a great advantage of the cluster system, as it helps to avoid lengthy and often counterproductive discussions about the coordination architecture. However, food security coordination mechanisms in several of the case studies were constrained in their effectiveness by a lack of clarity regarding their temporal, thematic and geographic boundaries.

85.   In terms of the **temporal dimension**, the activation procedures for formal

clusters have now been well defined. They are also generally well understood, even though existing guidance about supporting existing national coordination systems and linking to them still needs to be better implemented (see also §73). What is less well understood, however, is what type of coordination support and how coordination support should and can be mobilised when clusters are not formally activated. The global food security cluster and its lead agencies developed interesting models for supporting alternative coordination systems – in *Turkey*, *Lebanon* and *Kenya*, for example. These and similar experiences can be used to capture and communicate more generally what models are available and appropriate in different contexts.

86.   Much more difficult is the tail end of cluster coordination. The **lack of appropriate transition and exit strategies** has long been recognised as a problem of the cluster system. Yet, little progress has been made in addressing the issue. The food security coordination mechanisms assessed for this evaluation still have either no transition and exit plans or introduce them too late, for example in the *Philippines*, *Chad and Mali*. While the contingency plan of the food security cluster in *Bangladesh* includes an exit strategy for the disaster response, it has no exit strategy for the cluster itself. Many interviewees indicated that the point of cluster deactivation or the mechanism for shifting its role towards preparedness in high-risk environments remained unclear. As a result, they believe that too little effort is made to strengthen the capacity of national coordination systems, including through the secondment of coordination team members to national institutions to enable an easy reactivation of the cluster in case of another emergency.

87.   The chronically food-insecure contexts of *Mali* and *Chad* illustrate that the problem also relates to the food security approaches of humanitarian organisations. Integrated food security coordination mechanisms combine discussions about food assistance, agriculture, livelihoods and resilience programmes and thereby make some, albeit limited, contributions to a more integrated understanding of food security and the implementation of an early-recovery approach (see also §30). Beyond that, however, most of the mechanisms analysed have **contributed little to strengthening links with development actors** or to helping their members translate into practice the various related concepts – from disaster-risk reduction and preparedness to resilience and "linking relief, rehabilitation and development."

88.   The current humanitarian coordination architecture also leaves certain structural issues unaddressed. Food security has obvious **overlaps with coordination mechanisms for nutrition, early recovery and livelihoods** and the response modality of **cash and vouchers.** The coordination set-up for these issues varies from country to country. In places where food security has a broad remit – including, for example, livelihoods and cash and vouchers, as is the case in *Pakistan* – this tends to make the food security forum more relevant. Yet it risks excluding organisations that offer livelihoods or cash and voucher programmes, but are not active in food security. A more fragmented coordination set-up with separate mechanisms for livelihoods and cash and vouchers, at the same time, has more serious downsides as it multiplies the number of meetings and can lead to mandate boundaries that make little sense in practice. In the *Philippines*, for example, the early-recovery and the livelihoods clusters were merged for several months into the response. Even after that merger, the boundaries with the food security cluster remained problematic. Partners strongly criticised, for example, how they had to deal with agriculture- and fisheries-related livelihoods programmes in a different forum

using reporting formats different from other livelihoods interventions, even if they were targeting the same communities.

89.   Regarding **nutrition**, the case is slightly different. Most stakeholders agreed that a dedicated nutrition coordination forum was useful in contexts where acute malnutrition is a serious concern. An effective nutrition response, however, requires the active involvement of several sectors, including food security, water and sanitation and health. To date, the links between food security and nutrition are known and recognised in theory, but have been relatively weak in practice, as they are largely confined to the mutual participation of the cluster coordinators in each other's meetings. Similar to cross-cutting issues, this participation has only had a limited effect on integrating nutrition concerns across all stages of the humanitarian programme cycle. A potential good practice model was developed in *Turkey/Northern Syria*, where one of the co-coordinators of the food security group has a background in nutrition and is thus well positioned to include elements related to nutrition in all major steps, from the design of needs-assessment instruments to the definition of quality standards and monitoring and reporting. At the same time, the global food security cluster has a food security and nutrition working group. It has already delivered some initial guidance on how to link food security and nutrition at country level and country teams eagerly await more suggestions.

90.   In most contexts, humanitarian organisations challenge the splitting of related issues into separate coordination fora most vehemently at the local level. In the *Philippines*, for example, UN OCHA strongly advocated for activating the entire set of clusters, including dedicated coordination teams not only at national and hub levels, but also at sub-hub level. Many cluster lead organisations and global clusters resisted this demand, on the grounds that it would require an unreasonable amount of resources. On the ground, operational organisations also argued that holding up to a dozen sectoral coordination meetings makes little sense in an area where only a limited number of organisations are active. More generally, this experience shows that the cluster system has so far developed **no viable solutions for linking sector-based and area-based coordination approaches**. In other words, what is missing is a good way to move flexibly from sector-based groups at national level to a smaller number of merged sector groups at hub level to general coordination meetings at sub-hub or local level. In this regard, the UNHCR-led coordination system as applied, for example, in *Lebanon* may have interesting lessons to offer as it adapts the coordination set-up much more seamlessly for different levels.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

4.1. Overall assessment

91. This evaluation set out to assess what effects food security coordination has, why and how at three different levels depicted in the theory of change (see Figure 1): Effects at country and local level on humanitarian organisations and their activities; effects of the global FSC on actors at country and local level; and evidence for effects on affected populations. This Section summarises the evaluation's findings for these three main guiding questions and presents conclusions based on them.

What effects do food security coordination mechanisms at country and local level have on humanitarian organisations and their activities? How and why?

92. The effectiveness of the food security coordination mechanisms assessed for this evaluation varied significantly, depending on context, coordination capacity and approach and level of buy-in and support of key stakeholders. While it can be difficult to generalise, the evidence collected for this evaluation shows clear patterns. Overall, food security coordination at country and local level has a positive effect on the organisations participating in the mechanism and is often seen as one of the most successful clusters. A clear majority of stakeholders therefore see investments in the food security cluster as worthwhile (see Figure 10). Yet, the expectations of most stakeholders, as well as the expectations articulated in the global guidance materials, go beyond what a typical food security cluster at country or local level currently delivers. Compared to the functions defined for clusters (see §4) and the possibilities for influencing the approaches and activities of humanitarian organisations along the programme cycle, the achievements and constraints of food security coordination mechanisms can be summarised as follows:

- They make an important contribution by facilitating networking and helping organisations to build trust. This is particularly relevant in conflict situations and sudden onset emergencies and could be a more conscious focus (see Section 2.1).

- They rarely explore the full range of options for implementing, supporting and disseminating needs assessments and response gap analyses, even though these activities are of great benefit to humanitarian organisations (see Section 2.2).

- Strategy development and planning were mainly done as contributions to collective fundraising efforts through the CAP or SRP, but members of the food security coordination mechanisms did not use them strongly to guide their actions. Considering how time-intensive strategy development processes typically were, many stakeholders question whether system-wide strategy processes are a worthwhile investment in their current form (see Section 2.3).

- Food security coordination mechanisms clearly help to reduce duplications, although they have not managed to eliminate duplications and could take a more active role in analysing and filling gaps (see Section 2.4).

- The normative function of the coordination mechanism – setting and applying standards and guidelines – was stronger in some cases than in others and depended greatly on the quality and influence of the coordinator.

Where it was done well, it had a significant influence on service delivery (see Section 2.5).

- The information-management activities helped to improve reporting, but the information was not sufficiently used to support learning (see Section 2.6).

- Contingency planning and preparedness were not regular features of the food security coordination mechanisms reviewed, although promising pilots exist (see Section 2.7) .

93. Previous studies and evaluations identified a number of **factors** influencing the effectiveness of cluster coordination at country and local level (see §12). The case studies conducted for this evaluation confirm by and large that these factors remain valid. They do, however, highlight a smaller number of factors that are essential for enabling or constraining food security coordination:

- Food security coordination mechanisms are most successful where they have an active, clear and shared agenda and focus on the operational needs of their members and the donors who fund them. This operational focus is under threat when the demands of system-wide processes dominate the agenda without adding much to operations and coordinators lack the experience and capacity to maintain a sense of focus while dealing with systemic requests (see Section 3.1).

- Another crucial factor for successful food security coordination is the active participation of relevant stakeholders. Ideally, coordination mechanisms are actively led, but not dominated by the lead agencies, members feel a sense of common ownership and commitment and participate regularly and actively, and the coordination forum involves the most relevant actors in emergency food security. Most international actors participate in food security coordination at country and local level, although not always actively enough. However, a bigger concern in this context is that food security coordination mechanisms have generally made little progress in linking with or bringing in governments, local authorities, local civil-society organisations and non-traditional humanitarian actors. As a result, the capacities of local actors and coordination mechanisms are not sufficiently supported or are even undermined, many opportunities for learning are missed, and basic coordination activities such as coverage and gap-mapping miss an important part of the picture (see Section 3.2).

What effects does the global food security cluster have on coordination mechanisms and humanitarian actors at country and local level? How and why?

94. The FSC also operates at global level, facilitating coordination among global members and providing support to the country level. The evaluation focused on the roles played by the two lead agencies of the global FSC, FAO and WFP, and its Global Support Team, in improving food security coordination at country and local level. The achievements and constraints of this support can be summarised as follows:

- Compared to the years before the creation of the global FSC, the availability of dedicated capacities for food security coordination at country and local level clearly improved. The Global Support Team played a critical role in this

respect by advocating for and helping to mobilise coordination teams and by deploying its own staff members to fill gaps. Stakeholders particularly appreciated the level of experience and clarity of purpose brought by members of the Global Support Team. Investments in broad training programmes for potential coordinators and information managers, by contrast, paid off less as training participants were rarely deployed (see Section 3.3).

- The management of both lead agencies articulate strong support for the FSC. This has translated into a clearer sense throughout the organisations that lead agencies have a responsibility for providing some level of dedicated coordination capacity. However, the commitment and capacity to support food security coordination among regional and country offices is very variable. As a result, the human and financial resources for food security coordination are not always adequate. There are also important gaps in the degree to which lead agencies themselves adopt a coordinated approach in their operations (see Section 3.3).

- The introduction of the global FSC also had a positive effect on country level coordination because it defined clearer roles and responsibilities for different stakeholders. This clarity helps to avoid lengthy discussions and frictions over roles and mandates. However, a range of boundary issues that can constrain effective coordination at country level remain open. This includes exit and transition planning; capacity-building activities and links to development actors; the role of FSCs in preparedness; the relationships to related thematic areas such as nutrition, early recovery, livelihoods, resilience and cash and voucher programming; and the development of more integrated or area-based coordination solutions at local level (see Section 3.4).

Is there any available evidence on what effects coordination may have had on the food security situation of affected populations as evidenced by changes in the coverage of humanitarian services and changes in the monitoring of effects on beneficiaries?

95.   As shown in the theory of change, the ultimate objective of the FSC is to better address humanitarian food security needs. It was impossible within the scope of the evaluation to gather any primary data on changes in the food security situation of affected population. Instead, as suggested in the inception report, the evaluation focused on establishing whether food security coordination helped strengthen outcome and impact assessment and whether duplications and gaps have reduced and coverage increased.

96.   As expected, the available data on the food security situation of affected populations do not allow drawing any conclusions on a potential effect of food security coordination, especially since so many other important factors influence the food security situation. The evaluation also found no evidence that food security coordination was trying to strengthen the evidence base by improving the monitoring of effects on the food security situation of affected populations (see Section 2.8).

97.   By contrast, all case study countries yielded concrete examples of duplications that were avoided, allowing organisations to use their resources to cover other, underserved areas. The case studies also provided some, albeit few, examples of active gap-filling through the coordination mechanism. While it is not possible to

quantify this effect, we can infer that these measures, along with the fundraising efforts of many coordination mechanisms, have led to increased coverage of food security needs (see Section 2.8).

98. Based on these findings, the evaluation team draws the following **conclusions**:

- Effective food security coordination creates clear benefits for humanitarian organisations and can plausibly claim benefits for affected populations by increasing the coverage of food security services. While not all links depicted in the theory of change (see Figure 1) are active, its principles seem to hold.

- There is currently no preferable alternative international humanitarian coordination model available. The vast majority of traditional, international humanitarian actors support the cluster approach in principle. Moreover, in the case studies in which alternative international solutions were used, humanitarian organisations quickly called for or introduced clusters or cluster-like systems.

- A clear majority of interviewees and survey respondents[33] therefore see investments in food security coordination as worthwhile in principle. It is important to mention, however, that higher investment for the overall coordination set-up in some recent L3 emergencies do not yield proportionally higher benefits. While dedicated funding for a certain level of dedicated coordination capacities is crucial, this suggests that overall coordination costs should remain within a certain range in absolute terms, as well as in relation to operational costs. The current coordination model also offers opportunities for cost savings.

- Food security coordination faces important constraints. These constraints do not only prevent coordination mechanisms from reaching their full potential. Excessive process demands and the failure to involve local and non-traditional organisations in particular risk undermining the operational relevance of food security coordination. If that is the case, the participation of traditional actors might also decline and current achievements of the coordination system would be at risk. Addressing the constraints should therefore be a priority for the lead agencies, the Global Support Team, coordination teams at country and local levels, food security cluster members, donors and other components of the international humanitarian system.

4.2. Recommendations

99. Food security coordination has created important benefits for humanitarian response over recent years. To safeguard these achievements and enable coordination mechanisms to explore more of their untapped potential, the actors included in the FSC's theory of change – lead agencies, the Global Support Team, coordination teams at country and local level, FSC members, donors and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and UN OCHA – should take steps to implement the strategic recommendations listed below (in order of their importance). A more detailed list of suggested actions for these stakeholders is included in Annex 1. Many of the lessons echo the findings of other evaluations and include areas in which improvement activities are already ongoing. Where this is the case, the

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[33] 44% of survey respondents see investments in food security coordination as "clearly worthwhile", 32% see them as "somewhat worthwhile", 6% as "not really worthwhile" and 1% as "clearly not worthwhile".

recommendations are meant to support ongoing initiatives or to add a sense of priority. Since many of the findings are of a systemic nature, the recommendations may also be relevant for other clusters.

Recommendation 1: Advocate with and support the IASC in revising standard system requirements to ensure they are lighter and more operationally focused.	Addressed to
Suggested actions: • Provide the IASC principals and IASC working groups with feedback on experiences with the coordination protocols for level 3 emergencies and help to make these protocols lighter, more realistic and more focused on operational benefits. • Advocate with the IASC to also revise the standard requirements for non-level 3 emergencies.	FAO&WFP senior management and emergency directors

Recommendation 2: Strengthen mentoring for and capacities of coordination teams to focus on operationally relevant activities.	Addressed to

Suggested actions:
• Ensure that coordination activities are based on demand, adopt a participatory approach, use adequate formats and follow a clearly defined agenda and purpose.
• Strengthen activities related to:
  - the analysis and use of data (including needs assessment and analysis, response analysis, gap analysis and gap filling);
  - the cluster's normative role (e.g. standards, guidelines, trainings, defining common approaches);
  - mutual/joint learning;
  - more explicitly facilitating networking/trust-building.
• Strengthen mentoring and guidance for coordination teams at country and local level to help them cope with system-wide demands and focus on operationally relevant issues.
	Coordination teams
	GST

Recommendation 3: Enhance the GST's capacity and improve the preparation of deployed teams in order to further strengthen coordination capacity.	Addressed to
Suggested actions: • Enhance the GST's capacity and ability to mentor country coordination teams and deploy its team members to emergencies by advocating for donor funding, dedicating lead agency core resources and mobilizing further secondments from partner organisations. • Systematically provide newly deployed teams with briefings and a food security coordination starter kit. • Reduce general trainings and strengthen mentoring and coaching, as well as targeted trainings. • Develop a stronger human resource strategy for food security coordinators and information managers. • Deploy coordination team members for longer periods of time and increase the involvement of national staff members in coordination. • Strengthen learning among coordination teams.	Lead agencies GST WFP&FAO human resources departments

Recommendation 4: Strengthen nationally-led coordination mechanisms or increase the involvement of government actors in food security coordination mechanisms to enhance national ownership and sustainability.	Addressed to
Suggested actions: - Strengthen the role of FSCs or the lead agencies in preparedness, including informal government capacity assessments and scenarios for scaling up coordination support. - Better utilise existing contacts between the lead agencies and government offices to facilitate links with the food security coordination mechanism. - Engage early in transition and exit planning, regularly review the coordination set-up and, where necessary, include capacity-building activities for national institutions. - In cooperation with Humanitarian Coordinators and Humanitarian Country Teams, strengthen links with development actors and their activities, especially relating to capacity-building.	FAO&WFP country and regional offices Coordination teams

Recommendation 5: Engage national and local civil society organisations and non-traditional humanitarian actors more closely in food security coordination.	Addressed to
Suggested actions: - Strengthen outreach to non-traditional humanitarian actors at headquarter and regional level. - Better utilise existing contacts of lead agencies and members with civil society and non-traditional humanitarian actors. - Adopt a more field-based, bottom-up approach to coordination to identify relevant actors. - Offer concrete, demand-based benefits to local civil society organisations and non-traditional humanitarian actors and ask them for specific inputs or contributions. - Adapt coordination formats and communication channels to the needs and preferences of local civil society and non-traditional actors.	WFP & FAO partnership/donor relations branches WFP & FAO regional offices Coordination teams

Recommendation 6: Take action to ensure a more consistent commitment and capacity of lead agencies to support food security coordination and advocate for enhanced donor commitment to food security coordination.	Addressed to
Suggested actions: - Increase efforts to ensure that lead agencies' regional and country offices take responsibility for ensuring the availability of adequate human resources for coordination and for adopting a coordinated approach in their own operations, for example by including these aspects more strongly in performance appraisals and including coordination on the agenda of regional and global retreats. - Strengthen FAO's country and field presence in emergencies, if necessary by developing or strengthening advance finance facilities. - Advocate with donors to consider analyses, priorities and standards developed by food security coordination mechanisms more strongly in their own decisions. - Advocate with donors to provide financial support for food security coordination teams, flexible coordination solutions and coordination activities where the situation requires. - Develop standard coordination cost scenarios for different contexts.	Lead agencies senior management Regional and country office directors GST

Recommendation 7: Work with the IASC, OCHA and other clusters to further clarify roles and responsibilities in the coordination architecture and promote more efficient coordination solutions.	Addressed to
Suggested actions: • Develop models for linking sector-based and area-based coordination models (e.g. activation of clusters at national level, small number of merged clusters at hub level, integrated, area-based coordination at local level). • Continue to strengthen links between food security and nutrition coordination mechanisms (as well as with other clusters such as WASH and Health) and ensure that information-management tools of different clusters are compatible (e.g. 4Ws). • Allocate responsibilities for coordinating livelihoods activities and cash and voucher programming under different scenarios. • Strengthen compliance with guidance on early recovery as a cross-cutting issue.	WFP and FAO IASC principals Emergency directors GST

Annexes

Annex 1: Suggestions for operational improvement

100. Following the theory of change developed for this evaluation (see Figure 1), the contributions and collaboration of a range of different stakeholders is necessary to make food security coordination successful. This annex details how these stakeholders groups could implement the recommendations made above by providing more detailed suggestions for operational improvement.

Recommendations for the Global Support Team

1: Help increase the operational relevance of food security coordination through advocacy, mentoring and guidance
1 a) Support the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, its working groups and UN OCHA in revising the coordination protocols for level 3 ("L3") emergencies, as well as the system-wide processes for other emergencies. Urge them for adopting an approach that is lighter, more realistic and more operationally-focused. The deadlines for clusters to submit requested documents should be clear and realistic and only one matrix should be used to request information.
1 b) Provide mentoring or guidance to help food security coordination teams at country and local levels choose appropriate activities, emphasising the importance of: • Creating links and/or providing support to government structures, if appropriate in the given context; • Engaging local civil society organisations and non-traditional humanitarian actors; • Focusing on the analysis and interpretation of existing data and information by, for example, identifying gaps in available needs assessments and in service provision and by spelling out the operational implications; • Identifying the most important information needs of different stakeholder groups and using the most appropriate information channels for each group; • Making full use of the coordination forum's potential for facilitating networking.
1 c) Provide coaching and include relevant elements in existing trainings to ensure coordination teams at country and local levels are able to use the most appropriate methods and tools for facilitating coordination, gathering data and disseminating information (including, for example, diverse workshop- and meeting-facilitation methods and social media use).
1 d) Strengthen the dissemination and potential use by country coordination teams of global initiatives related to quality and standards.
1 e) Strengthen communication about the expectations and roles of local food security coordination with FSC partners and other relevant stakeholders.
2: Seek to strengthen the Global Support Team's capacity for deploying experienced coordination teams and improving the preparation of coordination teams
2 a) Increase the advocacy with donors, lead agencies and partners to enable the Global Support Team to grow and provide more mentoring (especially in L3 emergencies) and / or deploy more of its own team members as coordinators or information managers, so that more capacity gaps can be filled and deployments can be longer (for longer deployments, costs would have to be reimbursed by the country office). Where possible, rely on staff members seconded by cluster members to make the Global Support Team more inclusive.
2 b) Seek to extend deployment times for coordination team members. Include long-term, national staff-members in coordination teams as early as possible. Provide administrative surge capacity in new or rapidly developing emergency contexts to support the recruitment effort.
2 c) Before their deployment, systematically provide new coordination team members (including national staff) with oral and written briefings about the context and their tasks and offer mentorship as support. Keep emphasising personal interactions and tailor-made support, rather than tools such as

the e-learning programme. Keep the contact list for coordination team updated.

2 d) Provide all newly deployed coordination team members with a "coordination starter kit," including relevant guidance and templates, checklists and sample documents, standard definitions and interpretations of food security as a concept, a computer with necessary software (especially for information managers), basic facilitation materials, generic food security cluster or working group e-mail addresses (e.g., coordinatorlocation@foodsecuritycluster.net) and business cards.

2 e) Reduce general coordination and information-management trainings. Instead, focus resources on providing more mentoring and coaching, as well as targeted trainings to individuals who will very likely serve as food security coordinators or information managers (as already started with the new phase of training).

3: Establish more regular communication with a broader set of food security coordination teams and/or lead agencies

3 a) Establish regular (for example, bi-annual) communication with WFP and FAO regional offices and representatives in countries that have no international food security coordination, but are at high risk of emergencies. In these phone conversations, discuss how the lead agencies assess existing government and civil-society coordination structures and what scenarios they have discussed for providing international support to these structures or activating clusters in case of emergencies. Explain possibilities for support from the global food security cluster, including in situations in which the food security cluster is not formally activated. To increase buy-in, strengthen the presence of the food security cluster at regional meetings and increase outreach to operational staff.

3 b) Conduct regular (for example, bi-annual) conversations with lead-agency country representatives and food security coordination teams to discuss whether the existing coordination set-up is still appropriate, what scenarios for transition and exit exist and what measures (including capacity-building) coordination teams and lead agencies are taking to support transition.

3 c) Further expand the support to mutual learning between different coordination teams. Focus conversations on areas where the teams need support and match them with coordination teams in other countries with experience in this area. Continue to encourage the analysis and sharing of lessons and good practices and link with WFPs new lessons learning and knowledge management initiatives in this area. This includes, for example, the experiences with alternative coordination set-ups in Turkey/Northern Syria, the lessons learned with respect to cash and voucher coordination in Pakistan, the experience with government-led coordination mechanisms in Kenya, and the experience with a food security cluster focused on preparedness in Bangladesh. This is particularly helpful, in case a country suffers an emergency in the near future that puts workers' preparedness to the test. The Global Support Team should also encourage quality-related initiatives of the global food security cluster (such as the working group on food security and livelihoods in urban settings) to link more closely with coordination mechanisms at country and local levels – for example, by encouraging their participation in the working group, requesting their inputs or feedback and by making results available to them.

4: Strengthen links and integration with other clusters and related work areas

4 a) Work with related clusters, the global inter-cluster group, UN OCHA and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee to develop more flexible models linking sector-based and area-based coordination systems that would spell out, for example, how a fully activated cluster system at national level could transform into a smaller number of combined clusters at hub level and link to area-based coordination at local level. Examine whether the current coordination set-up in Central African Republic could provide a viable and efficient model. To facilitate links between clusters, ensure that information-management systems such as 4Ws templates are compatible.

4 b) Continue to develop and disseminate practical guidance to strengthen the consideration for nutritional issues (and other relevant related or cross-cutting issues) in food security programming.

5: Strengthen advocacy and outreach to donors and non-traditional actors

5 a) Urge donors to provide appropriate forms of financial support for dedicated coordination and information-management capacities, as well as some cluster activities. To support this, provide donors

with scenarios outlining what level of coordination capacity and related costs are appropriate for what kinds of contexts. Include these costs under the "coordination" section of the Strategic Response Plans. Provide guidance to country coordination teams on which funding instruments can be used to cover coordination costs.

5 b) Encourage donors to orient their funding decisions and standards more clearly in accordance with cluster strategies and action plans. In many cases, this would require more flexibility from donors to provide early support to agriculture and livelihoods programmes, as well as preparedness.

5 c) Enhance efforts to engage non-traditional humanitarian actors such as donors based in the Gulf, governments of emerging donors, foundations and implementing organisations from these countries to better understand what types of services – including information – and activities would be useful for them and how they might become more closely involved in food security coordination.

Recommendations for coordination teams at country and local levels

1: Enhance efforts to integrate local and non-traditional humanitarian actors

1 a) Identify relevant national, local and non-traditional humanitarian actors as early as possible. Newly deployed coordination teams should ensure they fully draw on existing contacts of the lead agencies and of partner organisations. Once the relief effort is underway, coordination teams should adopt a more bottom-up, field-based approach in which they visit affected communities and, among others, find out from them and the local authorities which other organisations are operating in the area. In some cases (especially in Asia), coordination teams should also invest more in participating in and monitoring social media, as non-traditional actors might use these channels to communicate about their activities.

1 b) Make the food security coordination mechanism more relevant to local and non-traditional humanitarian actors by offering concrete benefits to these actors and by asking for specific inputs and contributions from them. Consultations with representatives of local and non-traditional actors will serve best to identify which services and inputs are most important in the given context. Suggestions made during this evaluation include the organisation of "partnership fairs" that aim to match international and local partner organisations; practical explanations of how the international humanitarian system and its funding mechanisms work; dissemination of funding opportunities and calls for proposals; support in proposal writing; provision of a gap analysis of the response, with concrete and realistic suggestions on how local and non-traditional actors could help to address the gaps; requests for information about the local context, such as political, social or gender dynamics.

1 c) Adapt communication channels to facilitate participation. Depending on the context, this can mean strengthening the use of social media or relying more on personal meetings and exchanges, choosing meeting facilities that are easily accessible to local and non-traditional actors or strengthening the use of or translation into local languages. Including national staff members in coordination teams can facilitate communication with local actors.

2: Increase the operational relevance of coordination activities

2 a) Strengthen the role of food security coordination mechanisms in needs assessments and analysis. Coordination teams – with support from members – should, for example, routinely prepare overviews of existing needs-assessment results; identify gaps in needs-assessment information; and catalyse action to fill these gaps, either through joint assessments or by directing partners to the gaps.

2 b) Based on the situation and needs analysis, conduct a joint response analysis, based on a holistic understanding of food security, outlining which response options are appropriate when and where. Where relevant, use the results of the response analysis to advocate for early funding for agriculture and livelihoods programmes and to link with other related clusters or working groups.

2 c) Give greater priority to conducting a gap analysis for the response and drawing out operational implications for partners and/or facilitating joint action to fill gaps. To cover the activities suggested as priorities in recommendations 2 a) – 2 c), increase the focus on the analysis, interpretation and use of information, rather than giving one-sided priority to data collection.

2 d) Strengthen the normative aspects of food security coordination by drawing on the technical expertise of the lead agencies and member organisations, by linking more strongly with quality initiatives at the global level and by using available capacities for cross-cutting issues such as gender, age, disability, the environment and early recovery to provide specific operational advice at all stages of the response. `
2 e) Increase efforts to facilitate learning by encouraging members to strengthen their results-oriented monitoring and evaluation capacities and practices; exchanging experiences with different approaches to monitoring and evaluation; collecting lessons learned by different member organisations (if necessary, disseminating them in an anonymous format); and consciously integrating lessons in future strategies and action plans.
2 f) Ensure priorities for coordination activities are set so that sufficient capacity exists for addressing the issues raised in this and the previous recommendation. Should the process demands requested by the humanitarian system be excessive, request the lead agencies to seek resolution within the Humanitarian Country Team and or the Inter-Agency Steering Committee.
3: Improve the management and facilitation of food security coordination mechanisms
3 a) Systematically use participatory approaches to setting the agenda and defining strategies and action plans, as well as regularly (on bi-annual or annual basis) analysing the appropriateness of the modus operandi and results of the coordination. Ensure that members understand that effective and efficient coordination is a joint responsibility of all participants. Where the coordination forum has many members, using smaller steering, advisory or ad hoc working groups has proven useful for preparing suggestions that are then validated by the larger group.
3 b) Define a clear agenda and purpose for each meeting or other coordination activity. Choose formats and facilitation methods suited to the purpose.
3 c) Increase the focus on the analysis, interpretation and use of information, rather than giving one-sided priority to collecting data. This entails, for example, asking members of the coordination forum and other relevant stakeholders what information needs they have for what purpose and what communication channels are easiest for them to use and prioritising these. It also implies strengthening the analysis of gaps in needs assessments and the response and using this analysis to catalyse action.
3 d) Support the networking function of coordination mechanisms more consciously. Coordination teams can, for example, ask members to prepare short organisational profiles, display them in the meeting room and disseminate them within the group. They can also consciously create space for networking either by adding more informal meetings or by organising meetings that leave room and time for bilateral conversations and inputs from members.
4: Plan food security cluster transition and early exit, increase support to national mechanisms and strengthen links to development actors
4 a) Better implement existing guidance to support existing national coordination mechanisms wherever possible and to use clusters for helping to build national coordination capacities.
4 b) Plan for the transition and eventual exit of internationally-led coordination mechanisms from the beginning. Sketch scenarios outlining under what conditions handover to national structures can take place, identify obstacles and capacity gaps preventing transition and develop mechanisms to address these in collaboration with the lead agencies and members. Regularly (on bi-annual or annual basis) review coordination arrangements in consultation with national counterparts, the Global Support Team, the lead agencies and other clusters.
4 c) In countries at high risk of emergencies, transition from "operational" to "preparedness" clusters that operate at lower levels of activity and focus on preparedness, contingency planning and learning in close cooperation with the government.
4 d) Strengthen links with development actors – for example, by inviting them to strategic-coordination meetings or discussing response strategies, transition plans, disaster-risk reduction and resilience programmes and national capacity-building needs with them.

Recommendations for the lead agencies

1: Ensure that the lead agencies at regional, country and local levels consistently have the commitment and the capacity to effectively support food security coordination

1 a) WFP and FAO management should increase their efforts to ensure their country and regional offices are fully committed to supporting food security coordination. A credible commitment entails providing adequate human resources for coordination. It also requires the lead agencies to adopt a coordinated approach in their own activities. Since their behaviour sets an example, they should adhere to jointly agreed strategies and standards, such as cash for work rates, beneficiary selection criteria and integrated food security response strategies.

1 b) FAO management should increase its efforts to strengthen the organisation's presence and capacities in emergencies and should reiterate to its country and regional offices its organisational commitment to working in crisis and post-crisis contexts. As a matter of priority, it should review its ability to deploy adequate surge capacity for operations and coordination to sudden-onset emergencies and deteriorating situations. If necessary, it should develop or strengthen advance finance facilities to support these activities.

1 c) Both lead agencies should increase their support for a human-resource strategy for food security coordinators and information managers. Elements of such a strategy can include developing clearer career paths for coordinators; issuing longer-term contracts; improving the focus of training activities on individuals that are very likely to be deployed in coordination; and supporting the Global Support Team in increasing its ability to deploy team members as coordinators and information managers to emergencies.

1 d) Seek to extend deployment times for coordination team members. Include long-term, national staff-members in coordination teams as early as possible. Provide administrative surge capacity in new or rapidly developing emergency contexts to support the recruitment effort.

1 e) Link WFP's new lesson learning and knowledge management activities to efforts in the food security cluster to support lesson learning.

2: Harmonise and strengthen advocacy and outreach at global and local levels

2 a) In a joint approach between WFP and FAO, advocate with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and UN OCHA for a lighter, more realistic and more operation-focused approach when revising the protocols for L3 emergencies and the standard system requirements in other emergencies. The deadlines for clusters to submit requested documents should be clear and realistic and only one matrix should be used to request information.

2 b) Use the position of WFP and FAO offices in countries more strategically in emergencies to create appropriate links with relevant government offices. Depending on the context, this can range from supporting government-led coordination mechanisms and advocating for more inclusion in government-led mechanisms, to convincing line ministries to participate actively in coordination meetings, to acting as the interface between the coordination mechanism and the government, channelling information and advocating with the government on behalf of the food security group.

2 c) Ensure that existing contacts between FAO or WFP offices with local civil society organisations and non-traditional donors are used by the food security coordination teams.

2 d) Strengthen efforts at headquarter level to establish links with non-traditional humanitarian actors and facilitate links between them and the food security cluster.

2 e) Work with the global inter-cluster group, UN OCHA, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and Resident/Humanitarian Coordinators to forge an agreement that early recovery and livelihoods should not be activated as clusters and that either UN OCHA, the food security coordination mechanism or UNHCR (depending on capacities and context) should facilitate a cash and voucher working group that is open to all sectors.

3: Adopt a stronger role in preparedness for food security coordination

In countries without internationally-led food security coordination mechanisms, conduct an informal

assessment of existing government and civil society capacities for delivery and coordination. If possible, in cooperation with government offices, develop scenarios for scaling up and strengthening coordination based on a systematic capacity assessment. In doing so, emphasise possibilities for supporting existing structures. Regularly (on bi-annual or annual basis) discuss the assessment and scenarios with the Global Support Team of the food security cluster, the responsible desks within the agency and the Resident or Humanitarian Coordinator.

Recommendations for the Inter-Agency Standing Committee / HCT and UN OCHA

1: Readjust priorities to increase the operational relevance of coordination
Revise the protocols for L3 emergencies and the standard system demands such as the requirements for the consolidated appeals process to ensure they are light and allow coordination teams for food security and other sectors to address the operational coordination needs of their members and to increase the involvement of local and non-traditional actors. The deadlines for clusters to submit requested documents should be clear and realistic and only one matrix should be used to request information.
2: Facilitate strong relationships to host governments, as well as local and non-traditional actors on the ground
3: Continue to use pooled funding mechanisms to respond to gaps and priorities identified by clusters or similar coordination mechanisms
4: Address remaining issues regarding the coordination architecture
4 a) In cooperation with the different clusters and UN OCHA, develop and test models involving a gradual transition between sector-based and area-based coordination systems. This could include for example a model in which the national level sees an activation of all or most clusters, the hub level has a smaller number of merged clusters and the local level has an integrated, area-based coordination mechanism.
4 b) Clarify who is responsible for the coordination of livelihoods activities and cash and voucher interventions under different scenarios.
4 c) Ensure that existing guidance regarding early recovery (treating it as an issue affecting all sectors, rather than a sector on its own) is implemented.
4 d) Ensure that the information management tools developed by various clusters and UN OCHA are inter-operable and reduce the burden on humanitarian organisations that participate in several clusters.
5: Encourage more learning between clusters at the global level
5 a) Regularly convene global inter-cluster discussions to address issues regarding the coordination architecture, the linkages between different clusters and lessons that are relevant to all or several clusters.
5 b) Facilitate a joint discussion with interested clusters on the findings and recommendations of this, as well as several other cluster-related evaluations.

Recommendations for donors

1: Relate own planning more systematically to the strategies and positions taken by food security coordination mechanisms
1 a) Ensure that demands for information do not overly distract food security coordination mechanisms and their members from operational tasks.

1 b) Take the results of food security coordination mechanisms more systematically into consideration in own response decisions. Be prepared and have sufficient flexibility to respond to needs, gaps and responses identified and prioritised by food security coordination mechanisms if they can make a convincing case for it.
1 c) Where food security coordination mechanisms present a convincing response analysis recommending early support to agriculture, livelihoods or preparedness activities, be prepared to support them.
1 d) Support technical and quality standards proposed by food security coordination mechanisms where they make sense, either by requesting partners to adhere to them or by aligning own standards with them.
1 e) Clearly articulate what coordination products or inputs would be useful to support donor planning and decision-making.
2: Continue to financially support food security coordination
2 a) When required by the situation, provide dedicated financial support for food security coordination teams. Ensure that these resources can be used flexibly, be it for a formalised cluster, a working group, or in support of national coordination mechanisms. Request the food security and other clusters to provide standard models, indicating what approximate, reasonable level of resources is required under which scenarios, ensuring an appropriate balance between resources for operations and resources for coordination. Ensure that the support includes some level of funding for joint cluster activities, such as joint needs assessments and joint standard setting or adaptation of existing standards to specific contexts.
2 b) Provide financial support to the Global Support Team to enable it to strengthen its capacity to deploy experienced coordinators and information managers to important emergencies, as well as to maintain other activities.

Recommendations for food security cluster members

1: Help ensure the food security coordination mechanism adopts a relevant focus and agenda
1 a) Articulate your priorities for the coordination mechanism's agenda.
1 b) Use the food security coordination forum to agree with partners on concrete, common stances and joint or complementary activities.
1 c) Enhance efforts to fully understand and participate in the scope of relevant activities offered by the FSC, both at headquarter and country / field level.
2: Treat your assessment data and studies as a public good
2 a) Be prepared to share assessment data and commissioned studies with other members of the food security coordination mechanism unless there are compelling security or access reasons for not doing so.
2 b) Where security or access reasons make it difficult to share data, seek to develop data-sharing mechanisms with the coordination forum that protect confidentiality and allow sharing relevant data.
3: Use existing contacts with national and local civil society organisation and non-traditional humanitarian actors to strengthen the inclusion of these stakeholders in food security coordination.

Annex 2: Terms of reference of the evaluation

Fao/Wfp Joint Evaluation Of Food Security Cluster Coordination In Humanitarian Action

Commissioned By Th e Offices Of Evaluation At Wfp & Fao

1. Background

1.1. Introduction

1. Strategic Evaluations focus on strategic and systemic issues of corporate relevance, including new WFP strategic direction and associated policy, operations and activities. They evaluate the quality of the work being done related to the new strategic direction, its results, and seek to explain why and how these results occurred.

2. The Terms of Reference (TOR) was prepared jointly by the FAO and WFP Offices of Evaluation (OE) based on a preliminary document review and initial discussions with a number of stakeholders involved in the coordination of humanitarian action.

3. The purpose of these TOR is to provide key information to stakeholders about the proposed evaluation, to guide the evaluation team and specify expectations of the evaluation team. The TOR are structured as follows: Section 1 provides information on the context; Section 2 presents the rationale, objectives, stakeholders and main users of the evaluation; Section 3 defines the scope of the evaluation; Section 4 identifies the approach, key questions, and methodology; and Section 5 indicates how the evaluation will be organized.

4. The annexes provide additional information on information including a list of persons consulted with in the preparation phase of the evaluation, a diagram illustrating the initial definition of the theory of change that will underpin the evaluation framework, a mapping of 2010-2013 Food Security Cluster (FSC) coverage by country, the Global Food Security Cluster 2013-2014 strategy, a bibliography of materials reviewed during the preparation phase including relevant normative work produced by the two lead agencies, and information on the TOR and composition of the evaluation Reference Group.

1.2. Context

5. The 2005 humanitarian reform, within which the cluster approach is a major component, seeks to improve the effectiveness and timeliness of humanitarian response by ensuring greater predictability, accountability and partnership. As one of the three pillars of the reform, the cluster approach was introduced, comprising sectoral coordination with designated lead organizations[34]. The other two pillars were enhanced leadership by humanitarian coordinators and humanitarian financing. All of the pillars rely on the principle of strong partnerships between UN and non-UN actors and are mutually reinforcing. OCHA[35] provides the overall leadership for the

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[34] (Steets et al., 2010) UN, IASC Cluster Approach Evaluation 2, p 8.(Steets et al., 2010).
[35] OCHAs mandate covers large scale emergencies caused by natural and man made disasters resulting in displacement and loss.

implementation of the humanitarian reform agenda.

6. The cluster approach, launched in 2006/7, initially included 10 thematic or services areas[36], with global level clusters generally providing support, guidance, andstandard setting while the country level clusters support operational coordination. In principle each cluster has a designated lead (or co-lead). Guidance recommends that Government chair/co-chair cluster meetings wherever possible. NGOs may also be nominated to co-chair e.g. on a rotating basis[37]. Each humanitarian organization participating in the cluster also retains its own agency responsibilities; thus the collective responsibility (the cluster approach) is one among many of the stakeholders' responsibilities in humanitarian preparedness and response.

7. To date two global evaluations of the humanitarian cluster system have been conducted ((Steets et al., 2010; Stoddard, Harmer, Haver, Salomons, & Wheeler, 2007)). Cluster lead agencies have conducted cluster specific evaluations including most recently a joint evaluation (WFP/UNICEF/Government of Netherlands) of the Logistics Cluster[38] and an evaluation of UNICEF's Cluster Lead Agency Role (CLARE).[39]

8. The 2010 IASC Cluster Approach Evaluation Phase II - pointed to the gains made by the introduction of the cluster approach – and the need to continue assessing its success. Generalizing on progress made after 5 years for all of the clusters together, the evaluation noted that "the investments were beginning to pay off as the benefits generated by the cluster approach to date had slightly outweighed its costs and shortcomings. Provided that improvements are made, the cluster approach has significant potential for further improving humanitarian response and thereby enhancing the well-being of affected populations" (Steets et al., 2010, p. 67).

9. More recent reforms introduced in the context of the IASC[40] Transformative Agenda (TA) have further formalized roles and

Definitions:

Global cluster lead agency: an agency/organization at global level that has been designated by the IASC as cluster lead agency for a particular sector.

County level cluster lead agency: an agency or organization that has been designated by the Resident and/or Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC) as cluster lead agency for a particular sector at the country level, following consultations with the Humanitarian Country Team. (A cluster lead agency at the country level need not necessarily be the same agency/organization as the Global Cluster Lead Agency for that sector).

Global cluster coordinator: This is a person who has been designated as global cluster coordinator by the Global Cluster Lead Agency. This person is responsible for the day-to-day coordination and facilitation of the work of the global cluster.

Country level cluster coordinator: this is a person who has been designated as cluster coordinator by the cluster lead agency at the country level. This person is responsible for the day-to-day coordination and facilitation of the work of the cluster.

Source: http://oneresponse.info/ Coordination/ ClusterApproach/

UNHCR is a cluster lead for protection and camp management in IDP contexts resulting from conflict. However, in refugee operations, UNHCR, has the overall mandate for coordinating all assistance to refugees and cluster protocols do not apply. Source: Tim Morris, Forced Migration Review. 2006

[36] The 10 clusters as originally established including their leads are as follows: Agriculture Cluster (FAO), CCCM Cluster (UNHCR/IOM), Early Recovery Cluster (UNDP), Education Cluster (UNICEF/Save the Children), Emergency Shelter Cluster (UNHCR/IFRC), Health Cluster (WHO), Nutrition Cluster (UNICEF), Protection Cluster (UNHCR), WASH Cluster (UNICEF) and service clusters Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (OCHA/WFP/UNICEF) and Logistics Cluster (WFP).

[37] WFP and FAO co-lead the FSC, which implies accountability to the HC. Other organizations may chair the FSC, which is principally a facilitating role.

[38] http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/eb/wfpdoc062162.pdf

[39] http://www.unicef.org/evaluation/files/UNICEF_CLARE_-_ToR_FINAL.pdf

[40] The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) is the primary mechanism for inter-agency coordination of humanitarian assistance. It is a unique forum involving the key UN and non-UN humanitarian partners. The Transformative Agenda Protocols (2012) establish parameters for improved collective action in humanitarian emergencies.

responsibilities for humanitarian response, focusing on three key areas: leadership, coordination and accountability. The Humanitarian Coordinator (HC), the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), country clusters and cluster lead agencies remain the prime actors supporting national response efforts.

10. The Cluster Approach Evaluation Phase II (2010) recommended that a co-led Food Security Cluster be established "integrating food aid, agricultural issues and other livelihood interventions and addressing related institutional and policy issues at the political level". The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) designated the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP) as co-leads of the global Food Security Cluster (gFSC).

11. The main objective of the gFSC is to strengthen the impact of life-saving, food security responses in crisis situations and to mainstream early recovery approaches from the very outset by improving coordination of food security responses. Such efforts are intended to specifically strengthen country capacity to plan and implement proportionate, appropriate and timely food security responses in humanitarian crisis situations. In particular, strengthened food security clusters at the country level was seen as a way to "ensure that food assistance and agricultural livelihood-based programmes are linked as part of a coordinated response that gives food security a stronger position in country-level planning and execution".

2. Reasons for the Evaluation

2.1. Rationale

12. The evaluation was proposed to and agreed by both the Programme Committee of FAO and the Executive Board of WFP. It responds to the call for accountability embodied as an important pillar within the IASC Transformative Agenda. The evaluation will assess the performance and results of food security clusters (FSCs) at country-level, providing conclusions and recommendations relevant to the two global cluster lead agencies, the global support team, and to gFSC partners at national and global levels.

13. The evaluation considers a single clusters' performance and is designed to build on and provide additional evaluation insights beyond inter-agency evaluations of the cluster system as a whole. This focus is, however, without prejudice to the need for the evaluation to consider how effectively FSC efforts coordinate inter-sectorally and in accordance with the priorities and needs of individual countries.

14. Finally, significant resources (human and financial) have been channelled into food security cluster coordination over the period 2009-2013 at country and more recently global levels and it is an opportune time to take stock of good practices and lessons learned.

2.2. Objectives

15. Evaluations serve the dual objectives of accountability and learning. As such, the evaluation will:

a) Assess and report on the performance and results of food security cluster

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coordination[41] at country level since the inception of the gFSC in 2010 (accountability), and;

b) Determine the reasons why certain changes occurred – or did not occur – as a result of food security cluster-related activities[42] over the 2009-2013 period, before and after the gFSC was established and during the roll-out of the Transformative Agenda, to draw lessons that will help in further implementation (learning).

16. Due to the fact that FSC coordination work has only recently been formalized for the two organizations, and given the considerable diversity observed in the contexts, set up and operations of FSC in the different regions, the overall aim of the evaluation is more formative than summative.

2.3. Stakeholders and Users of the Evaluation

17. It is expected that the evaluation team will undertake a full stakeholder analysis during the inception phase of the evaluation. Primary and secondary stakeholders have been initially identified as follows:

> Primary stakeholders: Primary audiences for the evaluation are senior management within both WFP and FAO at global and country levels, including the FAO Programme Committee and the WFP Executive Board, who have both supported food security cluster coordination. Other important primary stakeholders of the evaluation are global and country level FSC staff and the numerous partners who have provided both financial and in kind contributions to cluster management – and who are frequently key participants in country- level food security cluster activities. These stakeholders will inform the evaluation throughout the evaluation process through information provided in interviews as well as through formal consultative mechanisms such as the evaluation Reference Group.

> Secondary stakeholders: Other stakeholders who have an interest in and may benefit from the evaluation include OCHA and, at country level, Humanitarian Country Teams and parts of Governments with whom the FSC interacts. The multi-lateral and bi-lateral donors that support food security activities are also indirect stakeholders, with interests in the relevance, strategy, and performance of the food security clusters.

3. Subject of the Evaluation

3.1. Background

18. FAO and WFP each have mandates to respond to humanitarian needs for food assistance and livelihood recovery during and in the aftermath of a crisis. For FAO, this mandate is framed within one of its twelve strategic objectives "improved preparedness for, and effective response to, food and agricultural threats and

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[41] Benchmarking performance against IASC cluster coordination standards as outlined in the reference modules.
[42] Prior to the establishment of the gFSC in 2010 there were ad hoc and country-specific coordination mechanisms that addressed food security coordination.

emergencies"[43] FAO's role specifically in food security cluster/sector coordination is linked to its work in early warning and assessment, contingency planning, and in particular the organization result 2.2 which specifically relates to the application of the cluster approach. WFP's 2008-2013 Strategic Plan Strategic Objective 1 (SO1) of saving lives and protecting livelihoods in emergencies provides the overall framework for WFP's cluster leadership[44]. WFP's food security cluster responsibilities are linked to its emergency response and humanitarian food assistance mandates. humanitarian emergencies.

19. The IASC mandated global Food Security Cluster (gFSC) is co- led by WFP and FAO. The gFSC engages directly with the IASC cluster system architecture and provides support, norms, and guidance to country-level Food Security Clusters (FSCs). The objective[45] of the global Food Security Cluster (gFSC) is to promote responses that are proportionate, appropriate and timely[46].

A note on terminology:

The cluster approach: The cluster approach has a common architecture across **the 11 IASC mandated global clusters** (see illustration below). The architecture includes global level and country level systems for coordination. At global level, global cluster lead agencies (GCLA) are mandated by IASC, through the emergency relief coordinator (ERC), and supported by OCHA to implement the cluster approach at country level and provide support to country-level clusters. At country level, the cluster is activated by the HC/HCT with support from OCHA and Government. The cluster lead agency/ies (CLA) support the cluster and the heads of the CLAs are accountable to the HC/HCT. Clusters typically have a cluster coordinator (CC) responsible for managing the cluster activities.

Global Food Security Cluster (gFSC): IASC mandated global cluster for coordination of food security responses in humanitarian emergencies. Comprised of two global cluster lead agencies (FAO and WFP) that are responsible for supporting country-level coordination.

Food Security Cluster (FSC): a country-level cluster, activated by the humanitarian coordinator /country team (HC/HCT), that is responsible for coordinating the food security response in humanitarian emergencies.

Coordination Architecture in the global Food Security Cluster

ERC	(G)CLA	(Global) Cluster Lead Agency
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
UN OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
GST	Global Support Team (Rome –based)

Source: adapted from http://clusters.humanitarianresponse.info/about-clusters/who-does-what

20. Country-level FSCs are also often co-led by WFP and FAO and are responsible, with support of the lead agencies, for supporting coordinated service delivery, informing and supporting strategic decision making by the humanitarian country team (HCT), planning and strategy development, advocacy, monitoring implementation, capacity building, contingency planning, and a provider of last resort[47].

21. Following upon the 2010 IASC decision to formally establish the gFSC, in 2011

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[43] FAO is transitioning to a new strategic framework within which emergency work will be framed under a global resilience strengthening objective. Under both the old and new frameworks, the Emergency and Rehabilitation Division (TCE) leads FAO's corporate efforts, including its participation in Food Security Cluster Coordination.

[44] The recently approved 2014-2017 WFP Strategic Plan also lists WFP's cluster responsibilities under Strategic Objective 1, saving lives and protecting livelihoods in emergencies.

[45] See http://foodsecuritycluster.org/home

[46] See Food Security Cluster ToR, Draft. 2011.

[47] Food Security Cluster Coordination Handbook. June 2012.

WFP and FAO began to set up a global support team (GST) to support country clusters, jointly staffed and located within WFP headquarters in Rome. Over the past 2.5 years, the GST has grown substantially. The GST also provides support to four working groups[48]. The GST receives crucial support from the global partners forum – who meet twice year. The GST includes a staffing of a dozen staff (including seconded staff from GenCap, ProCap, the IFRC and HelpAge) and an annual budget of approximately US$2.5 million which funds GST activities funded through three main mechanisms: contributions from WFP and FAO; contributions in cash/kind from gFSC partners[49]; and extra-budgetary funding from resource partners. The main areas of work undertaken by the GST include capacity development in support of national clusters, information management, surge support, advocacy, communication and partnership building.[50]

22. Prior to 2010, agriculture clusters (led by FAO) and food aid coordination forums (led by WFP) existed in a number of countries. However, even at an early stage[51] some countries developed broader food security clusters (see mapping Annex 3). Today there are 26 active FSCs in Africa, Asia, the Near East and Latin America. The contexts in which clusters exist vary tremendously and even their names are not consistent from country to country. They have been set up in response to large scale natural disasters as well as complex man-made emergencies. In several cases, the emergency is regional (e.g. HoA, Sahel or most recently Syria) and there is a supra-national dimension to the coordination efforts underway (not called a cluster) with regional analysis, planning and appeal processes led by IASC partners. Governments are participating significantly in some countries – and less in others.

3.2. Scope of the Evaluation

23. The scope of the evaluation focuses primarily on country-level FSC performance and results, with a secondary focus on the role and function of the gFSC in support of the country-level FSC deliverables. Where they exist, the role and contribution of regional food security coordination mechanisms will also be examined.

24. The evaluation is focused on the performance and results of the country-level FSCs in terms of the timeliness, coverage[52], quality and connectedness of food security interventions in humanitarian response. These outcomes are supported by the coordination, information sharing, planning and strategy development, advocacy, capacity building, and M&E roles and responsibilities of the FSC. The measurable inputs to FSC activities are recognized as collective responsibilities of the cluster members; the evaluation will assess the extent to which these inputs have been provided and facilitated the achievement of these results. These inputs include cluster lead agency (CLA) support at country, funding, staffing, engagement of cluster partners, etc.

25. The period covered by the evaluation is 2009-2013, to include the period prior to the official gFSC formation. This provides scope for the evaluation to compare, in selected contexts, changes that result from establishing the gFSC. In some cases, ad

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[48] Current working groups include: Assessment Working Group, gFSC Inter-Cluster Working Group on Food Security and Nutrition, and the Urban Food Security and Livelihoods working group.
[49] There are 35 partner institutions associated with the gFSC. www.foodsecuritycluster.net
[50] gFSC Strategic Plan 2013_2014.
[51] By the end of 2010, 19 country-level food security clusters already existed. Source: IASC Principles Meeting. Proposal to establish a Global Food Security Cluster. Dec 2010.
[52] This includes how FSC have contributed to improved targeting that reaches the most needy (including females and marginalized groups), reducing duplication and gaps within existing resources.

hoc mechanisms of cooperation in food security coordination were present and in others two clusters (food aid, led by WFP, and agriculture, led by FAO) were present; in both cases, the longitudinal assessment of performance and results will allow comparison before/after the gFSC was established.

26. The evaluation will not assess the impact of food security interventions by individual cluster members , i.e. effects at population level, as this is beyond the scope of the evaluation and mandate of the commissioning agencies. A theory of change has been prepared to provide a framework for the evaluation (see Annex 2) and illustrates the outcomes, outputs and inputs that are a focus of the evaluation. The theory of change will be refined during the inception phase.

27. At secondary level, the evaluation will cover the inputs from the gFSC, including the activities undertaken by the GST and its management by FAO and WFP in their GCLA roles. The evaluation will place emphasis on the standards and policy setting agenda of the gFSC and the GST's capacity building and surge support functions.

4. Evaluation Approach, Questions and Methodology

4.1. Overview of Evaluation Approach

28. The evaluation is proposed as a theory-based evaluation, using a theory of change (see Annex 2 for draft theory of change) to guide the evaluation design, approach, and key questions. The methodological approach, and associated tools, will to the extent possible look to compare a series of cases (country-level FSCs) on a range of key results and performance measures[53]. The evaluation will also examine the contribution of the gFSC to the country cases. Within the overall limitations to evaluability, the evaluation will use a mix of methods to answer the key evaluation questions.

29. The overall approach to the evaluation will be inductive or bottom up. The main reason for this choice is that work done in the initial preparatory phase suggests that there is more variability than commonality in food security cluster work at country level and that, while a general theory of change can be constructed, in practice each country level example will need to be evaluated given its own context. This approach implies that, with respect to the selection of countries to be visited by the mission, the so-called "sampling approach" will deliberately seek to capture diversity and will of necessity involve a larger sample of countries than would be necessary if a greater level of homogeneity was evident.

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[53] The evaluation approach is also informed by those of prior evaluations of the IASC cluster system (see Steets (2010) and Stoddard (2007)) and by the WFP Office of Evaluation's strategic evaluation theme of emergency preparedness and response.

> ***Evaluability*** *is the extent to which an activity or a programme can be evaluated in a reliable and credible fashion. It necessitates that a policy, intervention or operation provides: (a) a clear description of the situation before or at its start that can be used as reference point to determine or measure change; (b) a clear statement of intended outcomes, i.e. the desired changes that should be observable once implementation is under way or completed; (c) a set of clearly defined and appropriate indicators with which to measure changes; and (d) a defined timeframe by which outcomes should be occurring.*

4.2. Evaluability Assessment

30. In searching for a comparison (i.e. a statement of what the humanitarian response would look like in the absence of food security clusters), the evaluation needs to consider a) countries where there is no FSC – with the understanding that another coordination mechanism will likely be in place, b) the period before the gFSC was established and what changed after 2011 as a result of its work, and c) countries where the establishment of the FSC is very recent and where stakeholders may be able to report back to the situation before the FSC was established. Benchmarking FSC performance against the performance of other clusters operating at country level may also be useful where data is available.

31. The outcomes of coordination (improved coverage, timeliness, enhanced national capacity, greater connectedness, etc.) are inherently difficult to measure and baseline data is generally lacking. The GST has only recently begun to develop a FSC monitoring tool. An added complication is that, in humanitarian crisis, the turnover in agency personnel is significant which means that even collecting information based on recall may be a challenge. The evaluation has constructed a theory of change[54] which will allow the evaluation to identify indicators and frame the evaluation questions. However, some of the areas of change will be hard to measure – and the role/contribution of the FSC to this change even more difficult. In the view of the commissioning evaluation offices, the evaluation will require a skilled evaluation team to draw together and systematically analyse across highly variable contexts, stakeholder perceptions, data quality and availability. The inception phase and inception result shall detail how the evaluability challenges will be addressed[55].

4.3. Evaluation Questions.

32. UN Evaluation Group norms and standards for evaluation will be followed, including the use of standard evaluation questions related to the OECD DAC criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability) and integrating human rights and gender equality dimensions. From an initial review of the literature and scoping interviews, the following 4 key questions have been developed for the evaluation, linked to the theory of change (Annex 2). Additional sub-questions will be

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[54] The draft theory of change is based on a significant body of cluster related documentation and has been adapted from the Phase II Cluster Evaluation Framework, 2010. It was validated by the commissioning offices during a biannual meeting of the gFSC partners in April 2013.

[55] The inception report is expected to elaborate upon the draft theory of change (Annex 2) and develop an evaluation matrix as a framework for addressing the evaluation questions. The assumptions in the theory of change and the range of data sources within the evaluation matrix should be developed to explicitly address the evaluability challenges.

further elaborated and refined by the evaluation team during the inception phase of the evaluation.

> **Key question 1:** To what extent have the FSC activities contributed to a timely, appropriate, and proportionate food security response in emergency affected countries? (effectiveness)
>
> **Key question 2:** To what extent have the FSC activities been relevant to the coordination, planning, information sharing, and capacity building needs (and change over time) of national and international humanitarian actors in emergency affected countries/regions? (relevance, coherence)
>
> **Key question 3:** To what extent have FSC efforts engaged national actors (public and private), building upon national structures and systems and extending their capacities to lead and participate in a coordinated response that links immediate relief to recovery/resilience building efforts? (sustainability/connectedness)
>
> **Key question 4:** As co-lead agencies, have FAO and WFP provided the necessary inputs at global and country levels? To what extent have the policies and standards, capacity building, and surge support functions of the gFSC, including the GST, enabled FSC activities in emergency affected countries? To what extent have the resources available been used efficiently?

4.4. Methodology

33. The evaluation will utilize a mixed-method approach, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative tools and a range of secondary and primary data sources. Tools and methods identified below are indicative and will be finalized during the inception phase.

34. The evaluation will employ relevant internationally agreed evaluation criteria including those of relevance, coherence (internal and external), efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability and connectedness.

35. The methodology:

- Is built around the TOC and related evaluation questions presented above;
- Seeks to be inclusive, to build understanding and to contribute to forward looking thinking;
- Takes into account the limitations to evaluability pointed out above as well as the agreed inter-agency budget and timeline for the evaluation;
- Uses and triangulates multiple sources of data (both qualitative and quantitative).

36. With respect to the analysis of existing secondary data, the evaluation team will undertake a systematic review of the following information:

- Evaluation reports (in particular WFP and FAO Country Evaluation reports for countries in which there was a significant crisis – as well as inter-agency evaluations such as RTEs,the cluster system evaluations, the WFP global logistics cluster evaluation, and the UNICEF cluster lead agency evaluation).
- gFSC reports and training materials.

- FSC country monitoring data (questionnaire based information available for several countries).
- FSC websites (where outputs of the FSC are archived) and OCHA websites (multi-sectoral analysis and appeals)
- Guidelines and normative work on FSC prepared by the two agencies (see Annex 5 for a preliminary list).
- Financial data on resource commitments to global and country level food security clusters.

37. With respect to primary data gathering, the evaluation will include interviews (face-to-face and telephone) and surveys designed to reach a wide range of stakeholders (see stakeholder mapping above) in a systematic way. In applying an inductive approach to measuring results that are hard to quantify, tools such as Most Significant Change and Outcome Harvesting may be used. The evaluation may also request FSC Coordinators to maintain "impact logs" or a 3 month journal where they note any changes that they observe in the behaviour or decisions of FSC stakeholders which appear to occur in the context of cluster coordination activities. These registers will be particularly important for countries that the mission will visit – allowing evaluation team members to hone in on specific areas of changes and causal pathways.

38. A number of country case study missions (anticipated 8-9) will be undertaken to allow for in-depth interviewing. The criteria for selecting the countries should ensure that variability is captured in terms of a) type of emergency: natural disaster/complex, b) maturity of the cluster, c) characteristics of the lead/chairing arrangements, d) geographic representation over the main regions where large scale food related emergency responses have occurred over the past 5 years, and e) by scale of need (affected population) and funding response. Interviews in country case studies will involve discussions with a wide range of institutional stakeholders. As the evaluation will not attempt to look beyond the results of coordination, no community/household level data gathering is envisioned.

39. As a key part of the methodological refinement, the inception report (IR) will contain: literature review; secondary data analysis; a refined theory of change to serve as the final evaluation framework which will be the basis of detailed sub-questions and a rationale for any proposed changes to the terms of reference questions; a detailed analytical plan articulating the specific methods and indicators to be used to answer each of the questions, how attribution will be gauged and counterfactuals established; a risk management plan; a detailed stakeholder analysis; a case study sampling plan (including the criteria to be used); and an evaluation matrix expanding upon the key questions articulating sub-questions, verifiable indicators and means of verification/data collection. It is expected that the evaluation matrix include specific sub-questions on the extent to which gender equity has informed the FSC outputs and outcomes.

40. A reference group comprising a cross-section of key food security practitioners from FAO, WFP and Partners will provide comment on the draft inception and evaluation reports.

4.5. Quality Assurance

41. WFP's evaluation quality assurance system (EQAS)[56] is based on the UNEG norms and standards and good practice of the international evaluation community (ALNAP and DAC). It sets out processes with in-built steps for quality assurance and templates for evaluation products. It also includes quality assurance of evaluation reports (inception, full and summary reports) based on standardised checklists. EQAS will be systematically applied during the course of this evaluation and relevant documents provided to the evaluation team. The evaluation managers will conduct the first level quality assurance, while the OE Directors will conduct the second level review. This quality assurance process does not interfere with the views and independence of the evaluation team, but ensures the report provides the necessary evidence in a clear and convincing way and draws its conclusions on that basis.

42. The evaluation team will be required to ensure the quality of data (validity, consistency and accuracy) throughout the analytical and reporting phases.

5. Organization of the Evaluation

5.1. Phases and Deliverables

43. A summary timeline of the five evaluation phases is indicated in Table 1. A more detailed timeline (see Annex 7) will be developed with the evaluation team and provided in the inception report.

Table 1: Timeline summary of the key evaluation milestones and deliverables

Phase 1 - Preparation	Key Dates
Initial desk review, concept note, scoping interviews and development and dissemination of the draft TOR. Call for Expressions of Interest for the Independent Team Leader and Team Members.	Apr/June 2013
Finalise TOR Recruitment of the Team Leader	Aug 2013 Aug 2013
Phase 2 - Inception and Recruitment of Team Members	**Sept-Nov 2013**
Recruitment of Team members	Sept 2013
Inception Mission	Oct 2013
gFSC Partners meeting	Nov 2013
Inception report	Nov 13, 2013
Phase 3 - Evaluation Missions and Primary & Secondary Data Analysis	**Nov 2013-Feb 2014**
Field mission 1	Nov/Dec 2013

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[56] WFP, Office of Evaluation. 2013. Evaluation Quality Assurance System, Strategic Evaluations. Guidance for Process & Content.
http://docustore.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/reports/wfp230917.pdf

Field mission 2	Jan 2014
Field mission 3	Feb 2014
Aide-memoires (country specific)	After each field mission
Phase 4 - Reporting (30 June submission by TL of final report to OED/OEV.)	**Mar-Jun 2014**
Analysis workshop	March 2014
Learning workshop	April 2014
Draft 0	May 10
Draft 1	
Draft 2	
Draft 3 + summary reports	June 30, 2014
Phase 5 Executive Board/Programme Committee and follow-up	
Preparation of evaluation brief and dissemination of reports	July 2014
Editing / translation of summary report	Jul/Aug 2014
Preparation of Management response	Jul/Aug 2014
Presentation of management response to the FAO PC	**Oct 2014**
Presentation of eval summary report to the WFP EB/14	**Nov 2014**

5.2. Evaluation Component

44. An evaluation team composed of one team leader and 3 team members with appropriate evaluation and technical capacities will be engaged for this evaluation. Within the team, the team leader bears ultimate responsibility for all team outputs, overall team functioning, and client relations. The team leader requires strong evaluation and leadership skills, experience with evaluation of humanitarian preparedness and response (ideally with UN humanitarian reform) and technical expertise in one of the technical areas listed below. His/her primary responsibilities will be (a) further elaborating upon the methodology and approach in the inception report; (b) guiding and managing the team during the inception and evaluation phase and overseeing the preparation of working papers; (c) consolidating team members' inputs to the evaluation products; (d) representing the evaluation team in meetings with stakeholders; (e) delivering the inception report, draft and final evaluation reports in line with agreed OE standards (EQAS) and agreed timelines.

45. The three additional *evaluation team members* will bring together a complementary combination of technical expertise and experience in the fields of: (a) humanitarian food security assessment (b) communications and information management, (c) capacity development (organizational and individual), (d) food security planning and programme management. Back office support in data analysis

will be required to support the evaluation team members and will be provided by the OEs.

46. None of the team members will have had primary responsibility for global or country-level Food Security Clusters, the outputs, or any of the major interventions, to avoid conflict of interest.

47. The evaluation team leader and members will contribute to the design of the evaluation methodology in their area of expertise; undertake document reviews prior to fieldwork; undertaket primary data collection at HQ, regional and country level to generate additional evidence from a cross-section of stakeholders, including carrying out site visits as necessary to speak with local organizations/stakeholders; participate in team meetings, including with stakeholders; prepare inputs in their technical area for the evaluation products; and contribute to the preparation of the evaluation report. All members of the evaluation team will abide by the Code of Conduct for evaluators ensuring they maintain impartiality and professionalism.

5.3. Roles and Responsibilities

48. The evaluation will be jointly managed by an evaluation manager from each organization and is governed by . The Evaluation Managers have not worked on issues associated with the subject of evaluation in the past. Within the given budget and time, they will manage the entire evaluation process from consultation on draft terms of reference through to dissemination and follow-up to the final evaluation report. FAO/OED will lead the management of the process, but all communications will be sent out together and all milestone decisions concerning the responsibilities set out below will be taken jointly on the basis of inputs from both agencies:

> a) prepare Terms of Reference in consultation with core stakeholders; b) identify and recruit the evaluation team;
>
> c) act as the main interlocutor between the evaluation team, represented by the team leader, and WFP/FAO and other agencies' counterparts to ensure a smooth implementation process;
>
> d) brief the team and participate in the inception interviews to WFP and FAO HQ;
>
> e) review and exercise first level quality assurance on the evaluation tools and products;
>
> f) ensure that the evaluation team is enabled to carry out its work by supervising logistical arrangements and preparing and managing the budget;
>
> g) supervise the collection and organization of all relevant documentation from within and outside WFP and FAO/other agencies and make this information available to the evaluation team.

49. A Reference Group, composed of 8-10 stakeholders[57] will be assembled. The reference group will act as a point of contact for their own organization, review and provide mainly technical feedback on three core evaluation outputs (TOR, IR, draft report), make suggestions for countries which would serve as case studies, suggest additional key reference documents, and participate in focus groups, interviews or workshops. See details including roles in Annex 6.

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[57] Comprised of representatives from WFP, FAO, OCHA, a donor representative, another Cluster Lead Agency (most likely Nutrition), ALNAP and several NGO representatives from the global FSC partners forum.

50. The Evaluation Managers will share the responsibility for evaluation quality assurance using WFP's process for strategic evaluations.[58] Both Evaluation Managers will be invited to attend consultant briefing/stakeholder debriefing sessions. The Evaluation Managers report directly to the Heads of Evaluation in FAO and WFP, who will provide: a) strategic orientation and direction at critical junctures; b) second level quality assurance, and c) final approval of the evaluation ToR, draft and final reports.

51. To enhance the credibility of the evaluation, WFP/FAO OE staff will not be part of the evaluation team or participate in meetings where their presence could bias the responses of the stakeholders.

5.4. Communication

52. The evaluation managers will ensure consultation with the Reference Group on each of the key evaluation deliverables. In all cases these stakeholders' role is advisory.

53. The evaluation will be coordinated with WFP's Office of Evaluation strategic communication plan, which includes key points of liaison with WFP senior management throughout the evaluation process.

54. Briefings and de-briefings will include participants from country, regional and headquarters level. Participants unable to attend a face-to-face meeting will be invited to participate by telephone. A communication plan for the findings and evaluation report will be drawn up during the inception phase, based on the operational plan for the evaluation contained in the Inception Report. The evaluation report will be posted on both FAO's and WFP's external websites once complete. The two agencies will be required to prepare a joint management response to the evaluation recommendations.

55. Key outputs will be produced in English. During the inception phase, decisions will be taken on the usefulness and possibilities for holding a workshop to discuss the evaluation report recommendations. Should translators be required for fieldwork, they will be provided.

56. The Summary Evaluation Report will be prepared by the Team Leader and presented to WFP's Executive Board and FAO's Programme Committee in all official UN languages.

5.5. Budget

57. The evaluation will be jointly financed from the Programme Support and Administrative budget of both FAO and WFP. Based on the team composition presented in section 5.2, the associated remuneration (daily fees) and the cost of international and domestic travel, the total budget for the evaluation is estimated at US$ 350,000.

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[58] WFP, Office of Evaluation. 2013. Evaluation Quality Assurance System, Strategic Evaluations.

Annex 3: Key documents consulted for the evaluation

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Annex 4: Methods

101. As suggested in the terms of reference, the evaluation team chose an **approach** that derived its guiding questions from a theory of change, which the evaluation team developed and validated with relevant stakeholders (see Figure 1). The methods used were predominantly qualitative, complemented by more quantitative analyses of survey results, trends and financial data.

102. The **data collection** for this evaluation included both primary and secondary data from a variety of different sources, which were triangulated in order to address the evaluation questions. The main activities were detailed country case studies, impact logs, a survey and global research. They relied on different methods including interviews, direct observation, analysis, interactive workshops, debriefings and learning events.

103. The evaluation team selected eight **country case studies** (see Figure 2) to assess food security coordination at national and sub-national level. In chronological order, the team carried our country missions to Pakistan, Bangladesh, Lebanon, Mali, Chad, Turkey (for the response in Northern Syria), the Philippines and Kenya. The cases were selected to include different kinds of coordination solutions and set-ups and to cover different humanitarian contexts. For each of the issues analysed for this evaluation, the team tried to determine patterns in the results of the case studies that would help to identify explanatory variables. The case selection had to be adapted several times due to security considerations. Planned missions to Yemen, South Sudan and Central African Republic were therefore not implemented.

104. As a core component of the evaluation, the case studies served multiple purposes. The sample generated evidence on the effects of coordination and factors that hinder or enable its effectiveness. During the visits, first hand observations and in-depth, person-to-person interviews were possible. Debriefings / learning workshops with coordination teams and representatives of the lead agencies were conducted at the end of the country missions. The findings of each country mission are captured in short and informal aide mémoires.

105. A **document review** and analysis was administered for country-specific preparation. The document types included products of the coordination mechanisms on the ground, funding data, monitoring and evaluation data as well as documented lessons learned and country-specific reports created at the global level. The team prioritized (1) documents that are direct outputs of country level clusters and allow insights into the quality of the work done (these documents were analysed for technical quality and coherence); (2) documents containing information relevant to some of the indicators used, for example cluster meeting minutes indicating participation levels and topics covered; and (3) evaluative and analytical documents such as lessons learned reports.

106. **Impact logs** were designed to gain a more global overview of the effects and characteristics of cluster coordination than the case country studies could permit. 24 clusters were selected for one-hour semi-structured phone interviews early on in the evaluation process. They allowed the evaluation team to pre-identify important issues and investigate them further during country visits. The impact logs documented the coordination mechanism in each country, recent FSC activities and examples of tangible effects of as well as constraints on effective coordination. The level and effects of support from the global FSC, headquarters and country-level lead agencies also were examined.

107. Overall, 483 **interviews** with people in 35 countries were conducted for this evaluation (see Figure 13). The in-person, phone or videoconference interviews were held with stakeholders at global, regional and local levels. About a third of the respondents were from either WFP or FAO and the interviews also encompassed the perspectives of FSC staff, partners and member organisations, international and local actors, donors, UN agencies and local authorities (see Figure 14). The team went through different stages to interprete and triangulate interview data. First, country case study research teams (usually teams of two) jointly interpreted interview data, triangulated results with documentary evidence and verified their interpretation in a workshop and through written comments on country-specific aide-mémoires with the country coordination team and other relevant stakeholders. Second, a joint interpretation of all interview data took place during a 3-day team workshop. Subsequently, all results were triangulated with the survey results and, where necessary, additional documentary research.

Figure 13: Interviewees by country
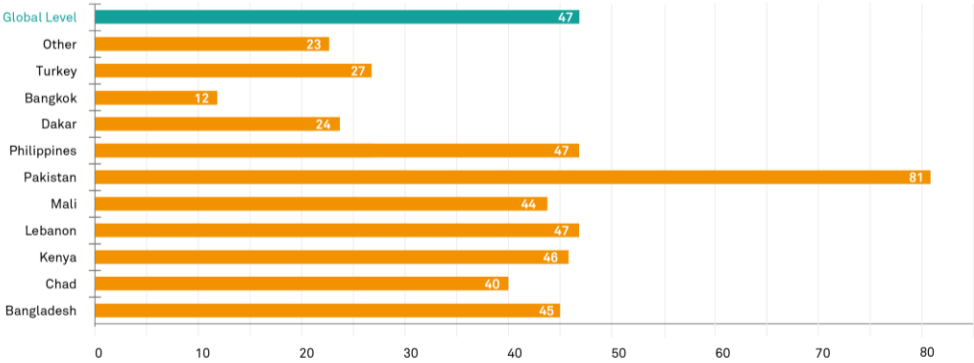
Figure 14: Interviewees by organisational background
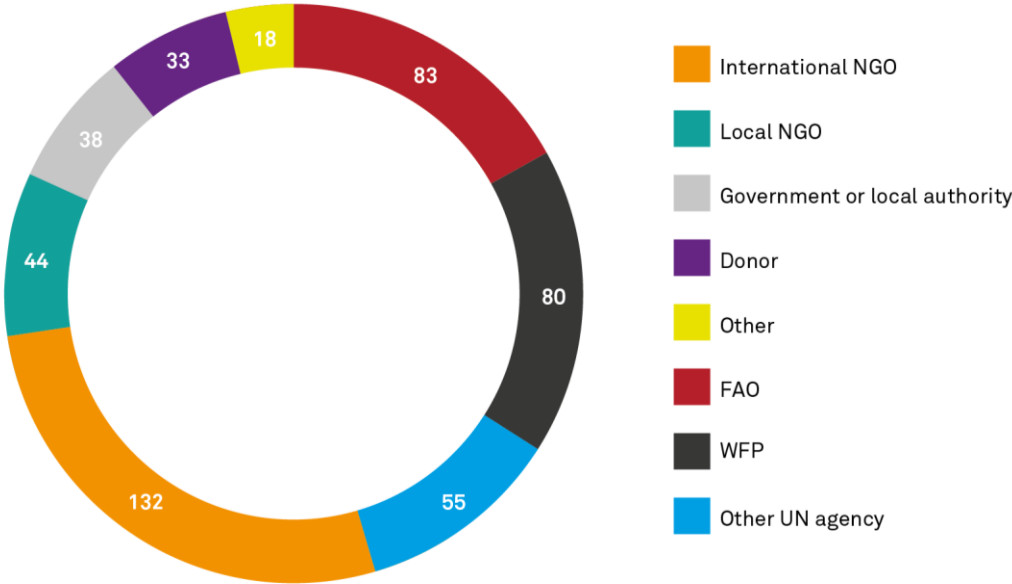
108. In addition, food security coordination teams in 56 countries were asked to complete and disseminate an **online survey** available in English, French, Spanish and Arabic. It comprised questions about the effectiveness of food security coordination, the relevance of activities, the mechanisms and leadership and the

services offered by the global support team. The survey was disseminated to relevant stakeholders at country level through food security coordinators and/or FAO and WFP country representatives.

109. 403 individuals from 43 countries participated in the survey (see Figure 15 for a breakdown for those countries that include at least 10 responses). The respondents are well balanced in terms of organisational backgrounds (see Figure 16), as well as roles assumed in the coordination mechanism (see Figure 17). The sample is representative of the different stakeholders and contexts relevant for food security coordination and its size allows for statistically analysing correlations. To account for the different numbers of responses for individual countries, many of the graphs used in the report indicate that the data are "weighted per country". This means that the combined responses for each country are given the same weight in the graph. The difference to "unweighted" analyses was in all cases minimal. However, the validity of the survey data is limited by two factors. First, a selection bias is probable as the more interested and convinced might have been more likely to receive and respond to the survey. Second, the representativeness of findings is questionable for countries with low response rates.

Figure 15: Survey responses by country (only countries with at least 10 responses)

# of responses
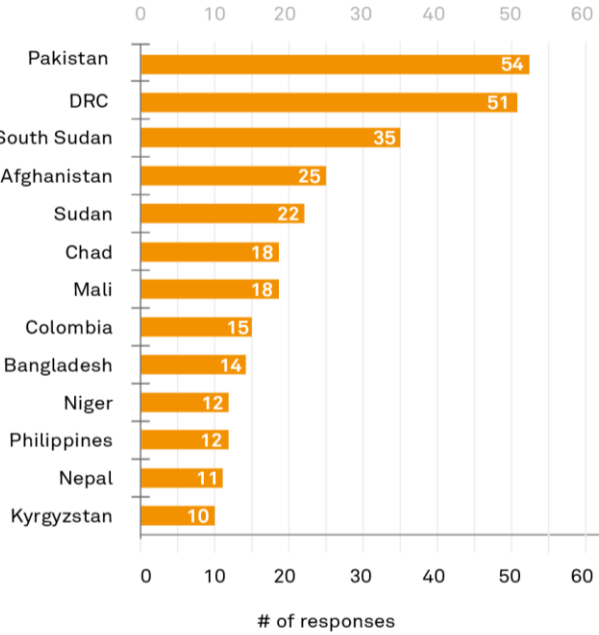
Figure 16: Organisational background of survey respondents

Legend:
- Humanitarian donor
- Other UN agency
- Other organization
- Government authority
- WFP
- FAO
- National or local NGO
- International NGO

403 responses
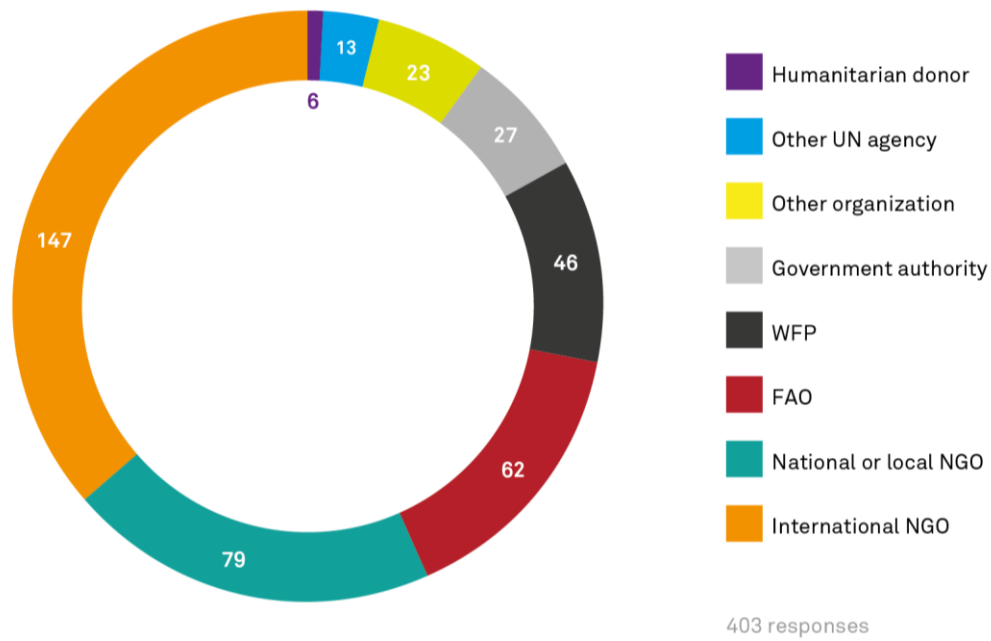
Figure 17: Role of the respondents' organisation in the coordination mechanism

Legend:
- No role
- Donor
- Observer
- Other role
- Chair
- Partner

395 responses
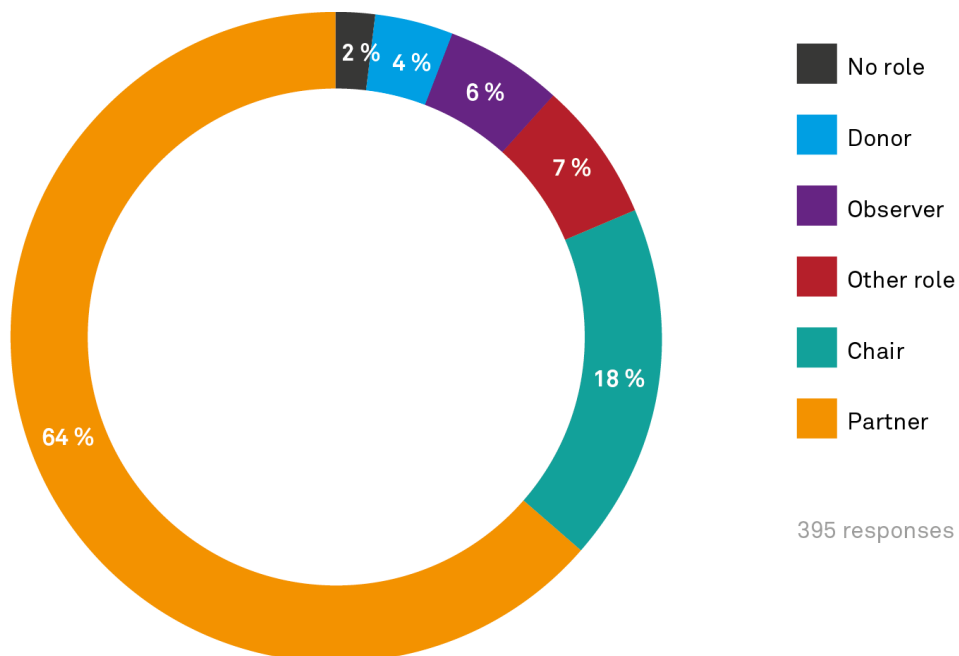
110. To complement the country-specific analysis, **global and regional research** was central to the evaluation.

- In addition to the documents relating to the different country case studies, a review of global documents was conducted based on the reliability and usefulness of different sources. This included global FSC products and guidance materials, as well as information on the website, meeting minutes and reports. Relevant evaluations of the lead agencies and of other clusters also were included and funding data for the clusters as well as the relevant food security literature also were consulted.

- The evaluation team also conducted confidential interviews with global and regional stakeholders. This included the FSC Global Support Team, management of WFP and FAO, FSC partners, observers, associates and non-members, donors, UN OCHA, representatives of other clusters and the leaders or facilitators of selected evaluations of lessons learned exercises.

- In addition to the country case studies, the evaluation included visits of regional centres. Team members travelled to the regional hubs in Dakar, Amman, Bangkok and Nairobi to interview additional stakeholders and understand regional aspects of coordination. The visits with the global FSC in Rome were organized in such a way that parts of the team could attend the global partners meeting.

111. The evaluation also entailed various **feedback and dissemination** mechanisms. The evaluation managers and members of the evaluation reference groups were invited to provide comments on the draft inception and evaluation reports. Stakeholders in the different case study countries were invited to share comments on the aide mémoires summarising country-level findings. Moreover, learning workshops were offered to enable different groups of stakeholders to review the findings and provide input into the fine-tuning of recommendations. The final findings and conclusions will be presented to the Programme Committee of FAO and Executive Board of WFP.

112. To guide its work, the evaluation team used an **evaluation matrix** (see Table 3). The matrix was based on the guiding and sub-guiding questions of the evaluation and defined specific indicators.

Table 3: Evaluation matrix

Evaluation questions	Sub-questions / indicators / observation points	Data sources
1. What effects do food security coordination mechanisms at country and local level have on humanitarian organizations and their activities? How and why?		
a) To what extent are food security coordination mechanisms offering relevant activities and services to promote a better coordinated strategy? To what extent are humanitarian organizations following a better coordinated strategy during preparedness, response or transition as a result?	How has the coordination mechanism contributed to baseline and early warning analysis on food security? To what extent has baseline and early warning analysis influenced joint and individual actions, such as emergency preparedness activities and contingency planning? **Indicators**: Share of food security coordination mechanisms that have conducted early warning analysis; Share of organizations actively using that information for planning	Interviews with coordinators and members of the coordination mechanism (management, preparedness and contingency planning sections) Analysis of baseline / early warning documents
	Has the coordination mechanism contributed to joint multi-sector and multi-agency food security needs analysis? If yes, what is the quality of that analysis? **Indicators**: Share of food security coordination mechanisms that have facilitated joint analyses; Share of analyses rated as low, acceptable or high quality	Interviews with coordinators and members Analysis of needs analysis documents
	Have coordination activities led to the formulation of a joint strategy on food security and / or helped forge consensus on response options? If yes, how coherent is the strategy and how appropriate are the identified response options? **Indicators**: Share of food security coordination mechanisms that have led to the formulation of a strategy; Share of strategies rated as low, acceptable or high quality	Interview coordinator and experts Analysis of documents of the coordination mechanism
	Is the strategy reflected in the overall country strategy and appeal documents such as the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP)? **Indicator**: Share of CAP documents making reference to food security strategies	Analysis of humanitarian country strategy, CAP and other appeal documents
	Is the coordination mechanism offering relevant and efficient information	Analysis of information management

Evaluation questions	Sub-questions / indicators / observation points	Data sources
	management services?	products
	Indicators: Share of humanitarian organizations rating information management services as relevant and efficient; Effectiveness of information management compared to other clusters	Survey Interviews
	To what extent are humanitarian organizations actively using analyses, strategies, action plans or information of the coordination mechanism in their planning and decision-making, for example in their choice of response options? **Indicator**: Share of organizations indicating that they actively use information and strategy products	Interviews with humanitarian organizations (management, programme heads) Survey
	Are there any specific examples that incoherence in the food security response has or has not been addressed?	Interviews with members of coordination mechanism, potentially focus group discussion
b) To what extent have food security coordination mechanisms offered relevant activities and services to enhance quality (e.g. more holistic approach to food security, integration of cross-cutting issues, adherence to standards, accountability to affected populations, better preparedness and transition)? Has the quality of humanitarian activities improved as a result?	Does the coordination mechanism have a coherent and appropriate understanding of the concept of food security in emergency and transition contexts? To what extent have humanitarian organizations (including the cluster lead agencies) adopted a more holistic food security model? If a holistic food security model is adopted, can this plausibly be attributed (at least in part) to coordination activities? **Indicator**: Degree of change observable in key organizations (FAO, WFP, major NGOs)	Analysis of documents of the coordination mechanism Analysis of policy and programme documents Interviews with humanitarian organizations and experts
	To what extent has the coordination mechanism offered information, guidance and training or facilitated peer review on issues related to programme quality? How relevant and of what quality were these services? To what extent have humanitarian organizations increased their compliance with relevant standards as a result of these services? **Indicators**: Share of food security coordination mechanisms that have offered activities related to quality; quality rating by participants	Interviews Survey Document analysis

Evaluation questions	Sub-questions / indicators / observation points	Data sources
	To what extent have humanitarian organizations improved the integration of cross-cutting issues such as gender, age, the environment and early recovery as a result of these services? **Indicator**: Share of organizations that introduced changes or additional measures following activities of the coordination mechanism	Interviews with members and experts Survey Analysis of policies and programme documents
	To what extent have humanitarian organizations strengthened their participatory approaches and other accountability to affected populations measures as a result of these services? **Indicator**: Share of organizations that introduced additional measures following activities of the coordination mechanism	Interviews with members and experts Survey Analysis of policies and programme documents
	How instrumental and appropriate has training been in this context (relevance of training as solution to an identified problem, training needs assessment, selection of relevant participants, training methods and materials, results of the training)?	Analysis of training strategy (if available) and training reports Interview with coordinators and people responsible for trainings Interviews with participants of the trainings
c) How do the benefits of the coordination mechanism compare to its costs and downsides?	What costs (financial, human resources, time invested in meetings and sharing information...) does the cluster or other coordination solution involve? **Indicator**: Total food security coordination costs (financial and in-kind) as a share of total food security assistance costs.	Financial analysis Interviews with coordination teams and members
	Does the coordination mechanism have any unintended negative effects (e.g. causing delays in the response, polarizing different groups of actors, undermining existing structures)?	Interviews with management and staff of humanitarian organizations (incl. UN OCHA and the Humanitarian Coordinator), as well as experts Survey
	Do humanitarian organizations see the investment as worthwhile?	Survey Interviews with members and non-members of the coordination mechanism

Evaluation questions	Sub-questions / indicators / observation points	Data sources
d) **To what extent have food security coordination mechanisms at country level or the global FSC influenced donor policies, practices and decisions?**	To what extent are donors participating actively in the coordination mechanism and receiving relevant information from it?	Interviews with donors and coordinators
	What other activities have the global FSC and country-level coordination mechanisms undertaken to influence donor policies and practices?	Review of meeting minutes and other documents Interviews with donors and coordinators
	What – if any – incentives or disincentives to coordinate actively do donors provide?	Interviews with donors and humanitarian organizations Analysis of donor strategies and application documents
	How strongly do donors consider strategies, action plans, reviews and recommendations developed by the coordination mechanism in their decisions?	Interviews with donors and humanitarian organizations Analysis of donor strategies
	Have coordination activities led to a quicker and stronger mobilization of funds for the response and thus allowed for a more timely and appropriate response?	Interviews with donors and humanitarian organizations Analysis of funding data
	Has the coordination mechanism led to more balanced funding for different food security needs? Indicator: CAP funding gaps for food aid and agriculture over time	Analysis of funding and CAP data at country and global level
e) **To what extent has the FSC incorporated past lessons learned (e.g. relating to the role of national systems, the set-up, resourcing, management and support of clusters)?**	What roles do national and local authorities and humanitarian actors play in the coordination mechanism and why? Has the coordination mechanism engaged in any activities for strengthening national and local capacities for coordinating and implementing food security response? If yes, how relevant and effective were these activities? **Indicator**: % of food security coordination mechanisms with stronger participation of national and local authorities and humanitarian actors than in the past	Analysis of documents of the coordination mechanism Interviews with authorities, local humanitarian actors and coordinators
	Does the coordination mechanism have an exit and transition strategy? If yes, how timely and appropriate is the strategy and how well is it implemented in practice?	Analysis of documents of the coordination mechanism Interview with coordinator and

Evaluation questions	Sub-questions / indicators / observation points	Data sources
	Indicator: % of food security coordination mechanisms with an adequate exit and transition strategy	authorities
f) Do lead agencies appropriately guide, manage and support country-level food security coordination mechanisms?	Does the coordination team have adequate human resources, organizational background, seniority, leadership, management, facilitation and technical skills (including information management capacity)? Are the lead agencies cooperating well, providing adequate support to the coordination team and distinguishing sufficiently between their own and the coordination mechanism's interests? How appropriate are the structures, working processes and decision making procedures of the coordination mechanisms? Are the roles, responsibilities and contributions of different actors sufficiently clear and well understood and are actors held accountable for exercising these roles and providing contributions? Indicators: % of members satisfied with skills and services; % of relevant stakeholders participating regularly, actively and at a sufficiently senior level in the coordination forum	Interviews coordination team and humanitarian organizations (lead agencies, members, non-members, UN OCHA, Humanitarian Coordinator) Survey Analysis of meeting minutes
	Do lead agencies effectively exercise their provider of last resort role? **Indicator**: % of organizational budget available for flexible use to fill gaps	Analysis of coordination documents and of lead agency budgets and programme documents
2. What effects does the global food security cluster have on coordination mechanisms and humanitarian actors at country and local level? How and why?		
a) To what extent has the global FSC been offering relevant support to different coordination solutions at country and local level? To what extent has this strengthened their capacities to offer timely	What kinds of support have food security coordination mechanisms in different countries and at local level received from the global FSC (e.g. support missions, surge deployments, trainings, information and information management services, guidance and tools)?	Interviews with coordinators Survey
	How relevant, strategic, appropriate and of what quality were these types of support and were they provided to the right kinds of contexts? **Indicator**: Share of country coordination mechanisms satisfied with support received	Interviews with coordinators and members Survey Analysis of monitoring and feedback data Analysis of training reports

Evaluation questions	Sub-questions / indicators / observation points	Data sources
and effective coordination in priority contexts?	What kinds of support were missing or how could support services be improved?	Interviews with coordinators and members Survey Learning workshops
b) To what extent have global humanitarian actors (donors and implementers) supported coordination and the adoption of cluster guidance and tools?	Do the most relevant food security actors participate actively in the global FSC? **Indicator**: Share of relevant organizations participating regularly	Analysis of FSC documents Interviews with global cluster members and non-members
	To what extent have donors and implementers at global level absorbed policies, guidance, tools and information provided by the global FSC and what have they done to promote their use at country and local level?	Analysis of policies and strategies of major actors Interviews with FSC members at global and country level
	What efforts have global FSC members made to encourage active cluster participation of their country and local offices?	Interviews with FSC members at global and country level
c) To what extent have the global Cluster Lead Agencies extended relevant and appropriate support to the global FSC and its activities?	What kinds of resources and other support have the global lead agencies provided to the global FSC? Have these been adequate?	Analysis of cluster documents and funding data Interviews with WFP and FAO management, the global support team and partners
	Have WFP and FAO managers taken effective measures to encourage and incentivise their management and staff at country level to support cluster coordination? **Indicator**: Share of WFP and FAO country offices that have taken a more supportive stance to (cluster) coordination since 2011	Interviews with WFP and FAO managers and selected staff members at global and country level

3.	Is there any available evidence on what effects coordination may have had on the food security situation of affected populations as evidenced by changes in the coverage of humanitarian services and changes in the monitoring of effects on beneficiaries?		
a)	**Have the activities, services and tools of the food security coordination mechanism helped to strengthen efforts to assess the effects of food security interventions on affected populations?**	Has the coordination mechanism made any attempts to strengthen the monitoring and assessment of results? What mechanisms are currently in place to monitor the results of food security responses? Have these mechanisms changed since the introduction of the coordination mechanism? If yes, can the changes plausibly be attributed (at least in part) to the activities and services of the coordination mechanism? Indicator: Share of countries with strengthened monitoring mechanisms following coordination activities.	Interviews with coordinators and global FSC Interviews with humanitarian actors Analysis of monitoring instruments
b)	**Is there any evidence that duplications and gaps have reduced or that coverage has increased due to coordination activities?**	Are consistent duplication and gap analyses or coverage maps available? If yes, do they show any clear trends? If yes, can these trends plausibly be attributed to cluster activities? If not, is there any well-documented anecdotal evidence on duplications and gaps? Indicators: Change in geographic coverage; Change in thematic coverage; Change in number of duplications	Analysis of documents of the coordination mechanism Analysis of duplication and gap analysis data Context analysis Interviews with humanitarian organizations

Annex 5: List of interviewees / persons consulted

Name	Affiliation	Position
Hassan Abadidja	Bureau Consult International	Assistant Coordinateur
Marc Abdala	FAO	Représentant Adjoint, Coordonateur Principal des Projets d'Urgence, de la réhabilitation et de la résilience
Amir Mahmoud Abdulla	WFP	Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer
Josef Acquati Lozej	Danish Refugee Council	Distribution Coordinator
Abakar Younous Adoum	Office National du Développement Rural	Chef de Région
Phanuel Adwera	FAO	Area Coordinator and FSL Cluster Coordinator
George Aelion	GST (now retired)	Senior Programme Adviser
William Affif	WFP	Chef du Programme / Regional Emergency Coordinator/Programme Advisor
Segdi Ag Rhally	GARDL	Coordinateur
Celine Agaton		Google USAID ICCM Fellow
Ruth Aggiss	Save the Children	Food security and livelihoods adviser
Praveen Agrawal	WFP	Country Director
Zahra Nadeem Ahmed	GOAL	M&E Coordinator
Moyen Uddin Ahmmed	BRAC	Programme Specialist, Disaster Environment and Climate Change
Tullia Aiazzi	FAO	Senior Evaluation Officer
Koffi Akakpo	WFP	Head of Vulnerability and Assessment Unit (VAM)
Syed Junaid Akhlaq	NDMA (National Disaster Management Authority of the Government of Pakistan)	Director
Shoaib Akhtar	ACF	Head of Base
Murshida Akhter	Oxfam	Humanitarian Program Manager
Molham Al Bozo	Hand in Hand for Syria	Project Coordinator
Mohamad Al Hafez	Khayr	CEO
Feroz Al Mohammad	Food Planning and Monitoring Unit	Associate Research Director
Bashar Al Sabsabi	Assistance Coordination Unit	Supply Chain Manager
Fadi Al-Dairi	Hand in Hand for Syria	Deputy Chairman, Operations Director
Taj Al-Dein Al-Kaisi	Norwegian People's Aid	Relief Project Coordinator
Fakhre Alam	FAO	Information Manager
Sana Alamm	Hand in Hand for Syria	Proposal Assistant and Translation
Sainar Alan	Department of Fisheries	Assistant Director
Ashraf Ali	FAO	Provincial Cluster Coordinator Sindh
Syed Majid Ali Shah	DOABAhDOD	
Shahnawaz Ali Shaikh	FAO	Program Assistant
Abdul Alim	Action Aid	Manager, Humanitarian Response, Disaster

Name	Affiliation	Position
		Risk Reduction and Climate Justice
Robert Allport	FAO	Assistant FAO Representative
Christèle Amigues	Ambassade de France	Attachée de Coopération, Correspondante Humanitaire
Ali Amjad	Care International in Pakistan	Emergency Preparedness and Response Coordinator
Jules Amoti	Comité International de la Croix-Rouge	Coordinateur, Département Sécurité Alimentaire
Karl Andersson	AMURT Global Network	International Disaster Liaison
Manuela Angel	FAO	Coordinadora Clúster de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutrición (SAN)
Marina Angeloni	Food Security Cluster	Junior Consultant, Global Support Team
Jennifer Ankrom	ACTED	Project Development Manager
Kaisa Antikainen	GST	Information Management and Communication
Waheed Anwar	UN OCHA	Humanitarian Affairs Officer
Ernesto Aragon	FAO	Area Coordinator
Rajendra Aryal	FAO	Representative a.i.
Farah Asfahani	International Orthodox Christian Charities	Health and Nutrition Field Officer
Saifa Asif	FAO	Assistant Cluster Coordinator - Food Security Cluster
Mohamad Assaf	Syrian Relief Aleppo	General Secretary
Raghed Assi	UNDP	Programme Manager, Social & Local Development Programme
Muhammad Attiq	International Rescue Committee	Livelihoods Coordinator
Jude Avorque Acidre	IEDA Relief (International Emergency and Development Aid)	Acting Country Director
Matloob Awan	ACTED	Monitoring and Evaluation Manager
Dan Ayliffe	DFID	
Abdoul Karim Bah	FAO	Operations Officer, FAO Indonesia; former FSAC coordinator in Roxas
Ibrahima Bah	Comité International de la Croix-Rouge	Agronome, Département Sécurité Alimentaire
Allegra Baiocchi	UN OCHA	Chef de bureau
Rizwan Bajwa	WFP	Program Officer
Mustafa Bakuluzzaman	Shushilan	Head of Research, Fund Raising and Public Relation
Francesco Baldo	FAO	FSL Working Group Co-coordinator (and former Co-Coordinator of Somalia Interagency Food Cluster)
Sory Bamba	Welthungerhilfe	Chargé de Suivi-Evaluation et Communication National, Représentant l'ONG Co-chair au sein du cluster Sécurité Alimentaire
Cindy Bankhead	ADRA	Program Director

Name	Affiliation	Position
Sophie Baranes	PNUD	Coordinatrice Régionale Prévention des Crises et Relèvement
Amin Baroudi	Assistance Coordination Unit	Information Management Unit Manager
Abdul Basit	Provincial Disaster Management Authority Government of KP	Deputy Director Operation and Coordination
Karim Bayoud	World Vision	Syrian Refugee Response Project Manager
Caroline Bedos	Solidarités International	Head of Mission
Carolyn Anne C. Benigno	FAO	Animal Health Officer
Andrea Berloffa	FAO	
Jérôme Bernard	ECHO	Expert Régional Assistance Alimentaire
Jean-Nicolas Beuze	UNHCR	Assistant Representative (Coordination)
Dipayan Bhattacharyya	WFP	Head, Food Security
Shahidur Rahman Bhuiyan	USAID	Sr. Food Security and Agriculture Policy Adviser Economic Growth Office
Nigist Biru	FEWS NET	Regional Technical Manager
Vanessa Bonsignore	Food Security Cluster	Junior Consultant, Global Support Team
Alexis Bonte	FAO	Equipe régionale de résilience
Afke Bootsman	UNDP	Livelihoods Advisor
Amadou Boucoun	CARE Mali	Coordinateur Adjoint Urgence
Vincent Boulardot	FAO	Coordinator
Rachid Boumnijel	CARE	Livelihoods adviser
Gerson Brandao	UN OCHA	HCTT liaison
Virginie Brision	ACTED	Directrice Pays
Jonathan Brooker	UN OCHA	Humanitarian Affairs Officer
Landry Brou	FAO	Coordinator
Olivier Brouant	ECHO	Head of Office
Douglas Brown	World Vision International	Director, Agriculture and Food Security
Denise Brown	WFP	Directrice Régionale
Dragan Brscic	WFP	Logistics officer / officer in charge
Bernd Bültemeier	FAO	Office of Evaluation
Dominique Burgeon	FAO	Director, Emergency and Rehabilitation Division
Pierre Burgos Cespedes	People in Need	Program Manager
Mauricio Burtet	WFP	Programme Officer - Tacloban
Victor N. Bushamuka	OFDA	Acting Principal Regional Advisor, West Africa
Iqbal Bussain Durrani	Agriculture, Supply and Prices Department	Secretary to Government of Sindh
Mass Bwikanye	Care	Responsable du suivi evaluation
Nonita Cabacaba	BFAR Guiuan	Marine Fisheries Development Center
Julien Carlier	CECI	
Maua Caroline	World Vision	National Food Security Coordinator
Luiza Carvalho		Humanitarian Coordinator - Resident

Name	Affiliation	Position
		Coordinator
Gustavo Cavero	Save the Children	Food Security and Livelihoods Manager
Clément Cazaubon	ACF	Directeur Pays
Naison Chakatsva	WFP	Coordinator Food Security Sector Working Group
Tapan Kumar Chakraborty	Action Contre la Faim	Deputy head of Department, FSL
Kumud Chandra	OXFAM	Country Funding Coordinator
Marc Chapon	Agronomes et Vétérinaires Sans Frontières	Coordinateur National
Samantha Chattaraj	global Food Security Cluster	Programme Adviser
Pamela Chemali	WFP	Sr. Programme Assistant
Mutinta Chimuka	WFP Afghanistan	Head of Programme
David Cibonga	UN OCHA	Adjoint Chef de Bureau
Al Hassan Cisse	OXFAM	Régional Food Security Advocacy Coordinator
Patricia Colbert	WFP	Gender Programme Specialist
Desideria Cosi	WFP	Data base Manager
Virginie Coustet	Délégation de l'Union Européenne	Chargée de Projets
Crescencio Cytayong	Municipal Agricultural Office	Agricultural Officer
Jacopo D'Amelio	FAO	Operations Officer
Marilyn S. Dacara	East-West Seed Company	Sr. Technology Transfer Specialist
Mark Dalton	OCHA	Officer in Charge, Information Services Branch
Federica Damiani	FAO	Liaison and Operations Officer, Emergency Operations Service
Luigi Damiani	Cooperazione Italiana - Pakistan-Italian Debt Swap Agreement	Italian Director
Louka Daou	ACF Spain, Mission Mali	Responsable Sécurité Alimentaire Moyen Existence
Ranadhir Kumar Das	Save the Children	Project Manager, Emergency
Germain Dasylva	FAO	Représentent
Aslam Daud	Humanity First Canada	
Patrick David	FAO	Assistant du Coordinateur, Analyste en Sécurité Alimentaire
Chele DeGruccio	Oxfam	Humanitarian Programme Manager
Novah Rose DeLeon-David	FAO	Food Security Policy and Institutions Adviser
Anne-Céline Delinger	UNICEF - cluster nutrition	Information Management Officer, coordinatrice intérimaire
Gisla Dewey	World Vision	Relief Manager, Syria Response
Mary Diallo	Système d'Alerte Précoce	Coordinateur National
Bassa Diané Dicko	Comissariat à la Sécurité	Commisaire adjointe

Name	Affiliation	Position
		Alimentaire
Sidiki Diarra	Save the Children	Coordinateur de Programme Sécurité Alimentaire et Moyens d'Existence
Lucy Dickinson	OCHA	Humanitarian Affairs Officer
Gouro Dicko	CARE Mali	Coordinateur des activités de terrain
Conrado Dizon	FAO	Coordinator
Daniele Donati	FAO	Team Leader, Early Warning, Surge and Response
Jean-Francois Dontaine	FAO	Coordonnateur Opérations
Allan Dow	FAO	Communication Officer
Mahamat Djimé Dréni-Mi	Ministère de l'Agriculture et de l'Irrigation	Directeur de la Production et des Statistiques Agricoles, Président du CASAGC
Patrick Drust	FAO	Forestry Officer
Sylvain Duhau	CRS, Catholic Relief Services	Country Manager
Rasmus Egendal	WFP	Deputy Regional Emergency Coordinator Syria and Neighbouring Countries
Dewan Abu Ehsan	Muslim Aid	Head of Programmes
Naziha El Moussaoui	IFRC	Déléguée Food Security and Nutrition
Hassan El Sayed	Première Urgence	Head of Mission
Mariam El-Fawal	Mercy-USA For Aid and Development	Program Officer
Ekram El-Huni	WFP	Head of Programme
Jessica El-Moujabber	World Vision	Programme Officer
Edwin Elegado	Plan International	Disaster Risk Reduction Specialist
Helois Ellien	IFRC	Disaster Response Delegate
Kasper Engborg	OCHA	Head of Tacloban office
James Paul Esguerra	Energy Logics Group	
Jose Estuar	Save the Children	Food security and livelihoods national adviser
Patrick T. Evans	FAO	Representative
Cyprien Fabre	ECHO	Chef du Bureau Régional
Sabine Farah	The Lebanese Republic, Ministry of Social Affairs	Operations Coordinator
Nasir Farid	Food Planning and Monitoring Unit	Director General
Graham Farmer	global Food Security Cluster	Global Food Security Cluster Coordinator
Omar Farook	WFP	Sr. Programme Officer Vulnerability and Mapping Unit
Ahmad Fawzi Sayed	Muslim Aid	Representative
Malika Fedala	ACF	Responsable Securité Alimentaire et Co-Facilitateur du Cluster
Teshome Feleke	UNICEF	Nutrition Specialist

Name	Affiliation	Position
José Luis Fernandez	FAO	Coordonateur du Bureau Sous-régional pour les Opérations d'Urgence et de Réhabilitation en Afrique de l'Ouest/Sahel / Senior Emergency Coordinator
Yon Fernández-de-Larrinoa-Arcal	FAO	Team Leader, Civil Society
Ahmed Feroz	FAO	National Coordinator Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
Ruth Ferreras	WFP	Protection Officer
Sébastien Fesneau	Mercy Corps	Représentant Pays
Marit Fikke	WFP	Head of Provincial Office
Emma Fitzpatrick	Food Security Cluster / WFP	Communications Adviser and Interim Coordinator for FSC Yemen
Sylvie Fontaine	Délégation de l'Union Européenne	Chargée d'aide et de coopération internationales, section développement rural, environnement et décentralisation
Yvonne Forsén	WFP	Head of VAM
Sebastian Fouquet	DFID Nairobi	Humanitarian Advisor
Barbara Frattaruolo		Conseillère régionale Sécurité alimentaire et moyens d'existence
Vili A. Fuavao	FAO	Deputy Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific
Bora Galgallo	World Vision, Isiolo	Child Well-being Facilitator
Aude Galli	IFRC	Regional Humanitarian Diplomacy Advisor
Francisco Gamarro	FAO	Senior Resilience Programme Coordinator
Faroukou Garba	ACF Spain, Mission Mali	Coordinateur Sécurité Alimentaire et Moyens d'Existence
Yannic Georis	Merlin	Directeur Pays
Katrien Ghoos	WFP	Head of Nutrition, Regional Bureau of Asia
Karimi Gitonga	Save the Children East Africa Regional Office	Child-centered Disaster Risk Reduction and Adaptation Advisor
Oscar Gobbato	Cluster de sécurité alimentaire	Information Management Officer
Andrea Göddecke	GIZ	Coordinatrice ENÜH; GIZ-IS
Branko Golubovic	EC DG ECHO	Technical Assistant
Mark Gordon	WFP	Head of Programme / Co-Coordinator of Somalia FSC
David Grassely		Coordinateur Humanitaire
Mira Gratier	EU ECHO	Technical Assistant - Somalia lead
Marjolaine Greentree	GST	Senior Programme Adviser
Souleymane Grita	World Vision Mali	Coordinateur du projet de distribution de cash à Douentza
Valerie Guarnieri	WFP Regional Bureau for East and Central Africa	Director
Peter Guest	WFP	Programme Adviser - Regional Bureau of Asia
Carine Guidicelli	CECI	Directrice Régionale Afrique

Name	Affiliation	Position
Ibraima Guindo	Projet D'Irrigation de Proximité au Plateau Dogon et dans le Bélédougou (IPRO-DB)	Ingénieur Agronome, Expert Agronome National
Moctar Guindo	YA-G-TU (ONG co-chair du cluster à Mopti)	Superviseur de projet
Robina Gul	Oxfam GB	Advisor Emergency Food Security and Livelihoods
David Hadrill	FAO	Consultant, LEGS trainer
Massoma Haider	FAO	Assistant Cluster Coordinator - Cash Working Group
Sandra Hart	WFP	FSAC coordinator - Manila
Rafiqul Hasan	Department of Agriculture Extension	Deputy Director, Monitoring
Shahinul Hasan	Islamic Relief	Senior Programme Officer, Livelihood and Community Development Programme
Rafat Hassouna	GOAL	Program Coordinator
Arzu Hatakoy	OCHA	Deputy Head of Office
Nasar Hayat	FAO	Assistant FAO Representative
Samer Haydar	SHEILD, Social Humanitarian, Economical Intervention for Local Development	Project Manager
Sally Haydock	WFP	Représentante
William Helyar	DFID Nairobi	Humanitarian Advisor
Angela Hinrichs	FAO	Liaison and Operations Officer, Emergency Operations Service
Jean Damascene Hitayezu	PAM	Programme Officer
Patricia Hoorelbeke	UNICEF	Spécialiste nutrition en urgence
Masanobu Horie	WFP	Programme Officer - Tacloban
Jesmin B. Hossain	Save the Children	Project Manager, Emergency Capacity Building
Nadège Houatou	WFP	Assistante Sécurité Alimentaire, co-facilitatrice cluster SA
Julia Hug	WFP	Program Officer
Zakir Hussain	Care International in Pakistan	Team Leader PEFSA (Pakistan Emergency Food Security Alliance)
Mostak Hussain	Save the Children	Director, Emergency
Martina Iannizzotto	ACF-Spain	Food Security Head of Project
Sharvan Ibesh	Bihar	
Abdoulnasser Ibrahim	FAO	Spécialiste en sécurité alimentaire
Abner Ingosi	Ministry of Agriculture	Deputy Director
Josephine Ippe	UNICEF	Global Nutrition Cluster
Bettina Iseli	Welthungerhilfe	Desk Officer Haiti
Michelle Iseminger	WFP	Représetante Adjointe
Rezaul Islam	Department of Disaster Management	Deputy Secretary

Name	Affiliation	Position
Nazrul Islam	Muslim Aid	Coordinator FSN
Amirul Islam	Action Aid	Manager, Sustainable Agriculture, Food Rights and sustainable Livelihoods
Abdul Jabbar	UN OCHA	Humanitarian Affairs Officer
Julius Jackson	FAO	Coordinator, Agenda for Action for Food Insecurity in Protracted Crises
Mubarak Jatoi	Department of Livestock Government of Sindh	Veterinary Officer
Dina Jerkovic	Food Security Cluster	Programme Coordinator, Global Support Team
Damien Joud	Action Contre la Faim	Head of Deparment - Food Security, Livelihoods and DRR
Mathieu Joyeux	UNICEF, Kenya Office	Nutrition Specialist, Emergency
David Kaatrud	WFP	Director of Emergenices
Fe Kagahastian	OCHA	Cash Coordinator
Nanthilde Kamara	FAO	Coordinatrice Cluster Sécurité Alimentaire
Hassan Kani	ACF	Deputy Program Manager
Silvia Kaufmann	UNICEF	Chief, Nutrition
Billi Keita	PAM	
Miriam Kennedy	BRAC	
Anne Marie Kerrigan Deriche	UNHCR	Senior Coordination Officer
Hasan Keysan	International Blue Crescent	Logistics Officer
Ruby Khan	FAO	
Naseem Khan	FAO	Assistant cluster coordinator KP and Fata
Sadia Khan	Save the Children	Food Security &Livelihoods Officer
Amad Khan	ACF	Project Manager FSL
Adeel Qaiser Khan	GOAL	Country Director
Farhan A. Khan	CESVI	Country Program Manager
Ejaz Khan	Society for Human and Institutional Development (SHID)	Programme Coordinator
Zahir Shah Khan	WFP	Programme Officer, Emergency, Office of Peshawar
Khalid Khatki	FAO	Provincial FSC coordinator KP and Fata
Rabia Khattak	UNDP	Assistant Country Director
Jad Khoury	Handicap International	Deputy Field Coordinator
Lawrence Kiguro	World Vision	Associate Director, Livelihoods and Resilience Quality Assuarance
Philip Kilonzo	ActionAid	Policy Research Coordinator
Beatrice W. King'ori	Ministry of Agriculture	Deputy Director of Agriculture
Timo Knaute	OCHA	Head of Sub-Office
Ziad Kneid	DRC	Emergency Response Coordinator
Abdramane Kone	Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation	Coordinateur Programme dans le cercle de Youwarou
Kevork KoshKarian	WFP	Field Monitoring Assistant

Name	Affiliation	Position
Timothy Koskei	WFP Isiolo Office	Advisor
Mohamed Koulibaly	Système d'Alerte Précoce	Chef Division Technique
Emily Krehm	UNRWA	Protection and coordination officer
Sigrid Kühlke	ECHO	Assistante Technique Mali
Massimo La Rosa	EU ECHO, Regional Support Office Central, Eastern and Southern Africa	Food Assistance Expert
Etienne Labande	WFP	Deputy Chief Preparedness and Response Branch
Anaïs Lafite	Action Contre la Faim	Représentante régionale pour l'Afrique de l'Ouest
Lauren Landis	WFP	Director
Karim Laraki	Cluster de sécurité alimentaire	Ex coordinateur
Sylvie Lasserre	Social Services Program (SSP)	Communication
Scott LeFevre	CRS	Deputy Regional Director, Program Quality, West Africa
Lordman Lekalkuli	National Drought Management Authority	Isiolo Representative
Cyril Lekiefs	FAO	Food Security and Agriculture Cluster Coordinator
Francis Lesengei	World Vision, Isiolo	Child Well-being Facilitator
John Long	OCHA	Intercluster coordinator
Francesca Longo	Handicap International	Field Coordinator Bekaa
Christelle Loupforest	OCHA	IASC Secretariat
Raymond Lung	WFP	Database specialist FSAC (Food Security and Agriculture Cluster)
David Mac Donald	OXFAM	Directeur Régional Adjoint
Douglas Machuchus	VSF Swiss, Isiolo	OIC
Acliny Madougou	Direction Regionale de la Promotion de la Femme, des Enfants et de la Famille	Chef de Division Promotion de la Femme, Directeur Adjoint
Hasan Mahabubul	FAO	Assistant IPC
Margherita Maiello	FAO and WFP	Information Management Officer Food Security Cluster
Brian Majewski	Avenir Analytics	Head of Strategic Research and Evaluation
Susanne Mallaun	Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO)	Deputy Head of Unit, Specific Thematic Policies
Jelome Manalu	ADRA	Program Officer
Rosanne Marchesich	FAO	Deputy FAO Representative in Bangladesh Emergency / Response Manager Philippines
Duncan Marigi	Embassy of Sweden, Kenya Development Cooperation Section	Programme Manager (Agriculture and Rural Development)
Dramane Mariko	USAID	Regional M&E Specialist

Name	Affiliation	Position
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Abdul	Hands	
Farauh	OCHA	IM Manager

Acronyms

4Ws	Who does What Where When
ACAPS	Assessment Capacities Project
CAP	Consolidated Appeals Process
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CHF	Common Humanitarian Fund
DG ECHO	Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (European Commission)
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
EMMA	Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis
ERF	Emergency Response Fund
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FSC	Food Security Cluster
GST	Global Support Team
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
L3	Level 3 emergencies
MIRA	Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OFDA	Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance
SRP	Strategic Response Plan
WFP	World Food Programme

Office of Evaluation

www.fao.org/evaluation

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www.wfp.org/evaluation

WFP

World Food Programme

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