

Food Security and Nutrition Sector Coordination Group - Minutes

7th Meeting – Tuesday, 2 March 2009, 09:30, UNICEF Jerusalem

Discussion item	Action/ Decision
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Jerusalem attendance: WFP, FAO, UNICEF, WHO, MAP, DFID, OCHA, Oxfam GB, Islamic Relief, CHF, USAID, UNDP, Premiere urgence, World Vision, ACTED, CRIC, ACF Spain,▪ Gaza attendance: WFP, CHF, OCHA, UNICEF, WHO, Islamic Relief <p>(list of participants / contacts in annex)</p> <p>Chair: Olivia Hantz, WFP Contact: Olivia.hantz@wfp.org; 054 6773151</p>	
<p>1. <u>Update of Food Security Situation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ WFP update/ Findings from the bi-weekly market survey completed on 2 March:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Availability of basic food is currently acceptable for both fresh and dry foods, whereas accessibility remains particularly problematic for red meat, poultry meat and eggs.- As of 25 February, the total stock of wheat flour in Gaza mills is 11,700 mt which is enough to cover the needs of the total population for approximately 26 days, until 22 March 2009.- Shortages of animal feed and gas have contributed to the increase of prices of chicken in the market from 12 to 19.75NIS/Kg last month.- The price of meat has decreased after the war by 0.5%. Vegetables are available and prices have decreased, with the only exception of tomato prices (+8%)- However, food availability in Gaza is volatile, dependent on: 1. opening of border crossing for both humanitarian and commercial goods; 2. resumption of local production - The availability of fresh foods is highly dependent on the ability and timeliness of the agricultural sector to recover and is at relatively high risk of shortages or economic access difficulties (high prices of imported fresh food, if such imports are allowed at all).- A crucial factor influencing food security in the weeks/months to come is the resumption of the cash economy and employment. Unless it recovers quickly, income and consumption poverty will prevail among most Gazan households, who will continue to depend on food aid, cash assistance and emergency temporary job creation schemes.- Lack of Cash: there is a shortage of cash in the GS. The monthly cash requirement is 400 million NIS (13 million NIS/day).- As of 1st March, the de facto Hamas Government started paying salaries to 20% of the total civil servants in Gaza.	

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<p>2. <u>Update on Nutrition Issues:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UNICEF update: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The 2009 Nutrition Survey of Children will be conducted in March/April (tentatively) by the MoH, in close collaboration with UNICEF and WHO. It aims at assessing the nutritional status of children between 6 to 59 months old and investigating causes to longstanding poor indicators, both in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The objectives are to measure: (i) Prevalence of acute and chronic malnutrition via anthropometry; (ii) Breastfeeding knowledge, attitudes, practices; (iii) Complementary feeding knowledge, attitudes, practices; (iv) Care seeking behaviors; (v) Micronutrient supplementation for pregnant women, lactating women and infants practices; (vi) Prevalence of disability. - It is intended as a one-off benchmarking survey aimed at planning and working in the field, NOT at measuring the impact of the war. - An important aspect of the assessment is the reactivation of the national Nutrition surveillance system. - The survey differs from UNRWA's surveillance system (looking at kids 0-3 years old and at certain elements only) in that it will analyze all nutrition related aspects (in-depth assessment) of children 0-59 months. - UNICEF is looking for an available technical consultant in the area of nutrition who could work together with the MoH (TORs will be sent by Sam). - The Nutrition Survey Concept note is attached to the minutes and will be posted on the FS&Nut Cluster webpage (http://www.ochaopt.org/cluster/clusters.php?domain=7). 	<p>For comments and suggestions related to the survey and potential candidates for the consultancy, contact Samson Agbo (UNICEF) sagbo@unicef.org</p>
<p>3. <u>Update on food security activities in Gaza from stakeholders:</u></p> <p>Nothing to report.</p>	
<p>4. <u>Rapid Qualitative Food Security Assessments in Gaza Strip:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PowerPoint presentation of the EFSA (see attached) and posted on the FS&Nut cluster webpage (see link above). ▪ Comments/remarks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - During the interviews, people stated that their first priority is the recuperation of livelihoods. - From the interviews conducted, it seems that food aid has been very well targeted. - It is important to closely monitor the situation, given its extreme volatility. Gaza needs more monitoring than assessments. - The WFP/FAO quantitative assessment will be conducted in April in Gaza with PCBS and UNRWA's close collaboration. - Priority areas for emergency interventions are the buffer zone and the areas severely damaged that are less accessible. 	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Issues related to Voucher programme implementation need to be closely looked at in order to be efficient. 	
<p>5. <u>Gaza response activity database (GRAD)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cecilia Utas (OCHA) gave a quick presentation and distributed the GRAD guidelines (attached). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The activity monitoring tool developed within the FS&Nut Cluster at the beginning of the war has been discontinued and "replaced" by OCHA's online Gaza Response Activity Database. - The GRAD aims at establishing a harmonized system for tracking of humanitarian assistance activities related to the Gaza emergency in all sectors. The database allows for activity tracking by actors, cluster/sector, sub-sector, type of activity, location/neighborhood, etc. The searchable database will enable mapping of activities and, consecutively, the identification of potential gaps/duplications. - Each organization implementing/planning to implement Gaza-related activities will be responsible for directly inputting and editing data regarding their activities online. To access the database, a username and password have been assigned to each organization for use across all activity clusters/sectors. 	<p>All user names and passwords have been sent to each organization on 4 March.</p> <p>For any question, contact Celine Francois (celine.francois@wfp.org), Cecilia Utas (OCHA - utas@un.org) or Mohammad Darawsheh (darawsheh@un.org)</p>
<p>6. <u>Early Recovery mainstreaming within the FS&Nut sector</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Laurent Marion (UNDP) informed the cluster that Early Recovery (ER) issues are now to be mainstreamed within clusters, given that ER is 'owned' by each cluster. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pointed out that ER issues are obviously well tackled within the FS&Nut group (employment, livelihoods, etc.) ▪ Importance of establishing cross-cluster linkages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each cluster should therefore appoint an ER focal point, in order to (i) liaise for mainstreaming ER issues within the cluster; and (ii) liaise with other clusters (here: agric., health, livelihoods and employment, education) - UNDP strongly advocates that the focal point be an NGO representative (from Gaza). ▪ ER coordination is now shifting to Gaza. 	<p>A focal point for ER issues to be urgently appointed by the Cluster (preferably an NGO)</p>
<p>7. <u>Next Meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Next meeting will take place on 19 March at 04.00pm at OCHA/Jerusalem, with video links with colleagues in Gaza. 	<p>19 March, 04.00 pm, OCHA</p>

Annex 1: Attendance list

Name	Organization	Title	Email	Phone
West Bank				
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