



CONCEPT NOTE OF THE GLOBAL NETWORK AGAINST FOOD CRISES

This document outlines the rationale, vision, approach and scope of work of the Global Network Against Food Crises.

Rationale

Hunger in all its manifestations is at unacceptable levels. The latest evidence shows that millions of people are affected by acute forms of food deprivation, which are becoming more profound and protracted in nature.

The *Global Report on Food Crises 2020* indicates that 135 million people across 55 countries and territories experienced acute hunger requiring urgent food, nutrition and livelihood assistance in 2019. This marks the highest number in the four years since the launch of the first *Global Report on Food Crises* in 2016. However, in the last four years, the report has consistently shown that more than 100 million people faced periods of acute hunger, and the number of countries affected has risen.

The latest evidence reported by *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2019* (former SOFI), also confirms a rise in world hunger for a third year in a row, indicating that there were 821 million chronically undernourished people in the world last year, up from 811 the previous year.

The number of people experiencing acute food insecurity is only the tip of the iceberg. Food systems worldwide are being strained by multiple simultaneous threats such as burgeoning population, dietary changes, environmental degradation, climate variability, natural disasters, employment uncertainty, and instability of the global markets.

Conflict and insecurity, climate shocks and economic turbulence, often leading to long-term displacement (UNHCR reported a total population of concern of 79 million people in 2019), are considered the main drivers of food insecurity, either in its acute life-threatening form and/or slowly building to its chronic form which has devastating effects on peoples' livelihood and on the long-term economic viability and political stability of countries. Poverty and inequality need to be addressed as food insecurity strikes selectively and the poor and vulnerable are disproportionately affected.

Yet, the paradox of food security is that, while for several years the number of people who cannot meet their daily food needs without humanitarian assistance has been rising, global food production per capita has never been higher.

High levels of acute and chronic malnutrition in children living in emergency conditions remain of serious concern. Undernutrition in childhood makes children more susceptible to diseases and hinders proper development. Evidence shows that undernutrition is the result of multiple immediate, underlying and structural causes, stemming from various sectors: food security, health, water and sanitation, protection and the overall enabling environment. Food security is therefore a necessary but not sufficient condition for nutrition security. Addressing nutrition security requires a multi-sectoral approach and a joint humanitarian and development framework.

In the last 10 years, humanitarian assistance and spending needs have grown by around 127 percent compared to 2007 – approximately 40 percent of which went to cover needs in the food and agriculture subsectors. While humanitarian assistance remains critical and necessary to promptly save lives and

livelihoods, and alleviate human suffering, more coordinated efforts should be put in place to address the root causes of food crises.

Furthermore, the alarming signs of increasing food insecurity and high levels of different forms of malnutrition are a clear warning that there is considerable work to be done to improve the coordination and synergies between the humanitarian and development approaches, with a strong consideration of the peace dimension.

Against this background, the *Global Network against Food Crises* was launched at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit by the European Union, FAO and WFP with the objective of tackling both the immediate food crisis and the root causes through shared analysis and knowledge and strengthened coordination in evidence-based responses that address the immediate humanitarian needs, link the short-term interventions with a medium to long-term vision and invest targeted development assistance to reduce needs, risks and vulnerability as well as invest in early preparedness and anticipatory actions.

The Global Network Against Food Crises – Vision

The Global Network Against Food Crises vision is to prevent, prepare and respond to food crisis and support the collective outcome related to Ending Hunger (SDG 2); reducing needs, risks and vulnerabilities associated with acute hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture and food systems.

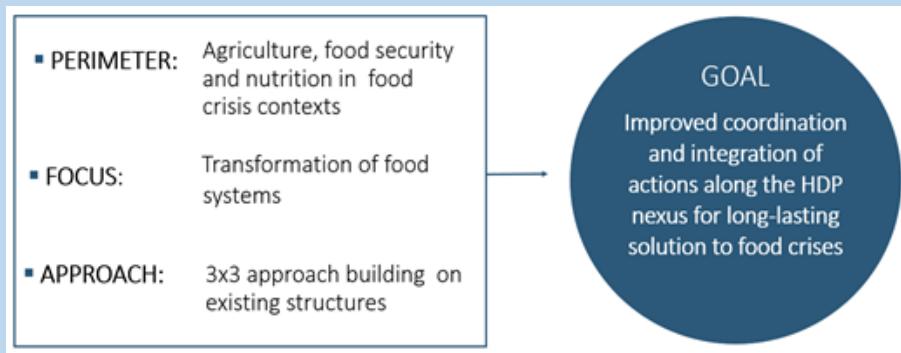
A set of principles¹ will inspire the *Global Network's* effort:

- a. The need to prevent, prepare, anticipate and respond at the local, regional and global levels, building on and strengthening local systems.
- b. The centrality of resilient and sustainable food systems in preventing food crises, mitigating their impact and boosting recovery and rehabilitation for its transformation.
- c. The need to inform policies and actions to fight food and nutrition insecurity with evidence-based understanding of complex dynamics and drivers of risk and vulnerability such as conflict and insecurity, climate change, environmental degradation, and demographic change.
- d. The need to address the risk and vulnerabilities as well as priorities of local rural communities involved in agriculture by adopting a territorial approach² that is supported by national policies.
- e. The need to align with and build on major existing initiatives and coordination mechanisms in order to deliver collective outcomes and meet the 2030 Agenda.
- f. Ensuring conflict sensitive programming and principled approaches.

¹ Principles were outlined in the key takeaway messages of the High-Level Event of the Global Network Against Food Crises held in Brussels, 2-3 April 2019.

² The territorial approach provides an alternative framework for capturing the variety of conditions across urban and rural regions as well as across different territories.

DEFINITION & APPROACH:



The “3x3” approach: three dimensions and three levels

The Network operates at **national, regional and global level** along three interlinked dimensions:

1. **Understanding food crises** – Generating evidence-based information and analysis.
2. **Strategic Investment in food and nutrition security** – Leveraging strategic investments to prepare, prevent and respond to food crises.
3. **Going beyond food** – Fostering political uptake and functional coordination across clusters/sectors to address other dimensions driving the food security crisis scenarios.

First dimension: Understanding food crises – generating evidence-based information and analysis

The work under this dimension is to promote neutral and consensus-based information on food crises, as global public goods to timely support decision-making processes at all levels, as well as highlight and address possible data and information gaps. It builds on existing country mechanisms for food security and nutrition analysis as well as on the arrangement in place for global analysis and information on food crises. In addition, the *Global Network* promotes and increasingly benefits from the strategic linkages between other initiatives that aim to strengthen the predictive analysis of food crises to inform prevention and early responses.

1) At **national level**, the *Global Network* supports the strengthening of existing platforms for analysis of food security and nutrition. In particular, by ensuring alignment with - and by working through national platforms such as IPC National Technical Working Groups, Early Warning System coordination mechanisms, Food Security [and nutrition] Clusters/Sectors. The *Global Network* partners seek synergies in their efforts to strengthen governments' food security and nutrition monitoring systems through the application of sound methodologies and reinforcing related capacities of national stakeholders, with the long-term objective of reducing dependence from external funding.

2) At **regional level**, the *Global Network* supports coordination with regional and sub-regional bodies, research institutions and relevant partners with a focus on creating a framework for harmonization of methodologies and tools as well as providing regional analyses fostering cross-country comparison, standardization of analytical processes and understanding of cross-border issues and regional drivers.

These processes contribute to annual global food security analysis while also supporting the preparation of regional focus analysis according to the needs of regional institutions.

3) At **global level**, the *Global Network* supports the overall coordination and production of the global food crises analysis and information, facilitated by the Food Security Information Network, as well as the development of set of common standards, parameters and guidance for early warning and information analysis. This analytical work also highlights possible data gaps or methodological shortcomings at country level and encourages action. At this level, the Global Network also supports the use and uptake of the information and evidence on food crises and nutrition in decision-making and policy processes.

Second dimension: Strategic Investment in food security and nutrition – leveraging strategic investments to prevent and respond to food crises

The analysis outlined in the first dimension will help to inform this dimension. This second dimension will promote strategic, evidence-based and coherent investments in food security and nutrition that integrate simultaneous short-term humanitarian actions with medium to long-term development in countries facing or at risk of food crisis, as well as integrate resilience building, prevention, preparedness and anticipatory or early action to reduce the impact of acute crisis and set the basis for recovery and reconstruction. Progress will be tracked, and adjustments made through monitoring, evaluation, learning and knowledge generation.

1) At **national level**, the *Global Network* promotes multi-partner country processes by strengthening and/or creating linkages between established and relevant coordination structures for programming and investments in the humanitarian and development sectors. The *Global Network* will boost food and agriculture systems that play a fundamental role in addressing acute needs, ending hunger and contributing to reduce malnutrition. The *Global Network*'s framework will facilitate partners to jointly set priorities, promote specific strategies and mechanisms/structures and to support donor decisions.³

2) At **regional level**, the *Global Network* promotes policy coherence, investments and programming frameworks of regional institutions. Regional inter-governmental institutions such as IGAD and ECOWAS / UEMOA /CILSS with their relevant initiatives IDDRSI and AGIR, which focus on humanitarian response and building resilience in food insecure countries, will be instrumental in shaping related investments at country/regional level, while also ensuring that nutrition and cross-border dynamics and related issues are incorporated.

3) At **global level**, the *Global Network* provides its members and the international community at large, a set of common parameters, good practices and programming options to improve the alignment and effectiveness of responses to food crises across prevention, preparedness, early warning, response and humanitarian/development nexus processes.

³ Global Network Engagement plans are regional and country owned products jointly prepared to set the priorities for partners and donors to activate funding, promote specific strategies, mechanisms/structures based on agreed priorities.

Third dimension: Going beyond food - Fostering political uptake and functional coordination across clusters/sectors to address other dimensions driving the food security crisis scenarios.

Addressing multiple facets of food crises require multisector interventions; a combination of humanitarian, development and peace efforts, and greater coherence across sectors. Under this third dimension, the *Global Network* increases collaboration and coordination between agencies, institutions and networks to holistically address food crises.

1) At **national level**, based on the analysis of the main drivers of food insecurity, the *Global Network* promotes and strengthens linkages with the most relevant actors (sectors/clusters) to promote integrated actions under a coherent framework encompassing the humanitarian, development, and peace spectrum.

2) At **regional level**, the *Global Network* coordinates with and promote increased cooperation among regional institutions, for example:

- In Eastern Africa, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) with its relevant initiatives such as the Drought Disaster Resilience Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI);
- In West Africa, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) – the West Africa Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) - the Permanent Interstate Committee for drought control in the Sahel (CILSS) with their relevant initiatives such as the Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative (AGIR) as well other intergovernmental peace mechanisms/ institution such as the G5 Sahel.

3) At **global level**, the *Global Network* promotes functional linkages with relevant global initiatives and mechanisms to scale up food crises response and prevention initiatives as a global collective effort. For instance, collaboration with the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) will ensure that this body is regularly informed on the food security situation and what possible measures can be taken. Further, the *Global Network* works together with and collaborates with the Global clusters related to Food Security and Agriculture, Nutrition, Health and WASH as well as with the UN Joint Steering Committee to promote greater coherence of humanitarian, and development action in crises and transitions to long-term sustainable development and in reducing vulnerabilities.