



UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
STANDING COMMITTEE ON NUTRITION
Task Force on Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation

Information note

Background

In March 2006, the 33rd Session of the SCN approved its new Strategic Framework and Plan of Action and called for the creation of three Task Forces (TF) to support the SCN in implementing its 5 areas of action. The role of the TFs would be that of “harmonizing and capitalizing on the related work being done across the various constituents of the SCN... and providing support to the working group activities of relevance”. FAO and WFP were chosen as the co-chairs of the TF on Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation (TF-AME).

At the following 34th SCN Annual Session held at FAO, Rome, on 26 February – 1 March 2007, a draft concept note was circulated to the prospective members of the TF-AME to start defining its objectives and activities and was presented by the TF Chair at the business session on SCN Steering Committee Task Forces proposals. This concept note was later expanded and developed in more detail in November 2007 and became a draft Workplan that was circulated to a better defined group of Task Force members.

The Task Force’s proposed objectives

Based on the priorities set forth by the Action Plan related to the TF-AME the following were proposed as the TF’s main objectives:

1. establish an agreed upon **minimum set of core indicators** that measure food deprivation and malnutrition and that would be acceptable to all members – the indicators would cover the three key areas of **food, care and health**.
2. serve as an effective **sounding board** for the SCN Working Groups and inter-agency activities (such as the HNTS) - this would also entail providing suggestions to, or peer reviewing, agreed activities and outputs.
3. provide a **forum** where members can **exchange information** on AME best practices, tools and methods.

The TF also established a set of **cross cutting principles** to guide its work. These are:

- Link the work done in the development and humanitarian aid settings, recognizing that the two should not be thought of separately;
- Link health and nutrition to food security and livelihoods (in the context of the MDGs);
- Consider indicators and associated actions related to all geographical levels: global, regional and local.

These objectives and principles were to be further discussed and endorsed/modified during the TF's first meeting in Rome in January 2008.

The Task Force's first meeting

In preparation for the 35th Session of the SCN to be held in Hanoi in March 2008, the TF members held a two-day meeting in Rome on 31st January- 1st February 2008. By the end of the meeting, and having heard from a number of institutions active in the field of AME, the TF decided to focus on 4 discrete activities where most request is coming for support from the TF:

- ✓ Develop a statement and a review paper on stunting as the “principle evaluative indicator of poverty reduction” as the SCN Action Plan mentions itself.
- ✓ Considering the request coming from the field of simple and clear guidance on a number of key AME indicators, prepare a number of fact sheets on selected food and nutrition security indicators or measures. A template has been developed and the first 4 fact sheets on: MUAC, Stunting, Dietary Diversity and Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS), have already been written.
- ✓ produce a study/review of selected indicators and thresholds used in the IPC (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification), as well as outside the IPC. The request is a result of a recent consensus to adapt the tool to a development context alongside the emergency contexts where it is already used.
- ✓ Support the SMART (Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transition) team in the revision of Module 3 of the tool on Food Security Assessment.

The task of the TF for the next months will be to produce the outputs mentioned above and to liaise with other partners that it has not contacted yet to coordinate AME actions and explore the possibility of working together. It will also have to set up a webpage of its own, preferably on the SCN website to make its products available and to reach out to partners and potential members. The TF aim is that of being a demand-oriented body so any requests for support are more than welcome!

Membership of the TF

The main principle for determining membership is that of making sure that the TF includes representatives of the SCN's three constituents - UN agencies, governments and NGOs/civil society. Currently the TF is made up of 12 members belonging to these three different constituencies and based in different continents. Other members are more than welcome to join and contribute to the work of the TF!

Current members are: Mark Smulders- FAO (chair), Agnès Dhur- WFP (co-chair), Jacqueline Frize-independent, Yves-Martin Prével- Insitut de Recherche et Developpement (IRD), Marie-Claude Dop-FAO, Cristina Lopriore- FAO, Claudine Prudhon- SCN, Grainne Moloney- FSAU, Somalia, Judith Appleton- independent, Bruce Cogill- Nutrition Cluster/UNICEF, Sean Kennedy- IFAD.

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