

Minutes of Meeting | Food and Nutrition Security Sector Committee Other Sphere India Members | 1st of April 2020

The meeting was called to discuss the food and nutrition-specific preparedness and response to COVID-19 1st of April 2020 via Zoom. List of participants, and the agenda of the meeting are attached in the Annex 1 and 2. The agenda wise key discussions, decisions and action points are as below:

Key Discussions:

Members discussed and applauded the steps taken by government, in terms of addressing food and nutrition security. Though the provision of additional free 5 Kg grains and 1 Kg pulses is announced in addition to other cash and food-based initiatives, to what extent these benefits are being reaching the beneficiaries is important to be monitored. Through the collective efforts the members can collect the information on gaps and bring to attention for advocating action by the government.

- a) Members raised the issue of Aanganwadi workers not being entitled to the Rs. 50 lakh medical coverage being afforded to front-line workers.
- b) It was noted that urban and rural centres (PDS and ICDS) need to be considered separately; in rural areas – while food and nutrition needs are provided in areas closer to the panchayat or local administrative body's office, areas in far-flung remote regions are facing shortage of food-grains; also, food supply must be ensured for migrants who are currently being quarantined within their villages or in camps falling under local jurisdiction; members noted that while lockdown is currently strictly enforced primarily in urban areas, they need to be prepared to respond to needs when it shall also be strictly enforced in rural areas; members are also urged to programme their interventions keeping in mind the vulnerable population, including senior citizens, daily wage labourers and migrants, while being considerate about the caste and gender dynamics.
- c) In urban areas, food distribution in slums need to be considered in the context of the need for social distancing.
- d) It was noted that if a database of local organizations capable of ensuring last-mile food delivery can be compiled, it would help members in ensuring food provision.
- e) Members highlighted that the role of the civil society organizations in the response is also to monitor government response; it was deemed necessary to understand the ground reality in terms of food distribution, especially in view of government orders to distribute food through PDS, ICDS and Mid-Day Meal processes/schemes.
- f) Members appreciated that the government has declared 104 as the official 24/7 helpline service for COVID related inquiries and assistance across India. Previously, the main objective of 104 Remote Health Advisory Helpline number is to provide information and advice for health related services to general public seeking answers or resolutions, while the state governments have added nutrition services also with 104 services.
- g) It was noted that the vulnerable population which does not have any bank account and currently do not avail any social security schemes are being left out of the government's response plan, and therefore should be catered to specifically.

Key Decisions and Action Points:

- a) Mousumi (ACF) to share with the member organizations the plans of certain state governments regarding food distribution.
- b) An advocacy note to be compiled and shared with the government, comprising of asks and recommendations for the various stakeholders with respect to food and nutrition security; it was advised that the recommendations be ministry-specific, while also taking into consideration the role of NITI Aayog.
- c) Organizations to nominate themselves for the taskforce notified to draft advocacy points for a note to government authorities by 12:00 pm of 3rd of April, 2020; the taskforce meeting shall be convened at 4:00 pm on 3rd of April 2020. A follow-up meeting to be convened once the advocacy note is prepared, to discuss the same.

- d) Member organizations are requested to fill the URS on the activities planned/undertaken by their organizations by 5:00 pm, 3rd of April 2020, and then continue updating the same as new decisions.

Annexure I: List of Participants

Registration for Sector Committee Meeting for Food and Nutrition Security			
Sr. No.	Attendee	Organization	Contact No.
1.	Pradnya (Chair)	WFP	9868186749
2.	Abhay	WFP	9711404064
3.	Harshan	EFICOR	9650892146
4.	Sujeet	CFNS	9934013273
5.	Anthony	IGSSS	8116493204
6.	Vijay	WHH	8470032250
7.	Kyra	TDH	
8.	Mousumi	ACF	9968458922
9.	Tushar Das	Plan India	9937152450
10.	Tushar Anchal	Plan India	9818971117
11.	Blesson	World Vision India	9650097282
12.	Harish	World Vision India	8130866331
13.	Satyanarayan	State-level NGO (Odisha & WB)	
14.	Vikrant	Sphere India	9818666331
15.	Kennedy	Sphere India	8285221559
16.	Paritosh	Sphere India	9637070738

Annex 2.2 Agenda of the Meeting: Food and Nutrition Security

1. Preparedness and Response to COVID-19 of:
 - a. Member organizations
 - b. Government
2. Identify gaps in response and avenues for collaboration with Government
3. Address government's response to violent outbreaks in view of COVID-19
4. Advocacy inputs for the various stakeholders
5. AOB