


Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

14th Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) for the Arab States
Beirut, 11-12 November 2010

FOOD SECURITY THEMATIC WORKING GROUP
Working Group Members

Agency	Focal Point
FAO (Chair)	Fatima Hachem
ESCWA	Youssef Chaitani and Vito Intini
IFAD	To be nominated
LAS	To be nominated
UNDP	To be nominated
UNEP	To be nominated
UNIDO	To be nominated
WB	To be nominated
WFP	To be nominated
WHO	To be nominated

Key Summary of Achievements/Developments in 2010

- ☐ A survey was conducted to take stock of food security activities undertaken by regional and UN institutions in the Middle East and North Africa, with a view to determine the commonalities across institutions that could lead to greater effectiveness and efficiency in the services they provide to the countries of the region. The survey identified many common themes that reporting institutions include in their work programs.
- ☐ A number of documents were prepared/published on Food security:
 - ☐ The implications of soaring food prices and the global financial and economic crisis on agriculture development and food and nutrition security in the Near East – will be presented at the FAO Regional Conference, Dec, 2010
 - ☐ Farmers' Response to Soaring Food Prices in the Arab Region – FAO/IFAD submitted to the Food Security Journal
 - ☐ International Investments in Arab Agriculture: An Overview of Trends and Implications for Policy – FAO submitted to the Food Security Journal
 - ☐ Study on Food Security and Conflict in the ESCWA Region - contributed to inform the debate and the FAO/WFP 2010 publication on Food Security in Protracted Crisis that has been recently discussed at the Committee on Food Security in Rome.

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Key Summary of Achievements/Developments in 2010

- ☐ **Monitoring of consumer food prices in the countries of the Region – FAO/AOAD**
- ☐ **A program to review and monitor food security policies in the region was launched – FAO**
- ☐ **An evaluation of the GIEWS (Global Information and Early Warning System) workstation already installed in the FAO office for the Near East Region and the Food Security Information Center in Egypt is scheduled for late November 2010. This will assist the TWG in deciding on the information system to use for mapping and tracking of food security activities at country and regional levels.**

Key Challenges Affecting Implementation

- ☐ **The unexpected delay in recruiting a food security officer for the regional office of FAO, the convener of this TWG, led to delays in convening meetings and hence to agree on a workplan for the group**

Amendments to the TWG Workplan

A first meeting of the TWG on Food Security in the Arab region was planned to be held in Cairo in the first quarter of 2010 to:

- **Discuss the draft TOR of the TWG on food security in the Arab region**
- **Finalize the list of members of the TWG on Food Security**
- **agree on the action plan, outputs and budget, for the TWG of Food Security**

The above meeting was not convened and hence a workplan was not developed for 2010. This meeting will now be convened on December 19th in Cairo.

As participants in the 12th and 13th RCM meetings highlighted the need for this group to map the activities that the different agencies are involved in and that relate to food security, the convener conducted in March 2010 a survey for this purpose. The data were analysed and a report summarizing the findings was produced. This report will be accessible via the RCM website.

ANNEXES

- A : TWG Meetings 2010**
B: TWG Terms of Reference
C: 2010 Workplan of the TWG

ANNEX A - TWG Meetings

Date	Location	Meeting Report Available Online (RCM Website)	Any Comments
19 December 2010	CAIRO	Not yet	

ANNEX B - TWG Terms of Reference

The Thematic Working Group on Food Security in the Arab countries should be a regional forum for sharing analyses and monitoring of food security in the Region and for coordinating actions and interventions undertaken by the different stakeholders. It should lay the principles for the formulation of appropriate policies and strategies and should have the means to monitor progress and to report on their implementation. Emphasis is given to synergy of policies, action and the delivery of results.

In particular the Food Security Thematic group will do the following:

- ☐ monitor the food security situation at the country and regional levels;
- ☐ facilitate coordination for in-country and regional actions to improve food security and to address emerging situations;
- ☐ serve as a manifesto that embraces the full range of policies and actions already underway in response to the food challenge as well as early information on intended projects;
- ☐ see that the UN and regional agencies adopt a coherent and systematic approach to food security with the capacity:
 - ☐ to respond rapidly to situations of food crisis and emergency in order to mitigate their negative effects;
 - ☐ to help bolster the governance of food security in a framework of coherence and synergy of policies, strategies and actions at national and regional levels
 - ☐ to help build longer-term food security and societal resilience.
- ☐ galvanize the strategic engagement of multiple stakeholders in concerted and sustained efforts to improve food security through partnering at local, national, and regional levels.

ANNEX C - 2010 Workplan of the TWG