

**Abstract/Summary information for the Technical Meeting on Nutrition (TMN)**

Subject Title	Research on Food Assistance for Nutritional Impact (REFANI)
Level of Relevance <i>Global /Regional/National</i>	Global + Local
Subject focus area <i>Research/programming/combination</i>	Research
Sphere of interest <i>Humanitarian/Development/Cross-cutting</i>	Humanitarian
Main nutritional focus <i>Wasting/Stunting/Micronutrient malnutrition/overweight and obesity</i>	Global Acute Malnutrition in Protracted Crises
Identify which of the ten thematic areas it relates to	3) Cash Transfer Programming
<p>Abstract/Summary information (<i>no more than 300 words</i>)</p> <p>Globally, between 2010 and 2012, 18 to 20 billion US\$ was spent each year on humanitarian response, and expenditure on emergency food assistance has remained a major component. While most expenditure has been in the form of direct food transfers, an increasing proportion has been provided through cash and voucher transfers. However, there remains a gap in evidence regarding the impact of these different forms of food assistance on the reduction and prevention of acute malnutrition in emergencies. For this reason, Action Against Hunger   ACF International, Concern Worldwide, the Emergency Nutrition Network (ENN) and University College of London (UCL) have come together in a consortium to undertake applied research on this topic.</p> <p>With generous support from the Department for International Development (DFID/UKAID) of the United Kingdom, the Research on Food Assistance for Nutritional Impact (REFANI) Consortium examines the impact of cash, vouchers and in-kind food assistance on nutrition outcomes with the aim of creating an evidence base for high-impact and cost-effective mechanisms to prevent acute undernutrition in emergencies. REFANI will conduct four case studies in different protracted emergency contexts around the globe, with its primary aim being the production of robust evidence on nutritional impact that is generalizable <i>across</i> these different contexts. This focus on external validity will require the testing of research questions across contexts, as well as looking in-depth at process indicators such as food assistance utilization (clients' behaviours, compliance, barriers) and the programme's organization (operational set-up, resourcing, challenges to implementation). There will also be opportunities to look at more context-specific research questions that are of special interest, such as the timing, duration and frequency of cash transfers. Currently, REFANI has identified its first two case studies in Pakistan and Niger; an additional two cases will be identified once the programme reaches full implementation.</p>	