

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FSN FORUM DISCUSSION No. 40
**REVISING THE FOOD SECURITY COMPONENT OF THE
SPHERE HANDBOOK**
FROM 14 JULY TO 10 SEPTEMBER 2009

Summary available at:
http://km.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/fsn/docs/SUMMARY_Sphere_handbook_revision.doc

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Duration:	from 14.07.2009 to 10.09.2009
Number of participants:	11
Number of Contributions:	12

II. INTRODUCTION OF THE TOPIC

Dear FSN forum colleagues,

The revision process is to be coordinated by a group of Focal Points and the Sphere project team over the next year, with publication scheduled in 2010 (last quarter). Milestone meetings are due to be held, 28-30 September 2009 and 13-15 January 2010. As the Focal Point for food security, I will be working closely with the focal points for nutrition and food aid (as well as environment/DRR, and gender) to ensure the respective standards are well integrated. I will also be working closely with a Food Security Core Working Group (composed of about 20 experts) to ensure that new approach, new ideas, right tools ...etc and valid suggestions highlighted by members and practitioners are debated.

As a bit of background, the Food security component in the Sphere handbook is currently structured via 5 minimum standards, 37 key indicators, 39 guidance notes and 4 appendices. In the English version these are developed from pages 114 to 133 (pages 172 to 179 and 194 to 199 for the appendices).

I would like to invite the FSN forum members to give feedback on the following questions:

- 1. What are the new standards that need to be added, if any? Please be specific and, if possible, provide evidence-based background or references to your suggestion.**
- 2. What are the indicators/guidance notes that you think need to be adjusted? Please be specific and, if possible, provide evidence-based background or references to your suggestion.**
- 3. What are the missing information/findings that need to be considered and reflected in the indicators/guidance notes or annexes?**

According to the initial feedback and importance of suggestions for changes we might launch other consultation rounds later on focusing on each standard

I thank you in advance for your contributions to this upcoming handbook revision and looking forward to hearing from you!

Best regards

Devrig

Devrig Velly
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The Food Security component can be found from **page 2 to 13** in the online version of this introductory message

http://km.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/fsn/docs/TOPIC_Sphere_handbook_revision.doc

or in the "Food Security, Nutrition and Food Aid" Chapter, from pages **114 to 133** (pages **172 to 179 and 194 to 199** for the appendices).

http://www.sphereproject.org/component/option,com_docman/task,cat_view/gid,17/Itemid,203/language,english/

III. LIST OF CONTRIBUTIONS

Contribution by Agnes Dhur from the World Food Programme, Italy

1. What are the new standards that need to be added, if any? Please be specific and, if possible, provide evidence-based background or references to your suggestion.

Perhaps standard on minimum information required for non-food responses to food insecurity, such as market studies for cash or voucher interventions. OXFAM and WFP are working on guidance for market analysis. Some of it could inform what is needed in order to inform these types of response (e.g. market integration, competition, prices, inflation risks, preferences, security issues etc.)

2. What are the indicators/guidance notes that you think need to be adjusted? Please be specific and, if possible, provide evidence-based background or references to your suggestion.

Indicators on food consumption: WFP and FAO have been working on indicators including the Food Consumption Score for WFP (guidance is available on the webpage or can be obtained from chiara.brunelli@wfp.org) and the Household Dietary Diversity Score for FAO (guidance can be obtained from MarieClaude.Dop@fao.org).

Indicators on coping strategies: Dan Maxwell et al. produced in 2008 a revised Manual for the compilation and analysis of the Coping Strategy Index as well as for a reduced CSI. The Manual can be found here [http://www.enonline.net/pool/files/ife/coping-strategies-index-manual-second-edition-\(final\)%5B1%5D.pdf](http://www.enonline.net/pool/files/ife/coping-strategies-index-manual-second-edition-(final)%5B1%5D.pdf).

3. What are the missing information/findings that need to be considered and reflected in the indicators/guidance notes or annexes?

Guidance on collection and analysis of data on remittances.

Guidance on how to link food security and nutrition information to decide on interventions (e.g. how to ensure that the 3 possible underlying causes of malnutrition are duly considered and how this would influence the type of responses that would be most appropriate to tackle malnutrition). WFP has produced a Guidance Note on the issue (can be obtained from kathryn.ogden@wfp.org).

Guidance on data needed to decide on the relevance and feasibility of social safety nets in emergencies. Unfortunately I cannot point to any existing guidance that could be used as a basis.

Perhaps more on the need for monitoring before and after a shock.

Best regards

Agnes Dhur
WFP
Italy

Contribution by Yves Martin-Prevel from the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement, France

Hello,

Only one point to add to the comprehensive message sent by Agnes Dhur.

Under point 2 (What are the indicators/guidance notes that you think need to be adjusted? Please be specific and, if possible, provide evidence-based background or references to your suggestion.) I would add the **Household Food Insecurity Access Scale**, as described/proposed by **FANTA** (guidelines can be downloaded in English, French or Spanish at http://www.fantaproject.org/publications/hfias_intro.shtml) and which is rather close to the concept underlying the CSI (see also http://www.unscn.org/files/Task_Force/TFAME/HFIAS.pdf).

Best regards

Yves Martin-Prevel

Institut de Recherche pour le Développement
Montpellier
France

Contribution by Terri Ballard from FAO, Italy

My name is Terri Ballard and I have worked in the Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division of FAO for the past 4 years as part of the FAO-European Commission Programme on Food Security Information for Action (<http://www.foodsec.org>). Within this programme, we promote the use of the Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS) in food security analyses, surveys etc, and have a wealth of data from these initiatives. Therefore, I was pleased to see Yves Martin-Prevel's endorsement of considering use of the HFIAS as a household food security measure in SPHERE. He has practical experience with the scale and has collaborated with us on its use in Burkina Faso.

I would like to provide an update on the HFIAS and its evolution in the near future into the **Household Hunger Scale**. Using datasets from a number of countries that included the HFIAS, FAO and the FANTA Project (now FANTA-2, <http://www.fantaproject.org>) have undergone an extensive internal and external validation of the HFIAS in the effort to derive a standardized, valid, and culturally invariant measure of household food security (i.e. one that has a similar meaning across different cultural settings). The result of this work is a new scale, the Household Hunger Scale, which will be released by FANTA within several months. A technical guide on the scale is in the final stages of preparation and will be available at the FANTA-2 website, once finalized. The new scale is based on the original HFIAS, but will replace it as a recommended tool to measure household food insecurity in a standardized and valid way. I have copied into this message a "flyer" (see below) that we produced to give you a preview of the new tool now, before the official launch takes place.

This new scale will be very useful for measuring whether households are actually experiencing hunger, which is not an easy concept to capture through survey methods. Using a direct measure of hunger at household level will be indispensable to Governments and institutions for providing valid data on the current situation for programmatic purposes, and in the longer run for demonstrating progress towards MDG-1 and other national commitments to reduce hunger and improve food security.

Best regards to all.

Terri

Proposed Household Hunger Scale

Background

In 2007, the FANTA Project released the Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS) for Measurement of Food Access: Indicator Guide, Version 3 (<http://www.fantaproject.org/publications/hfias.shtml>). The scale is composed of nine questions (listed in the following table). Respondents are asked about frequency of occurrence during the previous 4 weeks.

Household Food Insecurity Access Scale.

Respondents are asked if in the past four weeks did it happen, and if so how often, that they or any household member:

1. worried that your household would not have enough food?
2. were not able to eat the kinds of foods you would have preferred to eat because of lack of resources?
3. had to eat a limited variety of foods because of lack of resources?
4. had to eat some foods that you really did not want to eat because of lack of resources?
5. had to eat fewer meals in a day because there was not enough food?
6. had to eat a smaller meal than you felt you needed because there was not enough food?
7. had a time when there was no food to eat of any kind in the house, because of lack of resources to get food?
8. went to sleep at night hungry because there was not enough food?
9. went a whole day and night without eating anything at all because there was not enough food?

The 2007 HFIAS version 3 reflects refinements to address the recommendations of the Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), which carried out HFIAS adaptation work in multiple countries under the EC/FAO Food Security Information for Action Programme.

Validation study of the HFIAS

The FAO Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division has collaborated with the FANTA Project (now FANTA-2) on an internal validation study of the HFIAS, using data collected in six countries with technical support from FAO. The validation study used mathematical models (Rasch) to test the item response patterns to the 9 questions, which were asked in the presumed order of increasing severity, to test the assumption that persons across different cultural settings experience food insecurity in the same way. The study demonstrated that only the last three questions of the nine question scale showed cultural invariability, that is, only these questions reflected a similar level of food security severity in different settings.

Based on this finding, it is proposed that the scale be reduced to the last 3 HFIAS questions (questions 7-9). The 3 question scale reflects culturally invariant experiences that indicate the presence of hunger in the household. FANTA-2 will replace the HFIAS with the new scale, to be called the Household Hunger Scale. The following pages show the DRAFT revised Household Hunger questionnaire, instructions for scoring the scale and how to create categorical indicators of household hunger.

A full technical report by FANTA-2 and FAO will be released in the fourth quarter of 2009. This report will describe the validation study results and will introduce the new Household Hunger

Scale.

Proposed Household Hunger Scale

Scale items

Respondents are asked if in the past four weeks did it happen, and if so how often, that they or any household member:

1. had a time when there was no food to eat of any kind in the house, because of lack of resources to get food?
2. went to sleep at night hungry because there was not enough food?
3. went a whole day and night without eating anything at all because there was not enough food?

Each question is answered by a frequency response:

0 = No

1 = Rarely or sometimes (1-10 times)

2 = Often (more than 10 times)

Scoring and creating a categorical variable according to Hunger Status

A categorical indicator of household hunger is created using the responses to Questions 1-3.

First, the frequency responses (0, 1 or 2) for the three questions are summed, with a maximum score of 6.

Based on the summed score, households are categorized as follows:

SCORE	CATEGORY
0-1	little or no hunger in the household
2-3	Moderate hunger in the household
4-6	Severe hunger in the household

Use of other questions from the HFIAS to understand food access.

The other HFIAS questions (Q1-Q7) could be used as stand alone items to track changes in certain aspects of food quality or quantity. In the data sets used in the validation study, questions 5 and 6 solicited positive responses from mostly the same set households: in order words, the questions were largely interchangeable. Therefore, a combined question asking about reduced food quantity (either from smaller portions, fewer meals or both) could probably be substituted. (Example: In the past 4 weeks, did you or any household member eat less in a day because there was not enough food?) Using additional stand alone questions might also be helpful to

describe problems with food access in the group that is classified as having little or no hunger. However, use of the data from stand alone questions for this purpose has not been validated.

Contribution by Silvia Kaufmann from FAO, Afghanistan

Dear All,

In consultation with the nutrition cluster members in Afghanistan we have put together facts looking at the Sphere Standards from the emergency nutrition perspective. We discovered a range of standards and indicators that may need to be revisited, re-defined or added, ranging from infant and young child feeding practices, simple and feasible surveillance systems, assessment methodologies including the new growth standards and its implications for the admission to feeding programmes, **and further up to elements in linking nutrition and food security interventions better**, as the 'clusters' and respective coordination mechanisms, to be outlined at the guideline, would provide an opportunity to do so. Some of the standards and indicators are already updated/harmonized and may only need to be incorporated (i.e. infant and young child feeding), others will need to be re-discussed and redefined based on best practices or field based evidence to be SMART (i.e. food diversity), and inter-agency technical working groups would be required for their finalization: Nutrition specific comments will be shared with the global nutrition coordinator.

Additional food security relevant issues I would like to share herewith:

1. What are the new standards that need to be added, if any? Please be specific and, if possible, provide evidence-based background or references to your suggestion.

Access to food: **quality diet – food diversity**: standards and respective indicators to be harmonized, agreed on and added:

- Include guidance and indicators on the quality of a diet. Meaningful and **practicable indicators of food diversity** have been developed recently they would need to be discussed under the 'emergency context'; they would also need to be standardized and harmonized. For the time being different organizations are applying different methodologies; sometimes they differ only slightly, for example on the recall period, still that hinders comparability, sometimes they differ widely ranging from assessing of 'frequencies' to the assessment of 'quantities'. The **household hunger scale**, mentioned earlier, is an excellent starting point and would need to be adjusted for its use in disasters. Computerization would also need to be envisaged, possibly an update of the ENA, incorporating the agreed on food consumption indicators seems to be doable.
- **Optimize the use of local foods** to ensure that nutritional requirements are met. The actual guideline focuses on standard food basket and the minimum nutrient requirements. The guideline should highlight the importance of optimizing the use of local foods and the inclusion into the recommended food basket, which would help to aim for a better quality of food (see a). This entails the promotion of local foods as part of the general food basket as well as in supplementary feeding rations. Methodologies and mechanisms would need to be elaborated in more detail with respective actors.
- Update on **micro-nutrients** in emergencies including food based approaches.

Add the importance on the close **linkages between nutrition and food security/food aid** interventions. Standard procedures and indicators will need to be developed by respective actors.

Good examples are available: linking nutrition programmes (including the 'management of malnutrition') with extension services, particularly for parents of children admitted to feeding programmes, providing extension services at clinics including clinic gardens, home based food

production, back yard gardening and provision of seeds, including vegetables seeds, legumes etc. Furthermore, linking it to broader livelihoods support would help those most vulnerable families out of the desperate situation.

Add guidance on **linking emergency response to rehabilitation and recovery**. This is frequently overlooked and there might be a lack of expertise in the field, hence, whenever guidance or trainings on emergency actions is being provided it should ultimately provide guidance and practical steps for phasing over..

2. What are the indicators/guidance notes that you think need to be adjusted? Please be specific and, if possible, provide evidence-based background or references to your suggestion.

The guidance on the close linkages between **food distribution and nutrition programmes** will need to be updated, particular in light of the new growth standards and its implications as well as the recent trend towards community based management of malnutrition (which still requires facility based support). The community based action provides an additional opportunity for linking nutrition and food security/food aid support.

3. What are the missing information/findings that need to be considered and reflected in the indicators/guidance notes or annexes?

School feeding in emergencies (link to minimum standards for education in emergencies, guidance from the international network for education in emergencies, INEE, in 2005), with linkages to school based food security and agriculture.

A guidance note on **inter-sectoral as well as sectoral coordination** (or for responses where clusters are being activated, the cluster approach, inter-cluster as well as cluster coordination). Improved coordination needs to become more effective. I.e. Practical guidance and good practices in working together, mechanisms to ensure close collaboration and linkages between the nutrition and food sector/cluster (references: IASC and evaluation reports are available).

Relevant for all actors in emergencies: **Protecting breast feeding in emergencies**: Operational guidance for Infant Feeding in Emergencies and Code of marketing of breast milk substitutes etc. possibly as an annex.

Looking forward to contribute further, let me know if any more clarification is required, very best,

Silvia

Silvia Kaufmann
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Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
www.fao.org/world/afghanistan

Contribution by Nirvana Pradhan from Bhutan

Dear Devrig,

I have reviewed the document with a few feedback and comments. Though I am not a foodie but, have worked as a livelihoods practitioner, my comments and feedbacks are based on my practical experiences in the field.

Regards

The following text is also available at

http://typo3.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/fsn/docs/TOPIC_Sphere_handbook_revision_Reviewed_with_comments.doc

Comments in red italics refer to the section market by the bold red word.

Assessment and analysis standard 1: food security

Where people are at risk of food insecurity, programme decisions are based on a demonstrated understanding of how they normally access food, the type of food (local diet) and **the** impact of the disaster on current and future food security, and hence the most appropriate response.

The type should be mentioned on this section otherwise FS Standard I cannot not be fulfilled. I find a gap between Assessment and analysis standard I and FS Standard I. The access to (how) and the type of food is directly correlated to program decisions and fulfilling criteria laid out in FS Standard I. The type of food relates to (i) general understanding of type of nutrition intake and energy consumption (Key Indicator 8) (ii) local land use types (iii) local market structures and (iv) related livelihoods patterns. This is because, in the present situation of climate change affecting the land used by farmers and the local infrastructures does help in risk and vulnerability assessment which are prerequisite to program decision making processes.

Key indicators (to be read in conjunction with the guidance notes)

– Assessments and analyses examine food security in relevant geographic locations and livelihood groupings, distinguishing between seasons, and over time, to identify and prioritise needs (see guidance note 1).

– The assessment demonstrates understanding of the broader social, economic and political policies, institutions and processes that affect food security (see guidance note 2).

– The assessment includes an investigation and analysis of coping strategies (see guidance note 3).

– Where possible, the assessment builds upon local capacities, including both formal and informal institutions (see guidance note 4).

– The methodology used is comprehensively described in the assessment report and is seen to adhere to widely accepted principles (see guidance note 5).

– Use is made of existing secondary data, and the collection of new primary data in the field is focused on additional and existing information essential for strategic decision-making (see guidance note 6).

– Recommended food security responses are designed to support, protect and **facilitate** in developing sustainable livelihood strategies, while also meeting immediate needs (see guidance note 7).

– The impact of food insecurity on the population's nutritional status is considered (see guidance note 8).

Instead of promote, I find facilitate more adequate because, the sustainability, besides other issues also includes mainstreaming of community based disaster management efforts that leads to feasible livelihoods strategies that could be developed by communities themselves.

Guidance notes

1. Scope of analysis: food security varies according to people's livelihoods, their location, their social status, the time of year and the nature of the disaster and associated responses. The focus of the assessment will reflect how the affected population acquired food and income before the **disaster**, and how the disaster has affected this. For example, in urban and peri-urban areas, the focus may be on reviewing the market supply of food, while in rural areas it will usually be on food production. Where people have been displaced, the food security of the host population must also be taken into account. Food security assessments may be undertaken when planning to phase out a programme as well as prior to starting one. In either case, they should be

coordinated among all concerned parties to minimise duplication of effort. Assessments gathering new information should complement secondary data from existing information sources.

Somewhere in this line we need to mention the types of food because, sources together with the type is mandatory during assessment.

2. Context: food insecurity may be the result of wider macro-economic and structural socio-political factors e.g. national and international policies, processes or institutions that affect people's access to nutritionally adequate food. This is usually defined as chronic food insecurity, in that it is a long-term condition resulting from structural vulnerabilities, but it may be aggravated by the impact of a disaster.

3. Coping strategies: assessment and analysis should consider the different types of coping strategy, who is applying them and how well they work. While strategies vary, there are nonetheless distinct stages of coping. Early coping strategies are not necessarily abnormal, are reversible and cause no lasting damage e.g. collection of wild foods for consumption as well as for **selling**, selling non-essential assets or sending a family member to work elsewhere. Later strategies, sometimes called crisis strategies, may permanently undermine future food security e.g. sale of land, distress migration of whole families or deforestation. Some coping strategies employed by women and girls tend to expose them to higher risk of HIV infection e.g. prostitution and illicit relationships, or sexual violence as they travel to unsafe areas. Increased migration generally may increase risk of HIV transmission. Coping strategies may also affect the environment e.g. over-exploitation of commonly owned natural resources. It is important that food security is protected and supported before all non-damaging options are exhausted.

As per my experiences in South Asia, the communities collect wild food and other NTFP for both consumption & selling.

Example; in Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, Myanmar and Nepal..communities collect leafy vegetables, firewood and fruits from the forests as per the season and sell them in the market to purchase basic food item; e.g., rice, oil and salt and fill up their daily household's food basket. They consume lesser but, sell more of these item to have cash in hand....one of the coping strategies for communities typical in Myanmar, 6 months after disaster.

4. Local capacities: participation of the community and appropriate local institutions at all stages of assessment and planning is vital. Programmes should be based on need and tailored to the particular local context and within the local government and their **partner agencies'** policy frameworks. In areas subject to recurrent natural disasters or long-running conflicts there may be local early warning and emergency response systems or networks. Communities which have previously experienced drought or floods may have their own contingency plans. It is important that such local capacities are supported.

Partner is usually United Nations agencies.

5. Methodology: it is important to consider carefully the coverage of assessments and sampling procedures, even if informal. The process documented in the report should be both logical and transparent, and should reflect recognised standards and procedures for food security assessment. Methodological approaches need to be coordinated among agencies and with the government to ensure that information and analyses are complementary and consistent, so that information can be compared over time. Multi-agency assessments are usually preferable. The triangulation of different sources and types of food security information is vital in order to arrive at a consistent conclusion across different sources e.g. crop assessments, satellite images,

household **assessments** etc. A checklist of the main areas to be considered in an assessment is given in Appendix 1. A checklist for reviewing methodology is provided in Appendix 2.

I strongly recommend Households Dietary Index as one of the assessment tools because; it gives an idea on the daily traditional food basket and the types of food and, secondly, it is very helpful for professionals with non nutrition and health background to design rapid response strategy that could have longer – term results.

In Myanmar, Mid Island, rice farming communities do not consume rice on a daily basis. They consume rice noodles, which are available at cheaper rates. The rice they consume are lower/ substandard quality, that are cheaper in the market. The rice they farm are usually better quality and fetches good price in the market.

6. Sources of information: in many situations a wealth of secondary information exists about the situation pre-disaster, including the normal availability of food, the access that different groups normally have to food, the groups that are most food-insecure, and the effects of previous crises on food availability and the access of different groups. Effective use of secondary information enables the gathering of primary data during the assessment to be focused on what is essential in the new situation.

7. Long-term planning: while meeting immediate needs and preserving productive assets will always be the priority during the initial stages of a crisis, responses must always be planned with the longer term in mind.

This requires technical expertise in a range of sectors, as well as abilities to work closely with members of the community, including representatives from all groups. Participation of community members at all stages of assessment and programme planning is vital, not least for their perspectives of long-term possibilities and risks. Recommendations must be based on a sound and demonstrated understanding by appropriately qualified and experienced personnel. The assessment team should include relevant sectoral experts, including e.g. agriculturalists, agro-economists, veterinarians, social scientists, and water and sanitation or other appropriate experts (see Participation standard on page 28).

8. Food insecurity and nutritional status: food insecurity is one of three underlying causes of malnutrition, and therefore wherever there is food insecurity there is risk of malnutrition, including micronutrient deficiencies.

Consideration of the impact of food insecurity on the nutrition situation is an essential part of food security assessment. However, it should not be assumed that food insecurity is the sole cause of malnutrition, without considering possible health and care causal factors.

2 Minimum Standards in Food Security

Food security includes access to food (including affordability), adequacy of food supply or availability, and the stability of supply and access over time. It also covers the quality, variety and safety of food, and the consumption and biological utilisation of food.

The resilience of people's livelihoods, and their vulnerability to food insecurity, is largely determined by the resources available to them, and how these have been affected by disaster. These resources include economic and financial property (such as cash, credit, savings and investments) and also include physical, natural, human and social capital. For people affected by disaster, the preservation, recovery and development of the resources necessary for their food security and future livelihoods is usually a priority.

In conflict situations, insecurity and the threat of conflict may seriously restrict livelihood activities and access to markets.

Households may suffer direct loss of assets, either abandoned as a result of flight or destroyed or commandeered by warring parties.

The first food security standard, following on from the food security assessment and analysis standard on page 111, is a general standard that applies to all aspects of food security

programming in disasters, including issues relating to survival and preservation of assets. The remaining three standards relate to primary production, income generation and employment, and access to markets, including goods and services. Appendix 3 describes a range of food security responses.

There is some obvious overlap between the food security standards, as food security responses usually have multiple objectives, relating to different aspects of food security and hence are covered by more than one standard (including also standards in the water, health and shelter sectors). In addition, a balance of programmes is required to achieve all standards in food security. Disaster response should support and/or complement existing government services in terms of structure, design and long-term sustainability.

Food security standard 1: general food security

People have access to adequate and appropriate food and non-food items in a manner that ensures their survival, prevents erosion of assets and upholds their dignity.

Key indicators (to be read in conjunction with the guidance notes)

- _ Where people's lives are at risk through lack of food, responses prioritise meeting their immediate food needs (see guidance note 1).
- _ In all disaster contexts, measures are taken to support, protect and promote food security. This includes preserving productive assets or recovering those lost as the result of disaster (see guidance note 2).
- _ Responses that protect and support food security are based on sound analysis, in consultation with the disaster-affected community (guidance note ???).
- _ Responses take account of people's coping strategies, their benefits and any associated risks and costs (see guidance note 3).
- _ Transition and exit strategies are developed for all food security responses to disaster, and are publicised and applied as appropriate (see guidance note 4).
- _ When a response supports the development of new or alternative livelihood strategies, all groups have access to appropriate support, including necessary knowledge, skills and services (see guidance note 5).
- _ Food security responses have the least possible degradative effect on the environment (see guidance note 6).
- _ Numbers of beneficiaries are monitored to determine the level of acceptance and access by different groups in the population and to ensure overall coverage of the affected population without discrimination (see guidance note 7).
- _ The effects of responses on the local economy, social networks, livelihoods and the environment are monitored, in addition to ongoing monitoring linked to programme objectives (see guidance note 8).

Guidance notes

1. *Prioritising life-saving responses:* although food distribution is the most common response to acute food insecurity in disasters, other types of response may also help people meet their immediate food needs.

Examples include sales of subsidised food (when people have some purchasing power but supplies are lacking); improving purchasing power through employment programmes (including food-for-work); and

destocking initiatives or cash distributions. Especially in urban areas, the priority may be to re-establish normal market arrangements and revitalise economic activities that provide employment, regenerate access to food and food supply chain. Such strategies may be more appropriate than food distribution because they uphold dignity, support livelihoods and thereby reduce future risks and vulnerability. Agencies have a responsibility to take into account what others are doing to ensure that the combined response provides complementary inputs and services.

General food distributions should be introduced only when absolutely necessary and should be discontinued as soon as possible. General free food distribution may not be appropriate when:

- adequate supplies of food are available in the area (and the need is to address obstacles to access);
- a localised lack of food availability can be addressed by support of market systems;
- local attitudes or policies are against free food handouts.

2. Support, protection and promotion of food security: appropriate measures to support food security can include a wide range of responses and advocacy (see Appendix 3). Although in the short term it may not be feasible to achieve food security based entirely on people's own livelihood strategies, existing strategies that contribute to household food security and preserve dignity should be protected and supported wherever possible. Food security responses do not necessarily seek a complete recovery of assets lost as a result of disaster, but seek to prevent further erosion and to promote a process of recovery.

3. Risks associated with coping strategies: many coping strategies carry costs or incur risks that may increase vulnerability. For example:

- cutbacks in amounts of food eaten or in the quality of diets lead to declining health and nutritional status;
- cutbacks in expenditure on school fees and health care undermine human capital;
- prostitution and external relationships to secure food undermine dignity, and risk social exclusion and HIV infection or other sexually transmitted diseases;
- sale of household assets may reduce the future productive capacity of the household;
- failure to repay loans risks losing future access to credit;
- over-use and unregulated use of natural resources reduces the availability and degradation of natural capital
(e.g. excessive fishing, collection of firewood and construction materials, etc);
- travel to insecure areas to work or to gather food or fuel exposes people (especially women and children) to attack;
- producing or trading illicit goods risks arrest and imprisonment;
- separation of families and mothers from children risks poor standards of child care and malnutrition.

These progressive and debilitating effects must be recognised and early interventions undertaken to discourage such strategies and prevent asset loss. Certain coping strategies may also undermine dignity, where people are forced to engage in socially demeaning or unacceptable activities. However, in many societies certain strategies (such as sending a family member to work elsewhere during hard times) are a well-established tradition.

4. Exit and transition strategies: such strategies must be considered from the outset of a programme, particularly where the response may have long-term implications e.g. the provision of free services which would normally be paid for, such as access to credit or veterinary services. Before closing the programme or transiting to a new phase, there should be **evidence** that the situation has improved.

Are we talking about monitoring or, rapid impact assessment here? M&E ? Related to guidance note 8?

5. Access to knowledge, skills and services: structures that provide relevant services should be designed and planned together with the users, so that they are appropriate and adequately maintained, where possible beyond the life of the project. Some groups have very specific needs e.g. children orphaned as a result of AIDS may miss out on the information and skills transfer that takes place within families.

6. Environmental impact: as far as possible, the natural resource base for production and livelihoods of the affected population – and of host populations – should be preserved. Impact on the surrounding

environment should be considered during assessment and the planning of any response. For example, people living in camps require cooking fuel, which may lead rapidly to local deforestation. The distribution of foodstuffs which have long cooking times, such as certain beans, will require more cooking fuel, thus also potentially affecting the environment (see Food aid planning standard 2 on page 158). Where possible, responses should aim to preserve the environment from further degradation. For example, destocking programmes reduce the pressure of animal grazing on pasture during a drought, making more feed available for surviving **livestock**.

We should also mention about the garbage in the IDP camps and water contamination if, the camps are located near the streams or, rivers.

7. Coverage, access and acceptability: beneficiaries and their characteristics should be described and their numbers estimated before determining the level of participation of different groups (paying particular attention to vulnerable groups). Participation is partly determined by ease of access and the acceptability of activities to participants. Food security responses be non-discriminatory and seek to provide access for vulnerable groups, as well as protecting dependants, including children. Various constraints, including capacity to work, workload at home, responsibilities for caring for children, the chronically ill or disabled, and restricted cultural and physical access, may limit the participation of women, people with disabilities and older people. Overcoming these constraints involves identifying activities that are within the capacity of these groups or setting up appropriate support structures. Targeting mechanisms based on self-selection should normally be established with full consultation with all groups in the community (see Targeting standard on page 35).

8. Monitoring: as well as routine monitoring (see Monitoring and Evaluation standards on pages 37-40), it is also necessary to monitor the wider food security situation in order to assess the continued relevance of the programme, determine when to phase out specific activities or to introduce modifications or new projects as needed, and to identify any need for advocacy. Local and regional food security information systems, including famine early warning systems, are important sources of information.

Food security standard 2: primary production

Primary production mechanisms are protected and supported.

Key indicators (to be read in conjunction with the guidance notes)

__ Interventions to support primary production are based on a demonstrated understanding of the viability of production systems, including access to and availability of necessary inputs and services (see guidance note 1).

__ **New** technologies are introduced only where their implications for local production systems, cultural practices and environment are understood and accepted by food producers (see guidance note 2).

__ Where possible, a range of inputs is provided in order to give producers more flexibility in managing production, processing and distribution and in reducing risks (see guidance note 3).

__ Productive plant, animal or fisheries inputs are delivered in time, are locally acceptable and conform to appropriate quality norms (see guidance notes 4-5).

__ The introduction of inputs and services does not exacerbate vulnerability or increase risk, e.g. by increasing competition for scarce natural resources or by damaging existing social networks (see guidance note 6).

__ Inputs and services are purchased locally whenever possible, unless this would adversely affect local producers, markets or consumers (see guidance note 7).

__ Food producers, processors and distributors receiving project inputs make appropriate use of them (see guidance notes 8-9).

__ Responses understand the need for complementary inputs and services and provide these where appropriate.

Instead of NEW, I believe IMPROVED technologies are more appropriate or, feasible term because, we are talking about local acceptance as per the local context that includes many factors such as environment, availability and maintenance (costs...does not exacerbate vulnerability) over a longer period of time.

Guidance notes

1. **Viability of primary production:** to be viable, food production strategies must have a reasonable chance of developing adequately and succeeding. This may be influenced by a wide range of factors including:

- access to sufficient natural resources (farmland, pasture, water, rivers, lakes, coastal waters, etc.). The ecological balance should not be endangered, e.g. by over-exploitation of marginal lands, over-fishing, or pollution of water, especially in peri-urban areas;
- levels of skills and capacities, which may be limited where communities are seriously affected by disease, or where education and training may be barred to some groups;
- labour availability in relation to existing patterns of production and the timing of key agricultural activities;
- availability of inputs and the nature and coverage of related services (financial, veterinary, agricultural extension), which may be provided by government institutions and/or other bodies;
- the legality of specific activities or the affected groups' right to work e.g. controls on the collection of firewood or restrictions on rights of refugees to undertake paid work;
- security because of armed conflict, destruction of transport infrastructure, landmines, threat of attack or banditry. Production should not adversely affect the access of other groups to lifesustaining natural resources such as water.

2. **Technological development:** 'new' technologies may include improved crop varieties or livestock species, new tools or fertilisers. As far as possible, food production activities should follow existing patterns and/or be linked with national development plans. New technologies should only be introduced during a disaster if they have previously been tested in the local area and are known to be appropriate. When introduced, new technologies should be accompanied by appropriate community consultations, provision of information, training and other relevant support. The capacity of extension services within local government departments, NGOs and others to facilitate this should be assessed and if necessary reinforced.

3. **Improving choice:** examples of interventions that offer producers greater choice include cash inputs or credit in lieu of, or to complement, productive inputs, and seed fairs that provide farmers with the opportunity to select seed of their choice. Production should not have negative nutritional implications, such as the replacement of food crops by cash crops. The provision of animal fodder during drought can provide a more direct human nutrition benefit to pastoralists than the provision of food assistance.

4. **Timeliness and acceptability:** examples of productive inputs include seeds, tools, fertiliser, livestock, fishing equipment, hunting implements, loans and credit facilities, market information, transport facilities, etc. The provision of agricultural inputs and veterinary services must be timed to coincide with the relevant agricultural and animal husbandry seasons; e.g. the provision of seeds and tools must precede the planting season. Emergency destocking of livestock during a drought should take place before excess livestock mortality occurs, while restocking should start when recovery is well assured, e.g. following the next rains.

5. **Seeds:** priority should be given to local seed, so that farmers can use their own criteria to establish quality. Local varieties should be approved by farmers and local agricultural staff. Seeds should be adaptable to local conditions and be resistant to disease. Seeds originating from outside the region need to be adequately certified and checked for appropriateness to local conditions. Hybrid seeds may be appropriate where farmers are familiar with them and have experience growing them. This can only be determined through consultation with the community. When seeds are provided free of charge, farmers may prefer hybrid seeds to local varieties

because these are otherwise costly to purchase. Government policies regarding hybrid seeds should also be complied with before distribution.

Genetically modified (GMO) seeds should not be distributed unless they have been approved by the national or other ruling authorities.

6. Impact on rural livelihoods: primary food production may not be viable if there is a shortage of vital natural resources. Promoting production that requires increased or changed access to locally available natural resources may heighten tensions within the local population, as well as further restricting access to water and other essential needs. Care should be taken with the provision of financial resources, in the form of either grants or loans, since these may also increase the risk of local insecurity (see Food security standard 3, guidance note 5 on page 130). In addition, the free provision of inputs may disturb traditional mechanisms for social support and redistribution.

7. Local purchase of inputs: inputs and services for food production, such as livestock health services, seed, etc., should be obtained through existing in-country supply systems where possible. However, before embarking on local purchases the risk should be considered of project purchases distorting the market e.g. raising prices of scarce items.

8. Monitoring usage: indicators of the process and the outputs from food production, processing and distribution may be estimated e.g. area planted, quantity of seed planted per hectare, yield, number of offspring, etc. It is important to determine how producers use the project inputs i.e. verifying that seeds are indeed planted, and that tools, fertilisers, nets and fishing gear are used as intended. The quality of the inputs should also be reviewed in terms of their acceptability and producer preferences. Important for evaluation is consideration of how the project has affected food available to the household e.g. household food stocks, the quantity and quality of food consumed, or the amount of food traded or given away. Where the project aims to increase production of a specific food type, such as animal or fish products or protein-rich legumes, the households' use of these products should be investigated. The results of this type of analysis may be cross-validated with nutritional surveys (provided health and care determinants of nutritional status are also considered).

9. Unforeseen or negative effects of inputs: for example, the effect of changes in labour patterns in subsequent agricultural seasons, the effect of responses on alternative and existing coping strategies (e.g. diversion of labour), labour patterns of women and effect on child care, school attendance and effect on education, risks taken in order to access land and other essential resources.

Food security standard 3: income and employment

Where income generation and employment are feasible livelihood strategies, people have access to appropriate income-earning opportunities, which generate fair remuneration and contribute towards food security without jeopardising the resources on which livelihoods are based.

Key indicators (to be read in conjunction with the guidance notes)

_ Project decisions about timing, work activities, type of remuneration and the technical feasibility of implementation are based on a demonstrated understanding of local human resource capacities, a market and economic analysis, and an analysis of demand and supply for relevant skills and training needs (see guidance notes 1-2).

_ Responses providing job or income opportunities are technically feasible and all necessary inputs are available on time. Where possible, responses contribute to the food security of others and preserve or restore the environment.

- _ The level of remuneration is appropriate, and payments for waged labour are prompt, regular and timely. In situations of acute food insecurity, payments may be made in advance (see guidance note 3).
- _ Procedures are in place to provide a safe, secure working environment (see guidance note 4).
- _ Projects involving large sums of cash include measures to avoid diversion and/or insecurity (see guidance note 5).
- _ Responses providing labour opportunities protect and support household caring responsibilities, and do not negatively affect the local environment or interfere with regular livelihood activities (see guidance note 6).
- _ The household management and use of remuneration (cash or food), grants or loans are understood and seen to be contributing towards the food security of all household members (see guidance note 7).

Guidance notes

1. Appropriateness of initiatives: project activities should make maximum use of local human resources in project design and the identification of appropriate activities. As far as possible, food-for-work (FFW) and cash-for-work (CFW) activities should be selected by, and planned with, the participating groups themselves. Where there are large numbers of displaced people (refugees or IDPs), employment opportunities should not be at the expense of the local host population.

In some circumstances, employment opportunities should be made available to both groups. Understanding household management and use of cash is important in deciding whether and in what form microfinance services could support food security (see also Food security standard 2).

2. Type of remuneration: remuneration may be in cash or in food, or a combination of both, and should enable food-insecure households to meet their needs. Rather than payment, remuneration may often take the form of an incentive provided to help people to undertake tasks that are of direct benefit to themselves. FFW may be preferred to CFW where markets are weak or unregulated, or where little food is available. FFW may also be appropriate where women are more likely to control the use of food than of cash. CFW is preferred where trade and markets can assure the local availability of food, and secure systems for dispersal of cash are available. People's purchasing needs, and the impact of giving either cash or food on other basic needs (school attendance, access to health services, social obligations) should be considered. The type and level of remuneration should be decided on a case-by-case basis, taking account of the above and the availability of cash and food resources.

3. Payments: levels of remuneration should take account of the needs of the food-insecure households and of local labour rates. There are no universally accepted guidelines for setting levels of remuneration, but

where remuneration is in kind and provided as an income transfer, the resale value of the food on local markets must be considered. The net gain to individuals in income through participation in the programme activities should be greater than if they had spent their time on other activities. This applies to FFW, CFW and also credit, business start-ups, etc. Income-earning opportunities should enhance the range of income sources, and not take the place of existing sources. Remuneration should not have a negative impact on local labour markets e.g. by causing wage rate inflation, diverting labour from other activities or undermining essential public services.

4. Risk in the work environment: a high-risk working environment should be avoided, by introducing practical procedures for minimising risk or treating injuries e.g. briefings, first aid kits, protective clothing where necessary. This should include risk of HIV exposure, and measures should be taken to minimise this.

5. Risk of insecurity and diversion: handing out cash, e.g. in the distribution of loans or payment of remuneration for work done, introduces security concerns for both programme staff and the recipients. A balance has to be achieved between security risks to both groups, and a range of options should be reviewed. For ease of access and safety of recipients, the point of

distribution should be as close as possible to their homes, i.e. decentralised, though this may jeopardise the safety of programme staff.

If a high level of corruption or diversion of funds is suspected, FFW may be preferable to CFW.

6. Caring responsibilities and livelihoods: participation in income earning opportunities should not undermine child care or other caring responsibilities as this could increase the risk of malnutrition. Programmes may need to consider employing care providers or providing care facilities (see General nutrition support standard 2 on page 140). Responses should not adversely affect access to other opportunities, such as other employment or education, or divert household resources from productive activities already in place.

7. Use of remuneration: fair remuneration means that the income generated contributes a significant proportion of the resources necessary for food security. The household management of cash or food inputs

(including intra-household distribution and end uses) must be understood, as the way cash is given may either defuse or exacerbate existing tensions, and thereby affect food security and the nutrition of household members. Responses that generate income and employment often have multiple food security objectives, including community-level resources that affect food security. For example, repairing roads may improve access to markets and access to health care, while repairing or constructing waterharvesting and irrigation systems may improve productivity.

Food security standard 4: access to markets

People's safe access to market goods and services as producers, consumers and traders is protected and promoted.

Key indicators (to be read in conjunction with the guidance notes)

- _ Food security responses are based on a demonstrated understanding of local markets and economic systems, which informs their design and, where necessary, leads to advocacy for system improvement and policy change (see guidance notes 1-2).
- _ Producers and consumers have economic and physical access to operating markets, which have a regular supply of basic items, including food at affordable prices (see guidance note 3).
- _ Adverse effects of food security responses, including food purchases and distribution, on local markets and market suppliers are minimised where possible (see guidance note 4).
- _ There is increased information and local awareness of market prices and availability, of how markets function and the policies that govern this (see guidance note 5).
- _ Basic food items and other essential commodities are available (see guidance note 6).
- _ The negative consequences of extreme seasonal or other abnormal price fluctuations are minimised (see guidance note 7).

Guidance notes

1. Market analysis: the types of market – local, regional, national – and how they are linked to each other should be reviewed. Consideration should be given to access to functioning markets for all affected groups, including vulnerable groups. Responses that remunerate in food, or provide inputs, such as seeds, agricultural tools, shelter materials, etc., should be preceded by a market analysis in relation to the commodity supplied.

Local purchase of any surpluses will support local producers. Imports are likely to reduce local prices. Where inputs such as seeds may not be available on the open market, despite still being accessible to farmers through their own seed supply networks and systems, consideration should be given to the effect of external inputs on such systems.

We need to show linkage with Assessment and Analysis Standard 1: Food Security. We cannot isolate this study because, while developing response strategy the market analysis is also incorporated. It cannot be separated to fulfil Food Security Standard 1,2,3 and 4.

2. Advocacy: markets operate in the wider national and global economies, which influence local market conditions. For example, governmental policies, including pricing and trade policies, influence access and availability. Although actions at this level are beyond the scope of disaster response, analysis of these factors is necessary as there may be opportunities for a joint agency approach, or advocacy to government and other bodies to improve the situation.

3. Market demand and supply: economic access to markets is influenced by purchasing power, market prices and availability. Affordability depends on the terms of trade between basic needs (including food, essential agricultural inputs such as seeds, tools, health care, etc.) and income sources (cash crops, livestock, wages, etc). Erosion of assets occurs when deterioration in terms of trade forces people to sell assets (often at low prices) in order to buy basic needs (at inflated prices). Access to markets may also be influenced by the political and security environment, and by cultural or religious considerations, which restrict access by certain groups (such as minorities).

4. Impact of interventions: local procurement of food, seeds or other commodities may cause local inflation to the disadvantage of consumers but to the benefit of local producers. Conversely, imported food aid may drive prices down and act as a disincentive to local food production, increasing the numbers who are food-insecure. Those responsible for procurement should monitor and take account of these effects. Food distribution also affects the purchasing power of beneficiaries, as it is a form of income transfer. Some commodities are easier to sell for a good price than others, e.g. oil versus blended food. The 'purchasing power' associated with a given food or food basket will influence whether it is eaten or sold by the beneficiary household. An understanding of household sales and purchases is important in determining the wider impact of food distribution programmes (see also Food aid management standard 3).

5. Transparent market policies: local producers and consumers need to be aware of market pricing controls and other policies that influence supply and demand. These may include state pricing and taxation policies, policies influencing movement of commodities across regional boundaries, or local schemes to facilitate trade with neighbouring areas (although in many conflict situations clear policies on these issues may not necessarily exist).

6. Essential food items: selection of food items for market monitoring depends on local food habits and therefore must be locally determined. The principles of planning nutritionally adequate rations should be applied to deciding what food items are essential in a particular context (see General nutrition support standard 1 on page 137 and Food aid planning standard 1 on page 157).

7. Abnormally extreme seasonal price fluctuations may adversely affect poor agricultural producers, who have to sell their produce when prices are at their lowest (i.e. after harvest). Conversely, consumers who have little disposable income cannot afford to invest in food stocks, depending instead on small but frequent purchases. They are therefore forced to buy even when prices are high (e.g. during drought). Examples of interventions which can minimise these effects include improved transport systems, diversified food production and cash or food transfers at critical times.

Appendix 1

Food Security Checklist for Methodology and Reporting

Food security assessments should:

1. include a clear description of the methodology
 - overall design and objectives
 - background and number of assessors (whether they are working individually or in pairs)
 - selection of key informants (are they representative of all groups?)

- composition of focus or other discussion groups
 - criteria for selecting informants
 - timeframe of the assessment
 - framework for analysis and methodological tools, including PRA tools and techniques;
2. be based on a qualitative approach, including review of secondary sources of quantitative information;
 3. use terms correctly e.g. purposive sampling, key informant, focus group, terms for specific techniques;
 4. involve local institutions as partners in the assessment process, unless inappropriate e.g. in some conflict situations;
 5. employ an appropriate range of PRA tools and techniques (which are applied in sequence to analyse and triangulate findings);
 6. involve a representative range of affected population groups or livelihood groupings;
 7. describe the limitations or practical constraints of the assessment;
 8. describe the coverage of the assessment, including its geographic spread, the range of livelihood groups included and other relevant stratification of the population (e.g. gender, ethnicity, tribal group, etc.);
 9. include interviews with representatives of relevant government ministries and public services, traditional leaders, representatives of key civil society organisations (religious groups, local NGOs, advocacy or pressure groups, farmers' or pastoralists' associations, women's groups) and representatives of each of the livelihood groups under consideration.

The assessment report findings should cover:

1. the recent history of food security and relevant policies prior to the current situation;
2. a description of the different livelihood groups and their food security situation prior to the disaster;
3. food security pre-disaster for different livelihood groups;
4. the impact of the disaster on the food system and food security for different livelihood groups;
5. identification of particularly vulnerable livelihood groups or those vulnerable to food insecurity in the present situation;
6. suggested interventions, including means of implementation, advocacy and any additional assessments required;
7. the precise nature, purpose and duration of any food aid response, if a response is considered appropriate. Food aid responses should be justified on the basis of the above data and analysis.

Appendix 2

Food Security Assessment Checklist

Food security assessments often broadly categorise the affected population into livelihood groupings, according to their sources of, and strategies for obtaining, income or food. This may also include a breakdown of the

population according to wealth groups or strata. It is important to compare the prevailing situation with the history of food security pre-disaster.

So-called 'average years' may be considered as a baseline. The specific roles and vulnerabilities of women and men, and the implications for household food security should be considered. Consideration of intrahousehold food security differences may also be important.

This checklist covers the broad areas that are usually considered in a food security assessment. Additional information must also be collected on the wider context of the disaster (e.g. its political context, population numbers and movements, etc.) and possibly in relation to other relevant sectors (nutrition, health, water and shelter). The checklist must be adapted to suit the local context and the objectives of the assessment. More detailed checklists are available in, for example, the Field Operations Guide of USAID (1998).

Food security of livelihood groups

1. Are there groups in the community who share the same livelihood strategies? How can these be categorised according to their main sources of food or income?

Food security pre-disaster (baseline)

2. How did the different livelihood groups acquire **food** or income before the disaster? For an average year in the recent past, what were their sources of food and income?

We need to include type of food or daily food basket composition.

3. How did these different sources of food and income vary between seasons in a normal year? (Constructing a seasonal calendar may be useful.)

4. Looking back over the past 5 or 10 years, how has food security varied from year to year? (Constructing a timeline or history of good and bad years may be useful.)

5. What kind of assets, savings or other reserves are owned by the different livelihood groups (e.g. food stocks, cash savings, livestock holdings, investments, credit, unclaimed debt, etc.)?

6. Over a period of a week or a month, what do household expenditures include, and what proportion is spent on each item?

7. Who is responsible for management of cash in the household, and on what is cash spent?

8. How accessible is the nearest market for obtaining basic goods? (Consider distance, security, ease of mobility, availability of market information, etc.)

9. What is the availability and price of essential goods, including food? 10. Prior to the disaster, what were the average terms of trade between essential sources of income and food, e.g. wages to food, livestock to food, etc.?

Food security during disaster

11. How has the disaster affected the different sources of food and income for each of the livelihood groups identified?

12. How has it affected the usual seasonal patterns of food security for the different groups?

13. How has it affected access to markets, market availability and prices of essential goods?

14. For different livelihood groups, what are the different coping strategies and what proportion of people are engaged in them?

15. How has this changed as compared with the pre-disaster situation?

16. Which group or population is most affected?

17. What are the short- and medium-term effects of coping strategies on people's financial and other assets?

18. For all livelihood groups, and all vulnerable groups, what are the effects of coping strategies on their health, general well-being and dignity? Are there risks associated with coping strategies?

Appendix 3

Food Security Responses

The range of interventions possible to support, protect and promote food security in emergencies is wide. The list below is not exhaustive.

Each intervention must be designed to suit the local context and strategy for supporting food security, and therefore is unique in its objectives and design. It is important to consider a range of responses and programming options based on analysis and consideration of expressed needs. 'Off-the-shelf' interventions that do not take account of local priorities rarely work. The responses are categorised into three groups, which relate to the Food Security standards 2-4:

- _ primary production
- _ income and employment
- _ access to market goods and services.

General food distribution provides free food assistance directly to households and thus is of great importance in ensuring food security in the short term.

Primary production

_ **Distribution of seeds, tools and fertiliser:** provided to encourage agricultural production, as starter packs to returnees, or to diversify crops. Often combined with agricultural extension services and possibly technical training.

– **Seed vouchers and fairs:** based on the provision of seed vouchers to potential buyers. Organising a seed fair to bring together potential sellers stimulates local seed procurement systems while allowing buyers access to a wide range of seeds.

– **Local agricultural extension services**

– **Training and education in relevant skills**

– **Livestock interventions:** can include animal health measures; emergency destocking; restocking of livestock; distribution of livestock fodder and nutritional supplementation; livestock refuges; and provision of alternative water sources.

– **Distribution of fish nets and gear, or hunting implements**

– **Promotion of food processing**

Income and employment

– **Cash-for-work (CFW)** provides food-insecure households with opportunities for paid work.

– **Food-for-work (FFW)** provides food-insecure households with opportunities for paid work that at the same time produce outputs of benefit to themselves and the community.

– **Food-for-recovery (FFR):** a less structured form of food-for-work. Activities can contribute to initial recovery and should not require outside technical supervision.

– **Income generating schemes** allow people to diversify their sources of income in small-scale, self-employment business schemes. These include support of people in the management, supervision and implementation of their businesses.

Access to market goods and services

– **Market and infrastructure support:** includes **transportation** to allow producers to take advantage of distant markets.

In practicality how do we provide transportation...This is quite confusing and, not clear to me if I have to use the guideline.

– **Destocking:** provides herders with a good price for their livestock in times of drought, when there is pressure on water supplies and grazing and market prices of livestock are falling.

– **Fair price shops:** sale of basic items at controlled or subsidised prices, or in exchange for vouchers or goods in kind.

– **Food or cash vouchers:** for exchange in shops for food and other goods that can also stimulate local market and food chain.

Contribution by Raj Ganguly from FAO, India

Dear members,

1) As suitable disaster mitigation strategy community managed, 'Grain Banks' have been found as a very effective tool and could be included as a sustainable food security intervention in Sphere hand book. Grain Banks help address local food insecurity, particularly the problem of transient hunger during lean periods, and against starvation during natural calamity like 'drought'. The grain bank members borrow grains and return it with interest. More often, the community managed grain banks are comparatively faster to respond to local food shortage, than the centralized food security programs. (please see details of the Community discussion at <http://www.solutionexchange-un.net.in/food/cr/cr-se-food-04050901.pdf>)

2) Culture and religion are very important and sensitive social dimensions and these may require adequate elaborations in assessment indicators for food security.

3) Food safety is an important criteria to be included under Food security standard 1:general food security (ref. guidance note 8)

4) Sustainability dimension of interventions and strategies could be more explicit – particularly under Food Security standard 1 – Ref. Guidance note 2 (Support, protection and promotion of food security) and Food Security standard 2: primary production. This is important for regions facing repeated natural disasters viz., Bihar floods, Drought in Orissa.

5) Food Security standard 3: Income and employment - Monitoring child labour, special rates /kind of work for pregnant and lactating women and system for partial payment in food (ref. guidance note 3) are some suggestions.

6) Food Security standard 4: access to markets – This should also cover suitable market intervention mechanism to control smooth functioning of market (restricting hoarding & price control), preferably in coordination with local government.

7) Refer Appendix 3 – Food Security Responses / Primary production - Agroforestry /Horticulture interventions viz., saplings of early bearing/fast growing trees like Moringa, Papaya etc., and Seeds of fodder crops, depending upon local suitability can be useful for areas experiencing frequent natural disasters like drought. Also under climate change, scenarios such integrated farming system approaches can prove crucial as a sustainable disaster risk management intervention.

Overall comment – the formatting of the handbook and presentation is bit complex and efforts can be initiated to make it Simple, Easy to read and Use tool.

Hope this helps in revising this important document.

Raj Ganguly
Agriculture Specialist
FAO India, New Delhi

Contribution by Rujuta Desai from Sahaj Shishu Milap, India

Dear members

I very much agree with the increasing concern of Food Security during disasters, not just at household but also an overall issue. This concern is no more limited to the poor families, but is expanding also to the socio-economically better off section of the society.

In an agricultural country like India, the issues to be considered would be farmers becoming jobless, availability nutrition dense food products at reliable prices and availability of variety of foods, check on increasing trend of genetically altered food products, and high sale of adulterated food products during such times further create adverse health and nutritional implications. It is a high time to address them all at a point, to ensure right of safe, adequate and healthy food.

Traditional crops and cooking practices as per the community's geographical location and culture can be an added advantage rather than introducing new varieties and foods.

Best regards

Rujuta Desai

Contribution by DSk Rao from India

Dear All

There is a strong need to do Micro Planning at Community Level to understand Food production and consumption patterns and model of the community to optimize its resources during emergencies.

ERP or Enterprise Resource Planning is widely deployed in large organizations for integrating all business functions and business processes for accurate and timely information, thereby decreasing input costs and increasing productivity and incomes.

However, when it comes to a community, sadly there are no integrated information systems or ERPs for monitoring its overall development. The document on Community ERP available at <http://www.solutionexchange-un.net.in/food/cr/res29050901.doc> is attached for benefit of members for further details

Best regards

DSK Rao

Contribution by Rebecca Kik from FAO, Italy

Dear all,

My name is Rebecca Kik and I am working as a legal consultant at the Right to Food Unit at FAO headquarters in Rome, where we are developing an assessment checklist on the right to food at national level as well as an assessment of the right to food in district level as well as an assessment of the right to food in emergency situation.

The right to adequate food is defined as the “right to have regular, permanent and unrestricted access, either directly or by means of financial purchases, to quantitatively and qualitatively adequate and sufficient food corresponding to the cultural traditions of the people to which the consumer belongs, and which ensures a physical and mental, individual and collective, fulfilling and dignified life free of fear” (Jean Ziegler, Former Special Rapporteur on the right to food, in UN doc. A/HRC/7/5).

As a fundamental human right, the governments have not only to ensure the progressive realisation of the right to food, but they have also to guarantee its implementation in emergency situations caused by natural disasters (droughts, floods, hurricanes, earthquakes etc.) and man-made disasters (international and internal armed conflicts). As a fundamental right to be ensured even in emergency situations, the governments cannot but comply with their obligations to respect, protect and fulfil the right to food in such a context.

The “Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security”, adopted by the FAO Council in November 2004, recommend in Guideline 15.1, that “emergency assistance should be provided in a manner that takes into account food safety, the importance of not disrupting local food production and the nutritional and dietary needs and cultures of the recipient populations. Further it recommends that food aid should be provided with a clear exit strategy and avoids the creation of dependency. Moreover, Guideline 15.5. states that the assessment of needs and the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the provisions for food aid should be made in a participatory manner and, whenever possible, in close collaboration with recipient governments at the national and local level.

The need to complement the traditional approaches to hunger reduction with the right to food was clearly in the discussions held at the Madrid High Level Meeting on Food Security in January 2009, and the closing speech by the UNSG, Ban Ki-Moon. In his closing speech, he called for the Comprehensive Framework for Action to add the right to food as a third track to the existing twin-track approach. The states and the international community should continue to meet urgent hunger and humanitarian needs by providing food and nutrition assistance and safety nets, while

focusing on improving food production and smallholder agriculture, and include the right to food as a basis for analysis, action and accountability.

For this reason I would like to suggest, that the **right to food aspect should be at least included under the information/findings that need to be considered and reflected in the indicators/guidance notes or annexes** (Question No. 3). The right to food underpins the four dimensions of food security (availability, access, stability of supply and utilisation) with the human rights perspectives and includes the human rights principles like participation, accountability, non-discrimination, transparency, human dignity, empowerment and the rule of law into the decision-making process and helps to fight hunger and malnutrition in the world.

Furthermore, the right to food offers a coherent framework to address critical governance dimensions in the fight against hunger and malnutrition and it introduces additional instruments that ensure access to income earning opportunities and social protection. With reference to all the above mentioned advantages and reasons I would strongly recommend the incorporation of the right to food as a basic and underpinning tool/ dimension of the food security component of the sphere handbook.

Thank you very much.

Rebecca Kik

Contribution by James Sawyer from WSPA, UK

Dear All

I represent the [World Society for the Protection of Animals \(WSPA\)](#), who lead the NGO field in the provision of disaster response and risk reduction with regards to animals. This work has crucial importance to food security as so many people in disasters rely on animals for their economic means. We have specialist veterinary teams posted around the world in all key locations and have responded to all major disasters in the last fifty years.

Animals represent a range of problems to humanitarians in a range of settings from dealing with individuals to mass aggregations of people and the animals they bring with them. The loss of animals can have huge micro and macro-economic effects. Using just one example – in Myanmar in 2008, 50% of the working animals of the Ayerwaddy delta were killed in the cyclone which lead to huge amounts of farmland going uncultivated and subsequent slower recovery of the area from the event. New animals brought into the area came with more virulent diseases further exacerbating the problem.

I'm sure you will be aware of the LEGS (Livestock Emergency Guideline Standards) book that has recently been released which may offer some support to my words but the problem of animals in the humanitarian sphere extends to companion animals as well.

I do believe it is a significant gap in the chapter in the SPHERE handbook that the role animals have to play in humanitarian crisis and the impact they can have on food security is heavily underestimated.

WSPA published the case study "[Protecting livelihoods and food security: animal welfare in disasters](#)" which proves the point.

Please feel free to contact me if you require further information or input.

Sincerely
James Sawyer

Contribution by Phil McKinney from FAO, Italy

I realize that this late in the discussion but it has just come to my attention.

I am nutritionist working for FAO in the Nutrition Assessments Group (AGNA) within the Division of Nutrition and Consumer Protection (AGN).

It is interesting to see such a wide range of tools being discussed within Sphere to measure food security. I would suggest that when providing such an array of tools that a brief explanation as to the purpose of each tool, what they are designed to measure and their contribution to the understanding of food security is given. This is important in their correct incorporation into assessments as well as understanding the outputs of their analysis. That is, why choose a specific tool and what is the interpretation of the measurement that it makes.

The large differences in the interpretation of households diet diversity score (HDDS), Food Consumption Score (FCS), Coping Strategy Index (CSI) and Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS, noting that this is being revised to a briefer and less context specific Household Hunger Scale (HHS)). One should not forget the limitations and parameters under which these indicators can be interpreted usefully.

I would also like to point towards the use of individual diet diversity score (IDDS) for assessing individuals consumption patterns (useful in certain types of surveys, e.g. micronutrient surveys) and how this can contribute to a more direct relationship between food consumption and nutritional status. This tool, along with the HDDS, HFIAS and specific country experiences can be found at http://www.foodsec.org/tools_nut.htm

Finally, as Roberts and Helderma point out in a paper for HNTS (Priority Indicators in Complex Emergencies - www.who.int/entity/hac/techguidance/hnts/hnts_priority_indicators.pdf), it is important to ensure that the indicators used to measure food insecurity have good scientific evidence to support them and their use.

Thanks and Regards

Phil McKinney (and on behalf of Marie Claude Dop and Terri Ballard)

Concluding Remark by Devrig Velly from Action Against Hunger, USA

Dear all,

First of all I would like to express my gratitude to the contributors. You have raised very interesting points and your suggestions will be taken into account. If I can summarize the ideas:

Cash Transfer Programming, Access to food, Disaster Risk Reduction and Better coordinated Responses could be considered as new minimum standards. At least they should be strengthened in the next revision.

As per the new indicators to added/adjusted, the most common suggestions to be noted are concerning the food consumption, the measurements of Household food insecurity, the local cultures and practices.

Related to the above, specific tools to be added should be the HDDS (Household Diet Diversity Score) & FCS (Food Consumption Score), the CSI (Coping Strategies Index), the Fanta-2 project & the Household Hunger Scale related to the HFIAS (Household Food Insecurity Access Scale).

The handbook structure should be revised as it is complex to read. There are missing information or findings concerning the use of safety nets in emergencies, the right to food, the community planning, the sustainability of interventions, the farming systems and responses regarding livestock in communities affected (although links should be clearly developed with the recently released LEGS – Livestock Emergency Guidelines Standards -). Overall it was felt that the 3

appendixes concerning the Food security component should be strengthened and better linked with the 2 others components of chapter 3 (nutrition & Food aid).

As mentioned earlier the revision process is an extensive process of consultation. Therefore we would like to invite the existing and active Food Security clusters around the world to conduct their own consultation with the field practitioners (materials are available on the website www.sphereproject.org please don't hesitate to ask if needed).

We will probably come back to you with a second and last round of consultation starting mid-October where we might look into the links between components to prepare a response and specific response such as Cash Transfer Programming or Disaster Risk Reduction.

In the meantime please don't hesitate to contact me at the following email address: dv@aaah-usa.org

Thanks again to the FSN forum organizers for their continuous support, all the contributions and looking forward for more!

Best regards

Devrig

-Focal Point Food Security Sphere Handbook 2010 revision-

Devrig Velly

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