ACF - INTERNATIONAL NETWORK

INTRODUCTION TO FOOD SECURITY INTERVENTION PRINCIPLES

ACTION CONTRE LA FAIM
ACF INTERNATIONAL NETWORK

INTRODUCTION TO FOOD SECURITY INTERVENTION PRINCIPLES

OUR OBSESSION: THE FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER

Since 1979, ACF-IN* has directed its efforts towards serving the deprived, excluded and most vulnerable people of the planet, who mostly live in the least developed countries.
It assists first and foremost those who are close to death, whose bodies are drawing on their last reserves in order to survive.
Among populations ravaged by conflicts, disease, social crises, natural and ecological disasters, the victims of hunger never stop increasing in number despite the efforts of the international community.

The Right to Food has been recognised since the adoption of the Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.
At The World Food Summit in 1996, the heads of 185 countries along with the European Community, reaffirmed, in The Rome Declaration on World Food Security, "We, the Heads of State and Government... reaffirm the right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food, consistent with the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger." They also stated their wish to "reduce hunger and poverty by half by 2015" as part of the development goals set for the new millennium.**

ACF-IN supports this optimistic vision, which we would like to make a reality, with multidisciplinary teams who are present in the most hunger-affected areas. Our struggle translates into programmes for food and economic support, water supply, sanitation, health and nutrition education, hygiene promotion and psychosocial support, which have a short-term focus while also helping the populations move towards self-sufficiency.

Food security and livelihood programmes are an important part of our varied response to this plague and this booklet covers some of our action in this area:

- Understand the **concepts of food security**
- Better understand the project cycle and the **analysis of food security**
- Reinforce prevention by establishing **surveillance systems**.
- Have coherent responses to emergencies with **food aid and cash-based programming**
- Develop the capacities of the populations in the medium term by providing the opportunity to engage in **income-generating activities** and in the longer term to develop their means of agri-**cultural production and self-sufficiency.**

These booklets show certain aspects of our expertise in food security. Other booklets will be added to the series on the basis of our work and analysis in the field. These are borne of trial and error, and the many initiatives undertaken with our partners in the Southern hemisphere – whom we would like to thank here for their patience, tenacity and courage – and which are drawn on by our teams in more than 40 countries, organised in the Tecnical and Research departments of ACF-IN.

We believe that by sharing experiences we will help develop practices and improve the quality of programmes in the field.

* Action contre la Faim International Network: humanitarian network comprising the five head offices of ACF
** http://www.fao.org/monitoringprogress/summit_en.html

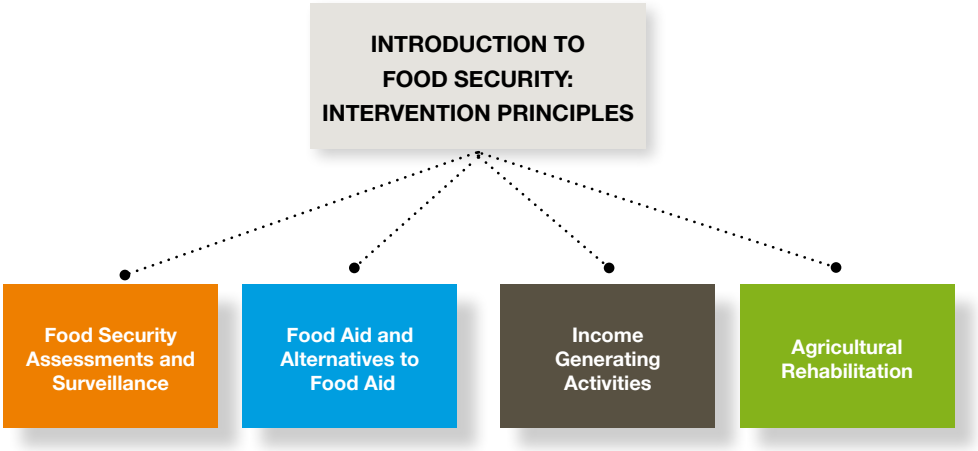
OBJECTIVE OF THE BOOK

Constitute a reference book specifying the principles of intervention for all food security activities, from initial assessment to programme implementation.

CONTENTS

PREAMBLE

This book is part of a series of food security books developed by Action contre la Faim (ACF-IN[1]) and is based upon a consolidation of experiences and investigations led over the past ten years in the field. This series looks at and develops specific aspects of the different food security programmes, especially the technical tools that can be used within the scope of precise projects. Each of these books can be read alone or they can be complemented and reinforced with the other ACF-IN Food Security books included in the series constituting a 'food security kit', which can be presented as follows:



The books address a variety of audiences including the international humanitarian community, technical and operation field workers and the public who wishes to learn more about food security at the international level. Each book contains a detailed index with examples of the different tools that can be used for the implementation of the programmes, a glossary of technical terminology and commonly asked questions that can give the reader a quick response to key points highlighted throughout the document. This series could eventually be completed with other types of food security programmes depending on the development and research led in the field (i.e., food security in the urban context, in the pastoral environment or other topics such as community participation or cash-based interventions). All of these books are subject at all times to additions and or improvements following the development of the food security department at Action contre la Faim and the continued internal and external evaluations of the different food security activities.

1 / ACF-IN is the international network comprised of ACF Canada, ACF France, ACF Spain, ACF UK and ACF USA. The international network shares a common charter and global objectives.

INTRODUCTION

This book is the first of a series of food security books published by ACF-IN and should serve as an introduction to the **Intervention Principles** and Implementation of food security programmes. As this is a general introduction to food security, it will provide the reader with a basic understanding of the logic that determines a food security intervention at ACF-IN and the theory upon which the different actions are based.

Chapter 1 of this book covers a brief introduction to food security and reviews a few key principles essential to understanding the basic concepts and approaches used in food security programmes. These concepts are further developed in chapter 2, addressing the general approach for food security assessments, which constitute the starting point from which needs and the modes of intervention are identified.

Chapter 3 focuses on key concepts related to food security surveillance. Recognising that people live in a dynamic and evolving system, it is necessary to establish a system of regular follow-up of food security beyond basic data collection, (the methodological tools that can be used for these two objectives are addressed in the 'Food Security Assessments and Surveillance' book).

Chapter 4 addresses the general principles for implementation, follow-up (monitoring) and impact evaluation of the programmes, (the specific tools and details of each type of food security programme can be found in the other books that make up this series).

Lastly, chapter 5 responds to the most frequently asked questions with brief responses regarding the information that has been developed more thoroughly throughout the book.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is not possible to name each person who contributed to the development of this book; however, the methodology and examples illustrated here are a compilation of experiences from hundreds of ACF-IN expatriates and national staff over the last ten years. Special thanks should be given to all those who have worked in the food security departments of ACF-IN headquarters and who all contributed in some way to develop the department and lay the foundation of this Food Security Series.

This book was updated by Lisa Ernoul in coordination with a peer review team consisting of Ludovic Bourbé, Caroline Broudic, Hélène Deret, Neil Fisher, Carole Lambert, Kate Ogden, Morwenna Sullivan, Marta Valdes, Sabrina Valy et Devrig Velly.

DEFINITIONS AND KEY CONCEPTS

• FROM HUNGER TO MALNUTRITION •

Hunger: a situation in which someone cannot obtain an adequate amount of food, even if the shortage is not prolonged enough to cause health problems (Presidents Task Force, 1984).

Famine: absolute exhaustion or inaccessibility of food in a given zone, for entire populations, possibly causing death in the short term.

Malnutrition: abnormal physiological condition due to an unbalanced diet (deficiency or excess) in quantity and/or quality (PRUDHON C. 1999).

• *Chronic Malnutrition (Stunting)*

Chronic malnutrition causes growth retardation, meaning a below-average height for age score. It is due to chronic or temporary nutritional deficiencies (energy or micronutrients), and/or it can also be the effect of an exposure to repeated infections or even to generally poor living conditions, which hinders (or has hindered) the growth of a child.

• *Acute Malnutrition (Wasting)*

Acute malnutrition results in a below-average weight for height score and/or the presence of bilateral oedema and it reflects the current nutritional situation of a child. It is due to nutritional deficiencies (poor intake or absorption). ACF-IN programmes target specifically, but not exclusively, this type of malnutrition.

A distinction is made between **moderate** acute malnutrition and **severe** acute malnutrition. Severe malnutrition is linked to a very high risk of mortality if it is not treated immediately. It can generally be present in two forms:

- Marasmus, in which the principle symptom is extreme thinness,
- Kwashiorkor, in which the principle sign is the presence of bilateral oedema

Moderate malnutrition is not immediately life threatening but should be treated in order to prevent severe malnutrition from developing.

• *Micronutrient Deficiencies (vitamins and minerals)*

The nature of nutritional deficiencies can be ranked according to the consequences that they cause, and the manner in which they are diagnosed. The diagnosis is based on the following determinants:

- The deficiency has no direct action on anthropometric measurements
(Type I[2] micronutrients)
- The deficiency engenders a loss of weight or growth retardation
(Type II[3] micronutrients)

• FOOD SECURITY: AVAILABILITY, ACCESS, USE... FROM MACRO TO MICRO •

Macro : refers to the dimension and the diverse characteristics on the scale of a particular zone (country, region).

2 / Type I Micronutrients : Selenium, Iodine, Iron, Copper, Calcium, Manganese, Thiamine (vitamin B1), Riboflavin (vitamin B2), Ascorbic acid (vitamin C), Tocopherol (vitamin E), Calciferol (vitamin D), Folic acid, Retinol (vitamin A), Vitamin B12, Pyridoxine (vitamin B6).

3 / Type II Micronutrients : Nitrogen, Sulphur, Essential amino acids, Sodium, Potassium, Magnesium, Zinc, Phosphorus, and Water.

Micro : refers to the diverse characteristics on a local scale, of the household or even the individual level.

Food security: food security is ensured when all people, at all times, have access economically, socially, and physically to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that satisfies their nutritional needs and their dietary preferences, allowing them to lead active and healthy lives. Food security of the households corresponds to the application of this concept on the family level, with the centre of attention focusing on the individuals making up the household (FAO, 1996).

• A person is in a situation of food security, during the hunger gap if the food resources are sufficient to ensure that he or she is capable of leading an active and healthy life. The same notion is applied to an entire population: urban/rural, rich/poor, young/old, and male/female.

A household is food secure when its livelihood and its environment are assured. The environment should consist of adequate stock and flow of food and income to satisfy basic needs. Food security also depends on the range of agricultural and non-agricultural activities that, together, furnish a variety of sources of food and/or income.

This definition contains three distinct but interlinking concepts that are each essential to attain a state of food security: **availability, access, and use**

Availability: availability refers to the total food stock in the country / region (macro level) or within the population or household (micro level); 'a measure of food that is, and will be, physically available in the relevant vicinity of a population during a given period' (HODDINOTT & Al., 2002).

• Availability may be limited by climatic factors (droughts/floods), political or military insecurity, a blockade of the zone, embargos, low production levels, inadequate post-harvest storage, transport difficulties related to poor road infrastructure and so on. Availability is essential to allow access to foodstuffs but it is not sufficient in itself.

Access: access refers to the capacity of a household to procure sufficient food to satisfy the nutritional needs of all its members; it is 'a measure of the population's ability to acquire available food during a given period' (HODDINOTT & Al., 2002).

• Factors influencing access to food include economic factors (price of foodstuffs, incomes, employment opportunities), social and political factors (ethnic, religious or social discrimination ; redistribution of resources within the population or the household, or access to the exchange network; transport difficulties or physical access to markets ; mutual assistance, support from family and neighbours; government or humanitarian aid ; credit), and factors related to agricultural production (access to land, seed), distance to market places, access to fishing or trade, etc.

Use: refers to the way in which food is used on a micro level (household—individual): the distribution of food within the household, its preparation and then absorption at the individual level; it is 'a measure of whether a population will be able to derive sufficient nutrition during a given period' (HODDINOTT & Al., 2002).

• The determining factors here are of a physiological (adequate assimilation of nutrients), hygienic (quality of water and general sanitary conditions), and educational order (conditions of conservation and processing of food, basic knowledge of nutrition).

Livelihood Economy Zones[4] (LEZ): an area presenting similar general internal characteristics: within a given zone, the same opportunities and constraints exist for the entire population.

4 / The livelihood economy zone is a concept developed by Save the Children and now commonly used amongst many humanitarian organisations..

• FROM THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COPING STRATEGIES TO FOOD INSECURITY •

Livelihood: livelihood is the combination of all activities (agricultural and non-agricultural) making up the resources (economic and food) which allow the household to continue to exist (to meet its basic needs) and to develop.

Capacities: capacities refer to the advantages, resources, or means upon which the population can rely in order to live normally, to effectively rise above problems and crises, and to pursue objectives and dreams. Each person possesses a variety of different physical, social, mental, or spiritual capacities, altogether forming the individual and society. Capacities are closely linked to the coping and adaptive mechanisms to be developed.

Coping strategies: this refers to the practices that households fall back upon in order to minimise the risks threatening their survival in the short, medium or long term. These strategies help households to maintain their diet, preserve their capital and the necessary resources to ensure their livelihood and that of future generations.

We can distinguish two types of mechanisms used by populations or households faced with crises: **coping mechanisms and adaptive mechanisms.**

Coping mechanisms: responses to reduce or minimise effects of a stressful event or an unfavourable situation where food access is abnormally disrupted, for instance by drought, flood, earthquake or military activity.

Adaptive mechanisms: measures used to manage and minimise the risk from chronic food insecurity and recurring situations. Adaptation is a process of adjustment to a longer-term solution, for instance nomads move to areas of better rainfall and pasture growth.

Vulnerability: in general terms, the level of vulnerability of a household and/or individual is determined by the risk of failure of the coping strategies. It is the inadequacy of their adaptive mechanisms, coping mechanisms or accumulated capital or food stocks to meet their daily needs.
More specifically, **food vulnerability** refers to the entire range of factors that place people **in danger of food insecurity**. The degree of vulnerability for an individual, a household, or a group of people is determined by its exposure to risk factors and by its aptitude to confront crisis situations and to survive them (FAO, 1996).

For a given household, a population, or a region, this means juxtaposing:

- Exposure to different **crises** or **events** placing its food security at risk
- And potential **capacities** / **mechanisms** which could be applied to face that risk, anticipate it, resist it, and to re-establish a normal level of food security.

The crises/events to which populations are exposed are the circumstances and conditions over which they have no direct control and which present a risk to their normal functioning. It could be climatic or environmental disasters (earthquakes, floods, droughts), poverty (leading to at-risk living conditions : precarious housing, poor diet, unsanitary conditions, limited access to education) or a social or political conflict (war, moral prejudice, racism, ethnic tension, dictatorship). Like capacities, vulnerabilities can be distinguished according to their physical, social, mental, or spiritual characteristics.

Food insecurity often also involves the degradation of the social and/or natural environment. Frequently, vulnerable households can no longer manage a balance between dietary needs over the short term (survival) and the management of their means of existence (livelihood) over the long term.
Chronic and transitory insecurity are closely linked. A succession of situations causing temporary but severe food insecurity increases the vulnerability of the household and leads to chronic food insecurity: the populations have exhausted their “capital” assets in order to support their food consumption.

• There is **food insecurity** when people are under-fed because of the physical lack of availability of provisions, or their lack of economic or social access to provisions, and/or an inadequate use of the foods. People affected by food insecurity are:

1. Individuals whose food consumption does not meet the minimum energy intake.[5]
2. Individuals who have the physical symptoms of nutritional deficiencies resulting from an unbalanced or inadequate diet, or the physiological inability to effectively use the food consumed because of an infection or illness.

The table below helps to determine the stages in the process of moving from food insecurity to famine. Each stage will not necessarily show all characteristics, but the table helps to illustrate which stage a situation has reached and in what direction the situation is likely to develop.

Table 1: Characteristics of Food Insecurity, Food Crisis and Famine

	FOOD INSECURITY	FOOD CRISIS	FAMINE
Mortality rate	Normal	Increased or high	Extremely high
Mouvements de population	Temporary migration	Population displacement +/-	Distress migration
Global malnutrition rate	Could be increased	Increased	Extremely high
Mortality related to moderate malnutrition	Low	Elevated	High
Severe malnutrition rate	Low	Moderate or high	High
Severe malnutrition in adults	Low	Low/moderate	High
Livelihood changes	Temporary	Irreversible	Complete destitution
Selling of capital assets	None or very limited	Important	Exhausted or very limited
Activity diversification	Normal or slightly increased	Increased +++	Exhausted or limited
Reduction of expenditures	Reduced	Reduced +++	Impossible to reduce
Food availability	Normal or slightly decreased	Reduced	Rare or none
Food accessibility	Slightly reduced	Reduced	Severely reduce or none
Dependence on food aid	Low	High or moderate	Complete
Reduction in caring practices	Low	Moderate or high	High

It is important to remember that the distinction between the different food security levels should be made very carefully through a thorough food security assessment. The indicators given above are general and should be applied according to each given context. The simple fact that one indicator is present in the famine column does not necessary indicate a famine, it is rather the combination of indicators that show the severity of the situation.

5 / ACF-IN, like many humanitarian actors, uses the World Health Organisation standards (WHO) for calculating the minimum calorie intake for an adult (2100 calories per day made up of 10-15% proteins, 20-30% fats and 55-70% carbohydrates).

Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION TO FOOD SECURITY

© D. Sauveur/Vu – Afghanistan

Summary

• Food security programmes aim to reduce or prevent the negative impacts of a crisis on the population by reinforcing the coping mechanisms of the most vulnerable.

• Food security in ACF-IN is based on an integrated framework addressing the causes of malnutrition and mortality.

• All food security programmes begin with an initial phase of analysis in order to better understand the vulnerability, coping strategies, and needs of the population.

• Intervention contexts can vary greatly from zone to zone leading to a diversity of possible responses.

• All food security programmes use the project cycle management approach.

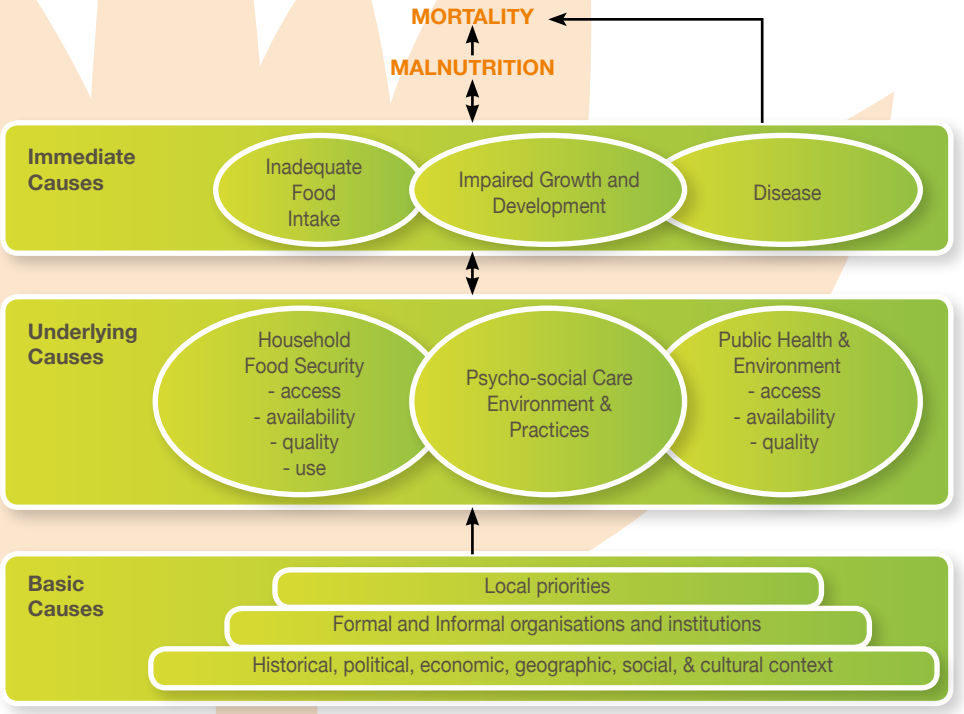
I. FOOD SECURITY AT ACTION CONTRE LA FAIM

Food security is included in the overall goal of ACF-IN, which is to save lives, relieve human suffering, and preserve and restore food security, by acting at different levels, while helping maintain the dignity of the people and protecting them : 'Help to save lives and also to live tomorrow.'

I.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF MALNUTRITION

The technical strategy considers the various direct, underlying, or basic causes, which determine the nutritional status of the individuals (ACF-IN, 2004). This integrated approach is represented by the conceptual framework of malnutrition (figure 1)[6]. This diagram clearly shows the interaction of factors that should, at any moment, guide our analytical process.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Malnutrition



6 / Adapted from Underlying Causes of Malnutrition and Mortality, UNICEF 1997.

The technical department is divided into different services to best address the different needs of the population and to fight against hunger from different angles. The services (food security, nutrition, health, psycho-social, water, sanitation and hygiene promotion [WASH]) work together using different disciplines to initiate actions that can best respond to the specific needs within each context. Each of the services works closely with the operations department to develop key advocacy points that aim to influence political and policy decisions that affect the humanitarian situation of people around the world.

Food security in ACF-IN was originally based on the World Bank's definition in 1986: 'To ensure access and availability of enough food of appropriate quality to all persons at all times to sustain an active and healthy life'. The key words are clearly: accessibility, availability, and enough good quality food. Today the utilisation of food is also taken into consideration when considering food security programmes and the interaction with the nutrition service.

In 2001 food aid was incorporated as an integral part of the food security service to ensure that food aid was seen as one of many responses to food insecurity. The fusion of food aid and food security also encourages immediate food security activities to limit the adverse impact and duration of food aid activities.

As the food security service has matured, a **livelihood approach** has been adopted with the aim of the food security service being defined as **'providing the means to fight hunger and preserve and reinforce livelihoods'.**

Food security programmes are part of an overall strategy comprising:

- Food security analysis
- Immediate food aid or cash-based alternatives, responding to a lack of access or availability of food items (and responding to immediate causes of malnutrition)
- Support to the household economy, which helps to strengthen the mechanisms of access to food supplies (production, trading). This responds to the underlying causes of malnutrition.

The approach developed by the ACF-IN food security service is based on the analysis of livelihood and mechanisms put into place by populations to live and survive, in order to identify and target the most vulnerable groups within the population. This analysis takes into consideration the cultural, economical, and political context that directly or indirectly affects the household. Furthermore, the approach considers the dynamics of the ever-evolving environment, and is not limited to a given moment. The programmes should take into consideration the Sphere standards[7] for international humanitarian programmes, but these standards should not overlook the diversity of cultural, political and security contexts where we operate thus ensuring adequate programme design.

II. INTERVENTION CONTEXTS

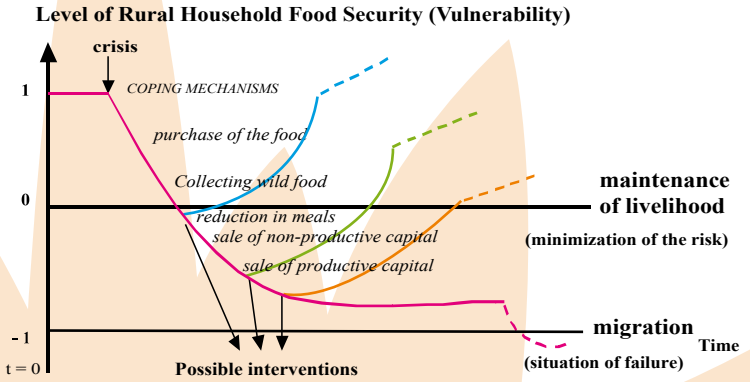
Given the large variety of factors that affect the food security of the population, ACF-IN intervenes in various different contexts:

- Open crisis: of natural or human origin, threatening food security or provoking a situation of famine. Emergency contexts, where survival often depends on humanitarian assistance.
- Post-crisis: following an open crisis, leading toward a re-establishment of the situation.

7 / It should be noted that ACF-IN has concerns that these standards could be used as contractual conditions with donors, authorities or other agencies, thus limiting the flexibility of programme design and hindering a proper adaptation of the programs to the cultural, political and environmental contexts.

• Destabilisation of the political social fabric related to external or internal causes, and which place certain groups of the population in extreme vulnerability.
• Discrimination: when a particular group of the population is vulnerable because of a problem of discrimination that could be linked to religion, ethnicity, etc.

Figure 2: Coping mechanisms in a rural context



Various situations could be juxtaposed. Analysis of a typical deteriorating situation in a rural environment and food security responses to it is illustrated in figure 2. Whilst 'typical' this curve does not represent a 'standard' situation and coping strategies vary from context to context and crisis to crisis:

In this example a crisis has invoked a deterioration of household food security. The household puts various mechanisms into place in order to try to minimise this deterioration.
People living in an urban context will adopt coping strategies that reflect their livelihood means and which thus differ from those in a rural environment (seen in figure 2). There is more focus on economic activities and the population could put in place strategies such as daily purchase of ready-prepared food, casual labour and small-scale and alternative income generating activities (petty trading). Whilst not desirable sale on the black market, theft and prostitution are coping strategies commonly encountered in urban contexts. Migration is more limited as often, when rural populations migrate, it is to urban areas adding further pressure on resources for urban populations. Economic migration for younger adults is however, common in many contexts.

The objective of food security programmes whether in urban or rural contexts is to reinforce 'positive' coping strategies in order to prevent the deterioration of individuals' nutritional status. Remember that this nutritional status does not depend exclusively on food security; the multiple causes of malnutrition should always be considered (figure 1).[8]

When acute malnutrition is detected, the treatment is assured by either ACF-IN or other humanitarian nutritional programmes (therapeutic and supplementary, respectively). Anthropometric nutritional investigations such as those activated by ACF-IN measure the level of global malnutrition, which can constitute one of the various indicators monitored. However, when taken alone it cannot be used to conclude anything concerning the food security situation nor does it give an indication about the causes of the malnutrition but rather gives a photograph of a situation at a given moment in time.

8 / For more information please refer to Appendix 3: Key questions in the analysis of malnutrition and its causes which look further into the causes of malnutrition.

The level of food security (1), (0), or (-1) seen in figure 2 represents theoretical levels that can be qualified as follows:
- (1): corresponds to a level of 'normal' food security: the household manages to meet its basic dietary and non-dietary needs, and its livelihood is not in danger.
- (1 to 0): coping mechanisms are reinforced; the household reacts to the situation in order to meet the basic dietary and non-dietary needs.
- (0): corresponds to the limit at which the household no longer manages to meet all its basic dietary and non-dietary needs. The household is in a situation of food insecurity.
- (0 to -1): livelihoods are in danger because the coping strategies put in place begin to affect assets. Food security of the household is in danger over the long term.
- (-1): coping strategies put in place have failed; the only solution for the household is migration[9].

This sequence does not take into account a possible intervention that aims to stop the decline and invert the curve by reinforcing the coping mechanisms of the population. Figure 2 simply attempts to illustrate that the earlier the intervention is initiated, the greater the chances of quickly re-establishing a level of food security equivalent to that which prevailed prior to the crisis.

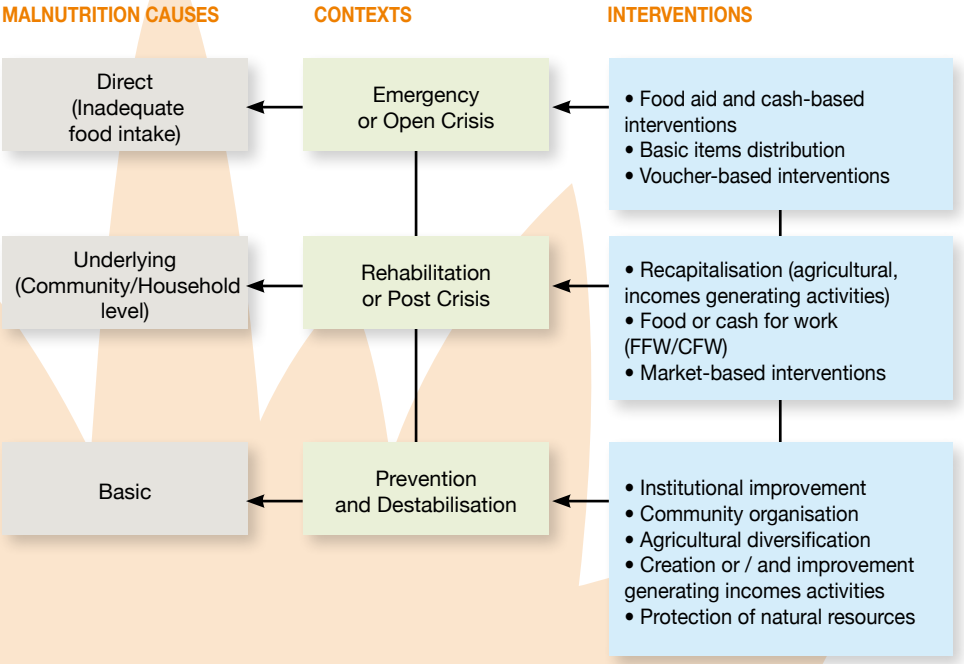
Depending on the context, the causes of the crisis and level of initial food security (at t=0) can be clearly or less easily identified. Once done this will enable us to determine appropriate context specific programme objectives. It is worth noting that before the crisis, households have different levels of food security and can be affected by the same crisis in different ways. These differences within the population are examined further during the study of vulnerability criteria as part of the initial assessment (see section II.2.2.2.).

The purpose of food security programmes is to enable beneficiaries to recover a level a food security, which is **at least** equivalent[10] to that which they had before the crises and to be sure that the conditions required for its maintenance and improvement exist (via the reinforcement of local capacities and collaboration with partners for example). The level to be attained will be determined according to initial conditions and in some cases an equivalent level may not be possible. When this occurs, ACF-IN tries to at least assure a level of food security where the households have an acceptable food consumption and resist minor, reoccurring shocks. In other cases, the initial state of destitution is an inadequate goal, especially if no actor is present in the zone. In these cases, we can consider activities that aim to protect food security in the long term.

ACF-IN can intervene during the crisis itself, through emergency actions, or later, through rehabilitation programmes. In high-risk contexts, preventive action can also be taken. Figure 3 illustrates some of the various types of programmes that can be implemented in the field ; it is not exhaustive, or are the causes, contexts and interventions so clear-cut, but it demonstrates the wide range of activities possible.

9 / It is important to note that seasonal migration or other types of economic migration can be considered as normal coping mechanisms, providing regular income sources for a given population and cannot automatically be considered as a last resort to failed coping mechanisms.
10 / Equivalent, but not necessarily similar, because it is very improbable that the post-crisis situation will be similar to the initial situation in all areas (Pirotte et al., 1997).

Figure 3: Causes – Context – Interventions



Institutional strengthening, community organisation and natural resources management and protection are transversal aspects which should be integrated into programming in all contexts where possible and is thus not exclusive to prevention.
To reflect the multi-disciplinary nature of food security a range of profiles is required for food security officers which include agronomists, socio-economists, logisticians, ethnologists, anthropologists, nutritionists, statisticians and geographers amongst others, all pooling their knowledge and approaches to understand the situation in order to better adapt the response.[11] The national teams recruited onsite equally reflect this variety of knowledge and know-how: 'Today's relief worker must be part political scientist, part economist, part anthropologist, part military analyst, part historian, part peace negotiator, part logistician (Lautze, 1997).

Our centre of interest is specifically household food security (i.e., availability, accessibility, and use of food). However, in keeping with the logic of the conceptual framework of malnutrition, it would be wrong to set the limit there. Activities, especially those of assessment and surveillance, also include "public health and environment" and "psycho-social care environment and practices" components. It should also be noted that one geographic zone is not necessarily equivalent to one context at any given time, therefore requiring the implementation of several different activities (both short and mid-term) to promote the recovery of the population. Figure 3 can be further developed in the following table, which separates the different activities into five major categories:

11 / See Appendix 4: Food Security Job Descriptions for some examples for the job descriptions of several food security positions.

Table 2: Type of Food Security Activities

TYPE OF ACTIVITIES SET UP WITHIN THE FOOD SECURITY SERVICE:

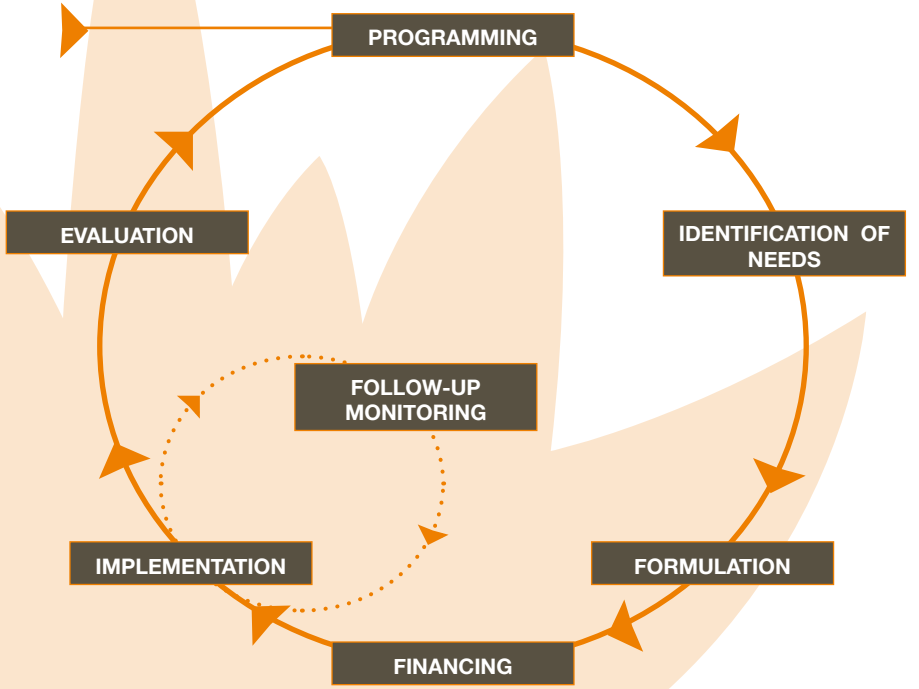
- Context analysis
  - Exploratory missions
  - Vulnerability analysis
  - Specific technical assessments
  - Surveillance systems /Early warning systems
- Food, non-food and cash-based assistance
  - General and targeted distributions
  - Canteens
  - Food or Cash For Work (FFW, CFW)
  - Seed-protection rations[12]
  - Basic Non-food Items provision (NFI)
  - Cashand voucher based interventions
- Support thousehold economy
  - Agricultural rehabilitation (production methods, diversification, training)
  - Recapitalisation of assets (agricultural, livestock, economic)
  - Income Generating Activities (IGA)
- Optimisation of productive tools
  - Capitalisation (ex: technical innovations, improved seeds)
  - Conservation (ex: protection of soils, agro-irrigation)
- Support of the socio-economic fabric
  - Support tsupply chain (ex: development of cash crops, marketing)
  - Support tcommunities (ex: community groups, farmer associations, social institutions, cooperatives)

12 / Food rations should be given in conjunction with seed distributions when there is a lack of food available in the household.

II.1 PROJECT CYCLE MANAGEMENT

The diverse contexts and needs as described above mean that food security programmes are rarely similar. However, they all follow the same stages of the project cycle[13]:

Figure 4: Project Cycle



➔ **Programming stage:** the possible entry point for the project. The overall context is assessed, to identify overall problems, constraints, and opportunities. General discussions are held in the field, the head office and with the donors, taking into account previous experience and the ACF strategy at national and regional levels.

➔ **Identification stage:** consultation with intended beneficiaries, analysis of the problems they face, and identification of options to address these problems. Ideas for projects are identified and screened for further study.

➔ **Formulation stage:** relevant project ideas are developed into operational project plans. Beneficiaries and other stakeholders participate in the detailed specification of the project idea. The potential project is assessed for feasibility (whether it is likely to succeed) and sustainability (whether it can generate lasting benefits). Based on the assessments a decision is made on whether to draw up a formal project proposal and seek funding for the project.

➔ **Financing stage:** a project proposal is submitted to the donor, and a decision is taken whether to fund the project. The donor and ACF-IN formally agree the modalities of implementation.

13 / For more information on Project Cycle Management, please refer to the EC Project Cycle Management Guidelines or the AusGUIDElines

➔ **Implementation stage:** the project is initiated and implemented. During implementation, in consultation with beneficiaries and stakeholders, the project is monitored to assess actual progress against planned progress. This allows us to determine whether the project is on track towards achieving its objectives. If necessary, the project is re-oriented to bring it back on track, or some of its objectives are modified in light of any significant changes in context since its formulation.
➔ **Evaluation stage:** evaluation of the project enables us to identify what has been achieved and lessons that have been learned. Evaluation findings are used to improve the design of future projects or programmes. Evaluations may also take place mid-term in order to measure the progress and make the necessary changes in the activities (EC, 2004).

The use of the project cycle is encouraged to overcome some inherent problems in project development and follow-up and has been adopted by ACF-IN. These problems and expected improvements offered by project cycle management illustrated in table 3 below.

Table 3: Objectives of Project Cycle Management (PCM)

INHERENT PROBLEMS TO BE AVOIDED	SOLUTIONS OFFERED BY USE OF PCM:
supply driven projects	➔ demand-driven solutions
poor analysis of the situation	➔ improved analysis
activity-oriented planning	➔ objective-oriented planning
non-verifiable impacts	➔ verifiable impact
short-term vision	➔ focus on sustainability
imprecise project documents	➔ standardised formats (e.g. logical framework)

Introduction to Logical Frameworks

The core approach within PCM is the 'Logical Framework Approach'. This requires the use of a 'Logical Framework' – also called a Logical Framework Matrix (LFM) or 'Log frame' to plan, manage and evaluate projects (Hallam, 1998).

A log frame, if correctly applied, exposes the logic of how a project is expected to work, by demonstrating a 'hierarchy of objectives'[14]. The log frames provide a concise summary of:

- the project objectives
- the 'intervention logic' (why, what and how) of the project
- the indicators and sources of information by which progress is measured
- the key risks and assumptions which may affect achievement of the objectives

Why use logical frameworks?

They:

- provide a quick visual checklist of all of the above
- are useful in planning projects (identification and formulation stages of PCM)
- are useful for assessing the progress of a project and evaluating achievements (monitoring and evaluation)
- are useful in communicating project ideas and components (to other staff members, HQ, donors, etc.)

14 / For details on designing and using logical frameworks, please refer to the EC Aid Delivery Methods volume 1 or the AusGUIDElines.

• are useful for project handover – can help new staff get ‘up to speed’ quickly
• are required by most donors for project proposals

However, log frames do not guarantee project success and poorly designed log frames (“filling in the boxes”) can lead to poorly performing projects.

Chapter 2
FOOD SECURITY ASSESSMENT

Summary
The preliminary assessment should allow us to respond to the following key questions:
- Which crisis?
- What effects has the crisis provoked on the zone? On the population?
- Which population group is most at risk? Where? When? Why?
- What are the risks (identification of the indicators)?
- Which strategies / what are the risks involved?
- Which action if any?
- What results are we seeking to obtain through the action (i.e., preparation for phasing out the assistance)?

I. INTRODUCTION: WHAT TYPE OF ASSESSMENT?

A quality assessment is imperative to the success of any food security programme. This assessment is defined on different levels:

- Situation analysis and the identification of needs: this involves a holistic **understanding of the context**, identifying the different possible alternatives and judging their respective relevance. This is what may be called **'the preliminary assessment.'**
- During the programme, two types of analysis are needed. First, monitoring the context and food security situation is required in order to confirm the continued relevance of the action. This type of monitoring is generally referred to as **food security surveillance**. Second, the programme itself will become the object of constant **monitoring.** This is also known as the **'follow-up assessment.'**
- After the programme, it is not only important to follow the evolving context, but equally important to verify whether the fixed **quantitative and qualitative objectives** have been achieved. In addition, **the impact of the programme** – including the positive and negative effects – should also be evaluated. This is the **'impact evaluation.'**

This chapter concentrates on the principles of a preliminary food security assessment. This would be conducted following a more wide-ranging assessment (for example after an exploratory assessment), which would have examined, although not in detail, all the factors contributing to malnutrition (figure 1). Effectively, **a food security assessment should contribute to a broad based understanding of the context;** if we focus our attention on food-related factors, we need to ensure that we do not by consequence gloss over complementary technical analyses such as nutritional or sanitary assessments.

Whilst attention might be put on food-related factors in many situations, it is important to develop wider economic factors to represent the livelihood approach.

Within this framework, the identification of a population's needs consists of:

- → Evaluating the food available to that population,
- → Determining the means by which it accesses its food and dietary needs,
- → Broadening the scope to include economic and wider livelihood issues,
- → Identifying the sub-groups within the population which are most affected by the crisis and most vulnerable to a situation of food insecurity, and why,
- → Understanding the coping and adaptation mechanisms used in each situation.

Food security assessments allow us to have a broad based and rapid comprehension of a population's coping strategies in a political, socio-cultural, ecological, and economic context at a given moment and help us to define vulnerability criteria. **These coping strategies will thus be the starting point for defining the most appropriate interventions.**

The global principles of an assessment are similar regardless of the context and objectives (from the exploratory mission to rapid assessments in emergency situations to the deeper analysis of food security). This simply involves adapting the methodology according to the time and resources available and the level of detail needed.

An assessment also allows us to determine crucial external constraints, which are not directly related to dietary needs but which must be overcome. These are socio-political factors, which justify the action in relation to our objective ('preserve the dignity of the people and protect them'). These external constraints can also threaten the principles expressed in the ACF-IN charter (independence, neutrality, non-discrimination, free and direct access to victims, professionalism, and transparency) or the security of the zone[15].

II. OBJECTIVES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR A FOOD SECURITY ASSESSMENT

II.1 OBJECTIVES OF A FOOD SECURITY ASSESSMENT

The assessment should lead to:

→ An understanding of the crisis context at the macro and micro level

→ Comprehension of the coping and adaptive mechanisms developed at household level to react to the crisis.

→ Identification of available food sources, the way in which the households access those sources and the way in which they use the food.

→ Identification of different wealth groups within the population and the ways in which the crisis affects each groups' ability to achieve food security.

With this **understanding** it should be possible to identify the **needs** of the population according to the macro-micro vulnerability. **Recommendations** for intervention can then be formulated.

In other words, the objectives are:

- To identify, in the region concerned by the investigation, the zones defined as at risk from a food security point of view.
- To define the characteristics of the populations confronting food insecurity, taking into account the geographical and temporal aspects.
- To define the type of household which is vulnerable from a food security point of view, and the criteria of vulnerability which allow us to distinguish them in order to adapt the response to different levels of need. This baseline information will serve as a base for monitoring a programme's impact and help determine the criteria for an exit strategy[16].
- To specify the appropriate interventions to complement their coping mechanisms and to develop their livelihood in both the short and long term.

II.2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR A FOOD SECURITY ASSESSMENT

II.2.1 Qualify the crisis and its context

Conforming to the principles illustrated in figure 2, ACF-IN interventions are generally introduced following a crisis. In theory, this is quite simple; but in reality, the identification of a crisis can be complex. Crises frequently involve a sequence of events, of successive crises, may stem from a 'perennial' conflict, where the movement of the population repeats itself or the 'pre-crisis' can go back several years (as it has been the case for example in Sierra Leone or Burundi).

This means that the principle that motivates assessments must be clearly understood: **qualifying the crisis is necessary in order to be able to set the objectives to be achieved.** In this way, it is important to distinguish the structural problems from the crisis related problems: while we try specifically to

15 / See Appendix 5: ACF-IN Charter of Principles for the complete ACF-IN charter.

16 / An exit strategy is the strategy outlining the steps to gradually end a project or close a mission. It can involve stopping the activities completely or handing over to another agency (other NGO, local authorities, international Organisation, etc.). An exit strategy should be taken into consideration from the initial stage of programme design.

respond to the latter, we must fully consider the former. Our action should actively and rapidly contribute to the reinforcement of local capacities, which should be strengthened over the long term.

Qualifying the crisis, and especially, estimating the level of food security which prevailed prior to the crisis, in direct relation to the population sub-groups, is thus fundamental to the design of coherent, technical strategies for intervention.

II.2.2 Hypotheses preliminary to the food security assessment

Despite the fact that the objective of this book is not to go deeper into the technical methodological aspects of assessments (this is covered in the 'Food Security Assessments and Surveillance" book), it is nonetheless important to understand the hypotheses upon which the situation is assessed and the levels of need are determined.

The situation analysis and the definition of needs follow a multi-sectoral approach of vulnerability to food insecurity. This involves analysis of the context (macro) and at the household level (micro). It is based on three principal hypotheses:

- Vulnerability to food insecurity is a function of the environmental/economic/socio-political context
- Vulnerability to food insecurity is variable according to the households' wealth group
- Vulnerability to food insecurity evolves over time

In terms of analysis, these three hypotheses will be addressed through food security mapping/zoning, definition of the typology of the population and changes from one period to another.

II.2.2.1 Food security assessment: zoning, context analysis

Natural resources, political events, agricultural activities, economics, and their development as well as socio-cultural aspects are the primary elements that determine the degree of risk in the zone. Generally, the zones are defined in terms of livelihood economy zones (LEZ); which are geographic zones that present similar internal characteristics, potentials, and constraints for the livelihoods of the population.[17]

All the information gathered is assembled and summarised in order to bring out the strong points (capacities) and the weak points (vulnerabilities) of each zone. A **vulnerability gradient**[18] can then be established. This ranking takes into account the degree of humanitarian risk in light of food availability and the conditions of access to food, considering the ecological and economical potential, their degree of development, degree of political destabilisation and the coverage of needs ensured by other actors (government, NGO or other local organisations….).

II.2.2.2 Food security assessment: typology of the population

Vulnerability to household food insecurity depends on the household's capacity to manage the crisis and to activate coping mechanisms; "there is a clear relationship between how people cope with a crisis and related opportunities for building local capacity' (LAUTZE, 1997).

The identification of LEZ is essential but is only a starting point. Within each LEZ, there are differences between households' survival strategies and their ability to cope when faced with a crisis. We therefore need to define sub-groups of the population according to the way in which the households can cope with such a crisis (frequently but not exclusively related to their socio-economic levels). The

17 / For an example of LEZ, please see Appendix 6: Livelihood Economy Zones in Tajikistan.
18 / This gradient is specific to each context, thus it is impossible to have standardised vulnerability indicators which can be used in any crisis situation.

levels of food security are evaluated in terms of **vulnerabilities** and **capacities** (ANDERSON M., 1996).

The first step is to gain an understanding of the way in which the community as a whole functions and of the characteristics of different household types. Factors such as the overall economy of the household, agricultural systems, health systems, exchange systems, social support systems, household food economy, intra familial links, and coping mechanisms for particular events will be examined. Next, various factors including the capital accessible to the household, the members who make up the household, as well as their activities and the direct impact of the crisis on the household are studied in order to determine the assets (capacities) that the household can draw upon in order to reduce the adverse effects of the events.

Household food security can be established by studying a combination of agricultural production, gathering, hunting, fishing, non-agricultural economic activities, and/or social mechanisms. Access to food can be affected by various events or circumstances. If coping mechanisms have been exhausted (for example wild foods are depleted), the population becomes vulnerable and finds themselves in a situation of food insecurity. These mechanisms are unique to each household causing various levels of vulnerability to exist within a population undergoing the same crisis.

When a household has put coping strategies in place without success, it enters into a situation of chronic vulnerability. In a context where successive situations are unfavourable, a household is likely to mobilise its capital without being able to reinvest it. It tries to manage one event after another until an improvement of the situation or a failure of the coping mechanisms occurs.

Analysis of vulnerability is essential when determining a household's level of food security. The vulnerability/level of food security of a population or a household can be evaluated by understanding:

- The coping mechanisms developed when faced with a crisis
- The capacity of the population or the household to recover from this situation

Community level discussion reveals different population groups within every LEZ, each of which has particular defining characteristics (related to for example the area of land planted, the number of livestock kept, the main sources of food and income). These criteria determine each wealth group's capacity to face both current and expected adverse events.
One or several groups of households may be defined as being vulnerable to food insecurity. In other words, they are not able to meet their basic dietary requirements (through production, purchase or exchange) and/or they do not have the capacity to manage in the event of a crisis.

As with zoning, the objective is to define the different population sub-groups according to their degree of vulnerability to food insecurity.

Figures 5 and 6 show two situations where three categories of households were identified. They were distinguished according to both their level of food security and the way in which they were affected by and reacted to the crisis.

Figure 5: Diagram showing a typical establishment of mechanisms for rural households following a crisis

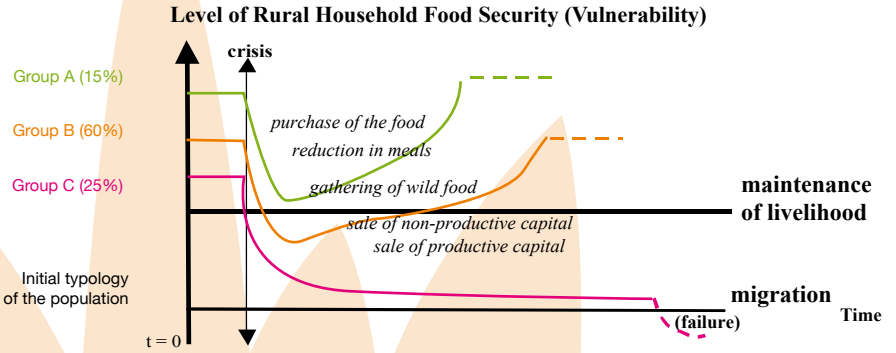
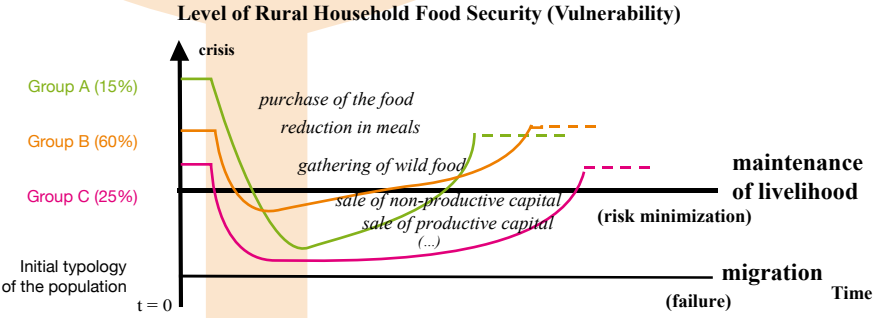


Figure 5 illustrates the most 'common' or 'usual' situation, where the category of households with the higher level of food security before the crisis (Group A) experiences the impact of the crisis in a less brutal manner than the other categories and succeeds in returning to the initial level (t=0) without having reached a point where he cannot ensure his food needs. In contrast, the most vulnerable category (Group C) fails in its coping mechanisms (which could possibly have been prevented through an appropriate intervention).

Figure 6 which follows illustrates another case, where households with the highest initial level of food security (Group A) experience a shock of greater amplitude than the other categories and are unable to return to their initial level. Households which started out being most vulnerable to food insecurity (Group C), return to the same level, albeit more slowly. This type of dynamic was seen after the war in Kosovo in 1999. If the assessment indicates such a situation, then the recommendations should be to prioritise targeting both the population groups A and C.

Figure 6: Diagram showing the typical establishment of mechanisms for rural households following a crisis



The dilemma that the vulnerable households face is a **choice between immediate dietary needs and methods of long-term survival.** In order to learn how the people adapt to a crisis situation, the assessment should obtain an overview of the household's situation prior to this crisis. This requires an understanding of livelihoods.
Using the normal situation as a reference, we then use the vulnerability groups to study the evolution of each group's economy before/during/after the crisis. We can thereby discover the sequence of coping strategies according to the intensity of the adverse events and the socio-cultural context as well as the impact on the population's resources. It is essential to understand how the population reacted to the crisis and the order in which the different mechanisms (coping and adaptive) were put in place (PIROTTE C., 1997).

Identification of the coping strategies put in place and their consequences (from the short to long term) should allow us, on the one hand to measure the intensity of the crisis and on the other hand, to determine what, if any, interventions should be recommended.

Some mechanisms should be supported and/or reinforced (for example activation of the internal/ external mutual assistance network, structured intensification of production); others are to be discouraged because of the eventual negative impacts that they may cause in the future (such as deforestation); thus, it is necessary to propose an alternative.

The typology should identify 3-4 principle categories of households by zone and the criteria that differentiate them.

Examples
Concerning rural zones, the typology will depend on:
- The composition of the household: number of active members, men/women
- The agricultural activities/ the type of farming, types of cash crops, average acreage, average returns, crop yields
- The available capital (buildings, livestock, tools) determining the capacity to buy food
- Related activities and their importance

In a similar manner, a typology in urban zones will most often use the following indicators:
- Size of the household, number of dependants
- Type of formal or informal income generating activities
- Type of home, furnishings
- Existence of household support (at the level of the country, diasporas)
- Food sources
- Access to basic services (electricity, water network, sanitation)

The information collected will be analysed according to the degrees of vulnerability; this should assist in the formulation of recommendations and allow decision-making. The programmes at ACF-IN generally target the most vulnerable and aim to ensure their present and future food security, while seeking to constitute as much as possible a support system for the positive mechanisms put in place by the community.

Finally, the synthesis created will show the different categories of the population, their relative proportions, and especially, the criteria which determined their identification.

These criteria, and their capacity for change between vulnerability groups will help to constitute the initial reference from which the situation will be monitored. They will also provide the final identification of the beneficiaries (targeting) for a possible future intervention based on the needs shown.

■ II.2.2.3 The consideration of time in a food security assessment

The time dimension is illustrated by comparing the years (good, average, bad), the seasonal variations (series of calendars) and the situation before and after the crisis.

As previously mentioned, a food security assessment gives a representation of a given situation at a given time. It is then necessary to place the current situation over time to better understand the risks and vulnerability levels. This exercise can be developed using a variety of tools including seasonal calendars, historical timelines, and interviews with elders in the village.

The starting point is to determine the current existing situation with the population and then ask if this situation is consistent throughout the year, or if there are months/seasons that are more or less difficult in terms of food security. After determining the most secure and food insecure seasons, the same processes can be used to determine how the current year compares to past years. Ask the community if the current situation is "normal", "better" or "worse" than an average year. If the response is better or worse, ask the community to indicate how the current situation differs, then identify the determining factors for defining average, good and bad years.

III. CONCLUSION OF A FOOD SECURITY ASSESSMENT

Different elements gathered at the level of the LEZ as well as at the group level provide a general understanding of the situation **at the moment of the assessment** and identify the strong and weak points affecting the food security of the population.

➔ This allows us to establish a ranking order among the zones: a risk gradient is established by taking the political situation, the natural resources, and the economic activities into consideration as well as the demographic aspects which might limit food accessibility to populations.
➔ In the same way, ranking the vulnerability groups residing in each of the zones is carried out by taking an inventory of the resources (capital, labour) and risk factors (absence of capital, high dependency ratios) available to the different groups identified.
➔ We consider the time dimension:

- At the crisis scale: from time t=0, **before** the crisis, when the different indicators are at their reference level.
- On a seasonal scale, taking into consideration the variations of these indicators throughout the year.

➔ The information can finally be illustrated in a matrix with the different types of households in rows and the different LEZ in columns, representing the ranking according to a scale of differential vulnerability. This formalisation allows us to have a rapid overview of the situation analysis:

Figure 7: Vulnerability Ranking according to LEZ and Population Typology

TYPOLOGY OF THE POPULATION	LIVELIHOOD ECONOMY ZONES			
	Z1 (most vulnerable zone)	Z2	Z3	Z4
T1 (most vulnerable category)	Priority			
T2 (intermediate category)				
T3 (category in a situation of food security)				

(Grünewald, 2000)

The *'Food Security Assessments and Surveillance'* book provides details of methods and tools that may be used to develop vulnerability ranking, as well as giving concrete examples.

The level of analysis achieved in the initial assessment depends on the time available, the context, and the initial objectives. In numerous situations, the urgency of the needs, conditions of access to the populations and insecurity will mean that comprehensive assessments cannot be undertaken as we would wish. Consequently, it will be necessary **to build a certain number of working hypotheses** that will be confirmed or invalidated later through the food security surveillance system.

The results of the surveillance system, as well as the monitoring of the programme should therefore allow us to review the hypotheses and the corresponding choices and to adapt our actions accordingly.

There is therefore no universal set of methods. It is only through the synthesis and comparison of different assessments that we can estimate the relevance and the feasibility of an action and decide on its implementation.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS – ACTION PROPOSALS FOLLOWING A FOOD SECURITY ASSESSMENT

The process of assessment / diagnosis is carried out in order to make recommendations for relevant actions.

Once the analysis has been completed, several types of actions are possible; it is therefore necessary to:
➔ Choose the zones for action, according to the identified levels of vulnerability, taking into account the needs covered by other actors, and/or whether ACF-IN can provide action everywhere.
➔ Make a thematic prioritisation according to an operational strategy, drawing on institutional knowledge and according to the needs covered by other actors.
➔ Identify the possible alternatives in terms of action: What type of intervention? For which population groups? How are they to be identified?

➔ Review the situation taking the 'do no harm'[19] principle into consideration (the possibilities of manipulation and use of humanitarian aid for political ends are extreme side effects)
➔ Take a decision on which, if any interventions should be undertaken
➔ Define a framework for monitoring and evaluation
➔ Define an exit strategy ('conditions' i.e., level to attain before assistance stops or changes) and 'handover'[20] to other actors.
➔ Imagine the possible scenarios regarding the development of the situation, and at the same time, the actions to be undertaken in each case.

19 / "Do no harm" refers to the principal of assuring that no action or program implemented will have a negative or harmful impact upon the population or the environment.
20 / The concept of "handing over" a project or activity can be part of a phasing out or exit strategy which ensures the continuation of the activities though other more permanent actors (local, governmental or international).

Chapter 3
FOOD SECURITY SURVEILLANCE


© J.Langevin/Deadlines – Somalie

Summary

• Surveillance systems allow for the follow-up of the evolution of the situation in order to improve our understanding of the context and the impact that the changes have on the populations.
• The surveillance systems should produce regular reports, thus serving as a practical tool for decision taking and lobbying.
• Project monitoring is an integral part of the surveillance systems and can allow for timely changes in the programme implementation in response to the evolving situation.

I. OBJECTIVE AND PERTINENCE OF THE ACF-IN SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM

The global objective of a surveillance system is **monitoring of the situation** in order to:
➔ Improve our contextual analysis and thus permit appropriate political and technical intervention.

And more specifically:
➔ To have sufficient elements to be able to, at any moment, view the programmes as part of the overall context, thus confirming their relevance and modifying them accordingly.
➔ To be capable of detecting improvements or deterioration in the situation in order to alert other actors or to intervene ourselves (alert system).

Figure 2 can be re-called here in order to illustrate the importance of the surveillance system. Beyond the two objectives cited above, this regular surveillance permits us, in terms of intervention strategy, to monitor and thereby to determine if the activities remain necessary, taking into account the conditions required for a potential disengagement.

The monitoring system that can be set up by ACF-IN should be complementary to the pre-existing systems:

- **On the macro scale** (national, regional, or international) such as the early warning systems (Famine Early Warning System [FEWS], Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems [FIVIMS]).[21]

These systems are sources of unique information, mobilising resources that are otherwise unavailable to us giving us information on the 'macro' aspects of our analyses. Macro-level information concerning climate data (from the interpretation of aerial and satellite photos), cartographic representation of population movement, etc. are fundamental indicators to understand the given context and to define an intervention strategy. ACF-IN surveillance systems complement these global systems, taking into account the existing information, and complementing it on a more micro level. For example, the microanalysis:

1. Allows interpretation of the consequences of recurrent adverse weather conditions,
2. Monitors the existing coping strategies which the populations have at their disposal to face events,
3. Assists in the identification of strategies that will define an adapted technical response.

In this way, the monitoring of nutritional and food security indicators (sources of food, nature of production systems [irrigated vs. pluvial], dependence on humanitarian aid, access to zones, level of decapitalisation) or indicators related to sanitary characteristics, should permit us to determine the type of intervention that is most appropriate for a given zone.

By its mandate ACF-IN is very often the only operator in the intervention zones, the only external witness to a dynamic situation, and the only collector of decisive indicators.
Thus, it is extremely important to define and follow-up indicators, compatible with the systems already in place and adapted to the already degraded situations in which ACF-IN intervenes because using the climatic or macroeconomic data alone will be insufficient.

- **At the national or local level,** it is also important to take into account the information collected through institutional systems or those managed by other agencies. This is to avoid duplicating efforts[22] and existing structural costs and to harmonise different indicators and collection methodologies, to share information for more thorough analysis and to reach a common understanding

21 / For more detail and other systems see the ACF documents 'Famine Early Warning Systems and response: a diagnosis and compared assessment of the major functioning Famine Early Warning Systems' 2000 and 'ACF-IN Food Security Surveillance Guideline Part 1: Background Document' 2005.
22 / When considering duplication of efforts, both the work of the different humanitarian actors and the population are taken into account.

of the situation. In certain situations the analytical methods of different organisations result in different conclusions but all the more reason to have ensured that all available information has been taken into consideration and coordination with the other actors has taken place.

For example, an increase in market prices is relatively common regardless of the context; we will thus analyse the price variation working in collaboration with the systems already in place and by adapting the tool to the expectations of each actor. In collaborating with local actors, this approach is in itself a way to begin work early on the **reinforcement of local capacities,** for longer-term sustainability: a well-conceived surveillance system could thus continue to be used after the departure of ACF-IN (especially for "disaster preparedness" programmes)

II. PROCEDURES

The preliminary assessment serves as a basis for the surveillance ('baseline survey') of the zone.

In a manner similar to the assessment, three dimensions – spatial, temporal, social (household capacities) – are found in the surveillance systems, which is also led from 'macro' to 'micro.'

Surveillance should be conceived in such a manner as to remain a practical tool for decision making and lobbying, allowing the rapid detection of any deterioration of the situation. In certain contexts, it is also an important tool in terms of witnessing / protection of the populations ('advocacy').

The "Food Security Assessments and Surveillance" book outlines further details concerning:

- the indicators to be followed, their characteristics and units
- the methodology and frequency of collection

III. PRINCIPLES OF ANALYSIS AND INFORMATION USE

Information analysis is the interpretation of a combination of different indicators. Surveillance should inform us of changes in the situation; improvement, deterioration, or stablility.

Ideally and in theory, it should be possible to define a **warning threshold.** This warning threshold is certainly not easy to determine, because the context and the coping strategies of the population are complex. Establishing thresholds enables us to respond, through information collection, as soon as a sudden change is perceived in order to evaluate its impact on food security.

This analysis should be documented in a regular monitoring report; **gathering information without having the ability to use it or even clearly knowing why we are gathering it must be avoided at all costs.** Other than purely methodological aspects related to the type of indicators to be collected and the sources of information, the conception of a surveillance system should also include the methodology for treating the data, the format of the report, the publication frequency, and the diffusion of the report.

The use of maps is recommended to illustrate the analysis and the evolution of the situation, and to illustrate the zoning defined during the initial preliminary assessment. The development of a multi-disciplinary Geographic Information System (GIS) can be created in coordination with the other technical departments. Although this technology has numerous advantages, and offers multiple possibilities to analyse and illustrate 'multi-criteria,' maps, simple maps can nonetheless be drawn if no such advanced software and expertise is available. Additionally, maps are an excellent tool for communication and exchange, allowing us to have a rapid and complete vision of a situation and its development.

It is crucial that information be shared 'vertically' and 'horizontally'; this means:

- informing the population and the structures from whom the information has been collected of the objective of the questions and the results of the analysis
- informing all the actors at the same level in the zone (local authorities, local and/or international humanitarian actors)
- informing higher authorities (national authorities in particular)

IV. MONITORING, EVALUATION, IMPACT OF FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMMES

The steps for monitoring and evaluation are an integral part of the project cycle and should be intimately linked to the monitoring of the situation. According to the type of programme set up, the monitoring and evaluation tools will be specific[23], but the principle and the objectives will always be the same.

Monitoring directly concerns the on-going activity. It takes place continuously throughout the intervention.

- **It is established for the daily follow-up of the project progress and, in particular the degree of success with respect to specific fixed objectives (ex : number of beneficiaries having effectively received the ration, respect of the distribution schedule, quality control).**
- **Its regularity also allows us to refocus, adapt, or improve the action if necessary.**

Beyond these pre-set objectives, one should also be attentive to **potential unanticipated positive and negative effects** of the project. In fact, even if the approach has followed all the recommended steps from the formulation to the implementation, the programme can have unexpected impacts and which are just as important to consider within the scope of the monitoring.

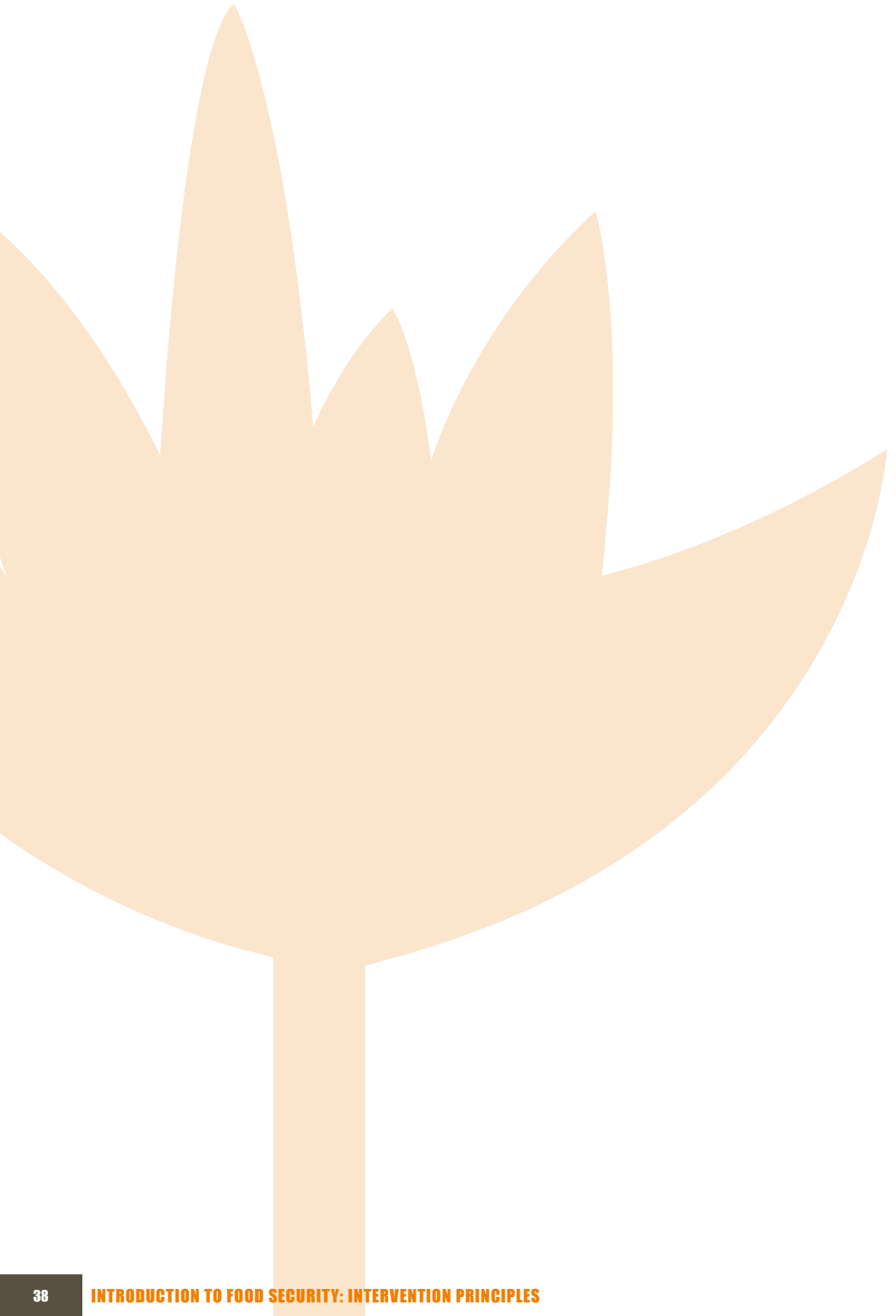
This monitoring system should be set up in conjunction with the surveillance of the situation, which thus integrates the follow-up of the beneficiaries' situation. The relevance of the technical choices and strategies that have been made in response to the needs based on the initial evaluation's conclusions and the evolving food security situation should be simultaneously evaluated. The monitoring "should not be limited to knowing "who has received what" but should aim at evaluate the contribution of … aid in the production and consumption boost…." (PIROTTE C., 1997). This involves refuting or confirming the hypotheses developed at the outset, while evaluating how the established programme responds to the fixed global objective as the situation develops. Additional complementary information can also be added to the initial assessment in order to further detail the situation or to identify specific changes in the context.

Monitoring methods are defined during programme design: the objectives to be attained and the indicators to be followed (why, where, how, with whom, when, etc.) should be specified from the time of formulation. The basis for monitoring is the logical framework (Logical Framework Analysis), which is now used for the formulation of the majority of projects. This framework sets the pillars of monitoring, in terms of overall and specific objectives. Even so, it will be necessary to define other 'internal' indicators in order to follow the programme from the initiation throughout the implementation.

The monitoring of the programme verifies whether the quantitative and qualitative objectives fixed initially have been achieved and shows whether the indicators are being met. This process simultaneously allows us to extract lessons from the successes and errors of the programme in order to improve the design and implementation of possible future programmes.

23 / For more information on specific monitoring and evaluation tools, see the other Food Security books included in this series.

The impact evaluation is to be considered in a wider manner and aims to appreciate the positive and negative effects, foreseen or not, of the programme on the population and local environment. Most often, this involves placing the monitoring results in relation to the surveillance of the situation. In a more rigorous manner, a complete external evaluation a posteriori should be conducted for each programme, which is unfortunately rarely the case.



Chapter 4
ORGANISATION OF FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMMES

© J.Langevin/Deadline - Somalia

Summary

• Similar to all other ACF-IN programmes, food security projects must consider the logistical and administrative possibilities/constraints before designing any activities.

• The food security team (expatriate and national staff) is the key to success for any programme. In order to ensure that success, the teams must be properly recruited, trained, and motivated.

• All food security programmes should directly involve the community in all steps of the project cycle.

• Local capacities (staff, communities, and local organisations) should be reinforced throughout the life of the programme. This capacity building will eventually provide handover opportunities allowing for a withdrawal of ACF-IN assistance.

Beyond the 'technical' integration to be taken into account in defining pertinent and coherent programmes and which we have already discussed, there are other factors that should be taken into consideration to optimise the implementation of the programme. The importance of each of these factors will vary according to the type of project.

I. THE LOGISTICS

The logistics of the programme are integrated within the general logistics of the mission. It thus involves understanding the general organisation and integrating the internal and external possibilities and constraints within the implementation of the activity.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS

Like all logistical aspects, administrative questions are handled at the level of the mission and the base. In order to guarantee harmonious management, it is also very important to be taken into account, to understand, to respect, and to discuss in order to prevent potential problems.

III. THE TEAM

The food security team is the pillar upon which the programme rests. Good human resource management is indispensable. Programme managers should ensure that teams are sufficiently trained in order to carry out programme activities effectively. This encompasses technical aspects, project cycle management, conceptual framework of malnutrition, information technology, community approach and human resources management. Teams are required to possess a solid capacity for objective analysis especially for activities related to assessment.
Everyone should share a common understanding of the objectives and knowledge of programming constraints. A small team which is fully aware of all the stakes in the intervention, is preferred over numerous people acting 'mechanically' without this understanding.

The team will frequently be multi disciplinary (depending on the type of programme): it will be made up of diverse profiles and experiences, men and women, and people of different geographic origins, etc.

For specific information on these logistical, administrative aspects and the management principles of a team, please refer to the specific books included in this series and the ACF-IN "logistic and administration kit".

IV. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND THE REINFORCEMENT OF LOCAL CAPACITIES IN FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMMES [24]

Community participation and reinforcement of local capacities should be applied throughout the programme cycle. This means that the community should be directly involved in the definition of the programme's objectives, the implementation of the activities and the monitoring and evaluation of the programme. This participation is key to ensuring that the programmes are best adapted and meet both the needs and expectations of the population. It will also reduce

24 / For more detail refer to ACF-IN document 'Community-Driven Participation in Humanitarian Relief'

potential conflicts or jealousy that could occur as a result of the programme activities. The methodology for ensuring this participation and knowledge transfer will differ depending on the different cultures and traditions of a given population.

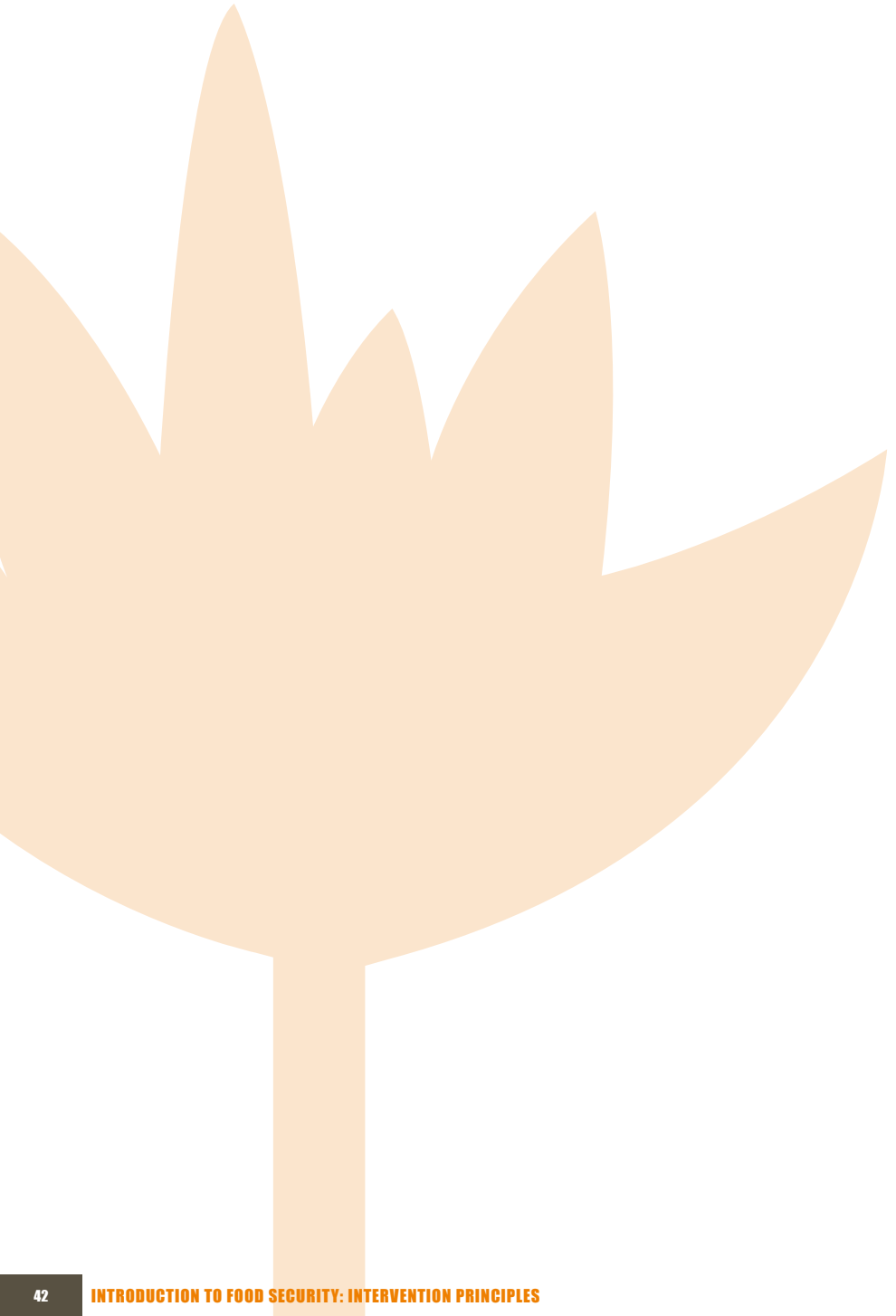
The principle difficulty is that, on the one hand, in an emergency situation the capacities of the population to take charge themselves are often limited (but present). This should thus be reinforced efficiently and rapidly, and any action aiming to develop these capacities should be encouraged. An 'over-zealous' intervention, regardless of the good intentions motivating it, could easily have harmful consequences in the mid-term, leading to the development of a 'do-it-yourself' approach taking charge and creating new forms of dependency. Emergency aid cannot be reduced to simple trucking (PIROTTE C., 1997).

However, it is clear that the participatory process requires much more time, which is a luxury that most emergency interventions do not offer. One of the 'immediate' keys is probably once again communication in the widest sense, as well as a will for detailed comprehension, and a permanent consciousness and respect for the 'do no harm' concept.

For the phasing out of ACF-IN activities, continuity of the activities should be planned. **The identification of potential partners should begin as quickly as possible.** Even if the 'handover' is not planned immediately, collaboration will be all the more productive if the knowledge and the mutual transfers of information and know-how have begun early. This will result in not only a simple stock-taking, but also a real recognition of the actors present and of the value that they could offer, and the direct participation of the communities in all programme aspects from the assessments to the evaluation. When choosing the local or international partners, it is important to ensure that they share ACF-IN basic principles, especially concerning neutrality.

Within the specific scope of ACF-IN interventions, the objective is not to lead development projects over the long term, but rather to remedy the consequences of a crisis. However, our knowledge of the area, of the populations, etc., acquired during the course of the phases of emergency and rehabilitation **should be transmitted.** We cannot begin to think of disengagement if the necessary conditions to ensure food security over the long term have not been met.

ACF-IN programmes present a true opportunity to identify local capacities at a very early stage, something that we must fully understand. In fact, the multi disciplinary technical approach - nutrition, health, care practices, food security, and WASH - require a global assessment and a complete analysis of the context and the needs should naturally bring about the re-construction of a solid social structure: every programme should in this way aim to promote local initiatives.



Chapter 5
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I. WHAT IS A FOOD SECURITY ASSESSMENT?

A food security assessment is the analysis of a situation leading to the identification of needs. This involves a broad-based **understanding of the context,** identifying the different possible alternatives and judging their relevance. An assessment can be implemented prior to a programme in order to establish a baseline or preliminary set of information. Other assessments may occur at different times during the project cycle and are most often spurred when important changes occur in the context.

II. HOW DOES FOOD SECURITY INTERACT WITH THE OTHER TECHNICAL SECTORS?

ACF-IN uses a multi-disciplinary approach to prevent and treat malnutrition based upon the Conceptual Framework of Malnutrition[25]. This approach recognises that the basic or underlying causes of malnutrition may be linked to any or several of the different technical sectors (nutrition, food security, health, care practices and WASH). This recognition is vital from the initial diagnosis of the situation and throughout the life of the programme in order to enforce the impact of the activities and to help ensure their sustainability.

III. WHEN SHOULD A FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMME BEGIN AND WHEN SHOULD IT END?

A food security programme should begin when an assessment clearly identifies that the population does not have the capacity to ensure its food security through coping strategies and needs are not met through the existing activities of other actors. The mandate of ACF-IN is not to replace the existing governmental structures or the population's coping strategies, but rather to intervene when and if these existing strategies are not able to meet the basic living conditions of the population. From the initial assessment and throughout the duration of the programme, an exit strategy should constantly be considered.

The exit strategy ensures that the basic conditions are met that allow for the withdrawal of ACF-IN activities in the zone. The conditions could be met through:

- establishing partnerships and handing over the activities to other local or international actors
- a net improvement in the food security situation

In certain cases ACF-IN can also leave the intervention area because the criteria in its charter (independence, neutrality, non-discrimination, free and direct access to victims, professionalism, transparency) are not met and jeopardise our capacity to ensure the proper functioning of a programme and/or our actions put the population at-risk

IV. WHAT ARE THE CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING THE VULNERABILITY OF A POPULATION?

Given the fact that the contexts and coping strategies of each country and its people are distinct, it is not possible to have a standardised set of vulnerability indicators. The criteria should be established through the initial assessment based on the situation before, during, and after the crisis.

25 / see figure 1

© J.Langevin/Deadlines – Somalie

© ACF – Népal

© D. Sauveur/Vu - Afghanistan

FIGURES

TABLES

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: ABBREVIATIONS

ACF-IN	Action contre la Faim International Network
EWS	Early Warning System
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GIS	Geographic Information System
LEZ	Livelihood Economy Zone
LFA	Logical Framework Analysis
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PCM	Project Cycle Management
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation

APPENDIX 2: GLOSSARY OF KEY WORDS

Cash-based intervention: A cash-based intervention falls into three categories – cash for work where a beneficiary works in exchange for cash, cash grants where beneficiaries receive cash directly through transfer or distribution and vouchers which a beneficiary can exchange for nominated items. Cash-based interventions are becoming more widely used in humanitarian programmes.

Causal analysis: In a causal analysis, a problem is identified, the causes of the problem are sought, the causes of the causes analysed, and so on. The result is a "problem tree", in which the logical sequence of causes and effects is presented. For each cause, a solution or objective is assigned. This method is used to define intervention strategies (it can be used for a log-frame analysis, for example).

Database: A table that organises various data concerning a particular entity or variable.

Exit strategy/phasing out: Strategies outlining the steps to gradually end a project or close a mission. It can involve stopping the activities completely or handing over the activities to another agency (other NGO, local authorities, international organisation, etc.).

Evaluation: Periodic assessment of a project (at mid-term and upon completion). It assesses the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of the project in relation to its objectives.

Food Aid: Making foodstuffs available and accessible to a given population, in terms of adequate quality and quantity, in such a way as to avoid malnutrition and diseases

Food security: Food security is ensured when all the people, at all times, have access economically, socially, and physically to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that satisfies their nutritional needs and their dietary preferences, allowing them to lead active and healthy lives. Food security of households corresponds to the application of this concept at the household level, with the centre of attention focusing on the individuals making up the household (FAO, 1996).

Geographic Information System (GIS): A system that combines a computer-mapping programme with a database including geographical information, in order to make a map on a topic of interest. It can be used to graphically represent many types of data (e.g. malnutrition rates by area or neighbourhood, type of livelihood by region, etc.).

Geographic Positioning System (GPS): The GPS is a device that gives the exact latitude and longitude of a particular site. It is used for navigation and mapping (e.g. in the GIS system).

Impact evaluation: A study that measures the realisation of the fixed **quantitative and qualitative objectives** and determines the positive and negative effects of the activities.

Income Generating Activities: Any type of activity that enables a person or a household to generate income. Income generating activities are important in terms of creating sustainability and improving accessibility to basic food and non-food products.

Indicator: "A measurement that shows the changes or the results of an observed activity" (Euronaid, 2002)

Institution: A public organisation, that comes under the social services. It is an establishment that supports vulnerable populations (socially, psychologically, or physically vulnerable). These include, for example, schools, orphanages, health centres, etc. This definition is essentially relevant in countries with a state welfare system (e.g. socialist, or former communist countries in Eastern Europe).

Log Frame Analysis (LFA): The logical framework analysis is a tool for programme planning. It presents, in a matrix form, the relation between the programme's overall objective, the specific objectives, the expected results, and the activities. For each of these, the following must be specified: objectively verifiable indicators, sources of verification, and assumptions or external factors. The inputs (costs and resources) are also included. The LFA serves as a basis for the proposal.

Monitoring: It is a continuous process of data collection and analysis, which should take place as the project is being implemented. Monitoring is based on indicators that are collected regularly. The actual progress is compared to the planned outcomes and activities, in order to identify necessary programme changes.

Preliminary assessment (base line study): The initial study that analyses the situation and identifies the needs of the population, this involves **understanding the global context,** identifying the different possible alternatives and judging their respective pertinence. This initial assessment serves as a benchmark to determine the evolution of the situation.

Project Cycle Management (PCM): The project cycle includes the various stages of a project: programming, identification, formulation, financing, implementation, and evaluation. PCM is an approach that aims to improve the management of the project cycle, using various tools (e.g. causal analysis, LFA, monitoring and evaluation techniques, etc).

SPHERE Project: SPHERE is a project aiming to set universal minimum standards for humanitarian interventions (qualitative and quantitative).
For example:

- Minimum energy requirements is 2100 kilocalories per person per day;
- 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;
- Average water use for drinking, cooking, and personal hygiene in any household is at least 15 litres per person per day, etc.

Surveillance: "Monitoring and analysing the food security situation (and nutritional status) of the population/targeted areas, and sharing findings/recommendations in order to enable decision makers to define adequate food security strategies and have timely responses" (ACF-IN, 2005).

APPENDIX 3: KEY QUESTIONS IN THE ANALYSIS OF MALNUTRITION AND ITS CAUSES (YOUNG & JASPERS, 1995)

1.Nutritional Status
What is the geographical and seasonal variation of malnutrition? What other nutritional problems occur on a seasonal basis? What are the demographic, social, and economic characteristics of malnourished children/households?

2. Inadequate Food Intake
• Household food consumption
What types of food are people consuming? Is the nutritional diversity of the diet adequate? How does the quantity and quality of the diet vary according to the seasons? Is it adequate?
• Infant food consumption
Do children receive colostrum? Are children exclusively breastfed from birth for up to 6 months? What is the quantity and quality of weaning foods?

3. Disease
What diseases are prevalent at different times of the year? Check whether there has been an outbreak of measles, cholera, diarrhoea, etc. that might have affected nutritional status dramatically.

4. Household Food Security
• Definition of livelihood economy zones (LEZ) and socio-economic groups
What are the geographical variations in people's livelihoods? Who are the rich, middle, and poor people within the Livelihood Economy Zones, in terms of what they do and what they own? What percentage of households is in each group? How do households move from one group to another?
• Spatial flows of goods and labour
What are the flows of goods and labour within the LEZ and with other areas outside of the LEZ?
• Sources of food - Factors influencing agricultural production
What are the basic production systems? What are the coping strategies and different sources of food available to each production system? How does the seasonal cycle of activities affect household food security and composition of the diet?
• Sources of cash
What is the relative importance of different sources of cash and their seasonal variations?
• Household expenditure
What are the relative importance of and the seasonal variations of different expenditures?
• Risks and vulnerability to future/past events and coping strategies
What events (drought/ floods / war) have occurred recently or are likely to occur in the future that have/will affect the ability of households to acquire adequate food and cash income? What impact have they had/would they have on households' food and cash income? What coping strategies have/are households likely to adopt in response to these events? How successful have/will these strategies be (been) in compensating for the decline in food and cash income? What has been/will be the net impact of the events once the success of coping strategies is taken into account? What have been/will be the costs of coping for the household?

5. Social Care and Environment
What is the educational status of mothers? Do mothers have adequate time to care for children or do they have other important demands on their time? What factors determine this? What beliefs and practices are associated with eating during pregnancy, when the child is ill, when the mother is ill? What beliefs and practices are associated with child's socialisation, roles, and development? What social support and childcare systems exist within the household and community? What factors determine access to these systems?

6. Public Health and Hygiene

• Access to safe drinking water

What are the main ways (and seasonal variations) in which households acquire their drinking water? Is the quality and quantity of the water supply sufficient? Have there been any recent unusual events (i.e. that are not related to seasonal variations) that have affected people's ability to acquire good quality drinking water ?

• Access to adequate sanitation facilities

What types of sanitary facilities are available? Is the quantity and quality of facilities adequate ? (Number of people sharing, distance from the house, removal of waste etc.)

• Living environment

What type of housing do people live in? What is the quantity and quality of the housing (overcrowding, roofing, ventilation, etc.) ?

• Access to health services

What are the key environmental factors contributing to disease? (Rainfall; water supply; sanitation; inadequate housing; hot, dry, and dusty conditions; crowding). How adequate are the local health services, in terms of immunisation coverage, availability of essential drugs, personnel trained in the rational use of drugs, realistic cost of services, and access to facilities? How have these been affected by war, civil unrest or other key developments ?

7. Local Priorities, Infrastructure, Ideologies, Resources

• The views of local people and their response to the current episode of food insecurity

What are their immediate concerns and priorities? How do they see the current situation in relation to past episodes of food insecurity? Consider the views of different groups: poor farmers, rich farmers, fishermen, nomads, farmers with livestock, casual labourers, full-time workers, artisans, factory workers, the destitute, the urban poor. Distinguish between the priorities of these groups and between men and women.

• Resources

What types of resources are available (financial, organisational and human resources)? A shortage of organisational resources (civil and social administration, transport networks, health systems) severely hampers implementation. They may have been destroyed as a result of war or deteriorated to a state of collapse through long-term neglect. Additional financial resources may be needed to strengthen weak institutions and provide the necessary training and support for personnel.

• Political context

What are the main political divisions? Who are the least-powerful groups or have least access to resources? Are any groups oppressed or discriminated against and if so, how and for what reason? How have these trends developed over recent years? What are the political sensitivities locally, nationally and internationally? Are any particular groups benefiting from the situation and if so how? To whom should programme be targeted, or how can interventions be implemented so that the most vulnerable benefit?

APPENDIX 4: FOOD SECURITY JOB DESCRIPTIONS

TITLE OF POST:
FOOD SECURITY/FOOD AID OFFICER

#1
Country: SUDAN
Base: North Darfur

BASIC POSITION DESCRIPTION:

1. To implement and monitor the food distributions in North Darfur together with another food aid officer
2. To supervise and continuously train members of the food aid team
3. To report on food aid activities

Activities:

OBJECTIVE 1: TO IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR FOOD DISTRIBUTIONS

- Activities
  - To manage a team of food aid officers
  - To prepare on a monthly basis the WFP food request
  - To supervise data entering of waybills
  - To plan the distributions according to logistic means
  - To organise distribution points
  - To prepare and organise the distributions in close collaboration with WFP
  - To monitor the distribution (stock control, stock reports, number beneficiaries, etc…)
  - To register new beneficiaries when necessary
  - To implement food distributions when necessary
  - To get support from local authorities and traditional leaders to ease distributions

OBJECTIVE 2: TO COLLECT INFORMATION IN THE CONCERNED AREA IN COLLABORATION WITH FOOD SECURITY DEPARTMENT

- Activities
  - To train the team and systematize the Post Distribution Monitoring tools in place
  - To analyse PDM data and write report
  - To complement PDM with other information collection tools (population movements monitoring, market surveys, ad hoc focus groups, etc.) in collaboration with FS department
  - To integrate these information in a broader food security perspective, in collaboration with the FS department.

OBJECTIVE 3: COORDINATION

- Activities
  - To follow-up the food needs in collaboration with the FS department
  - To actively participate in the definition of a food aid exit strategy in collaboration with FS department
  - To update the exit strategy on a regular basis in collaboration with FS department
  - To coordinate with other actors for a better understanding of the overall FS situation with a particular focus on food aid in the area of intervention.

TITLE OF POST: AGRONOMIST

#2
Country: INDONESIA
Base: Calang

BASIC POSITION DESCRIPTION:

- To provide an improved understanding of the agricultural situation in the project areas
- To identify and implement agricultural rehabilitation projects and assure an adequate monitoring
- To actively participate in evolving ACF food security strategy in Aceh province

OBJECTIVE 1: TO PROVIDE AN IMPROVED UNDERSTANDING OF THE AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

Activities:

- Assess the impact of the tsunami/earthquake on agriculture and consequently on the food security of the populations.
- To define food security assessments and surveillance methodologies and questionnaires, notably agriculture, together with FS surveillance expatriate and coordinator FS/FA and help in carrying out these assessments.
- To liaise and coordinate locally with other organisations implementing agricultural activities or assessments and report on these to the FS coordinator.
- Reporting on the findings.

OBJECTIVE 2: TO IDENTIFY AND IMPLEMENT AGRICULTURAL REHABILITATION PROJECTS AND ASSURE AN ADEQUATE MONITORING:

Activities:

- To implement agricultural activities and to identify new projects and interventions areas in Aceh Jaya district (rehabilitation of fields, vegetable gardens, cash crops, mangroves).
- To identify beneficiaries and targeting criteria.
- To follow up and/or organise soil salinity and soil composition assessments in the identified areas.
- To identify the needs for external support (FAO, CIRAD, civil engineers for irrigation etc), and organise and follow up these assessments.
- To identify, organise and monitor cash for work activities linked to agricultural projects (mainly cleaning of irrigation/drainage channels and cleaning of fields).
- To identify and distribute appropriate seeds, tools and other agro equipment.
- To organise appropriate training for the teams, beneficiaries and to organise farmer field trips.
- To order and follow up supplies needed for the implementation of the activities.
- To define a monitoring system and to monitor the implementation of the agro and cash for work activities through regular follow and punctual assessments, such as post-distribution and harvest monitoring and impact evaluations.
- To write progress activity reports compiling qualitative and quantitative data.

OBJECTIVE 3: TO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN EVOLVING ACF FOOD SECURITY STRATEGY IN ACEH PROVINCE

Activities:

- Information collection and analysis through FS/agro assessments, interviews, observation and discussions with other ACF expats, national staff, NGO personnel and local population.
- Regular meetings with FS surveillance expat concerning feedback and findings during the assessments.
- Regular communication with the Log base and coordo FS/FA on the evolution of the context.
- Definition of FS strategy (recovery and rehabilitation) in collaboration with coordo FS/FA and other FS expats and senior national staff.

TITLE OF POST: FOOD SECURITY SURVEILLANCE OFFICER

#3
Country: ZIMBABWE
Base: : Chipingue

BASIC POSITION DESCRIPTION:

The objective of the present food security surveillance officer position is **to design, implement and monitor the activities of the FS surveillance component of the ECHO 2007 programme, in link with the partners (in particular AREX, NEWU and FAO).**

The Food Security Surveillance Officer will be in charge of the analysis of the complex humanitarian context in some areas of Zimbabwe with focus on evolutions in livelihood vulnerability so as to regularly update the understanding of the various actors and additionally, allow ACF to timely adapt its programs to the changing context.

Activities:

OBJECTIVE 1: IMPLEMENTATION AND SUPERVISION OF THE ACF FS SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM.

- To design the baseline survey guidelines (for a socio-economic typology) and questionnaire, to supervise its implementation in the field and to ensure the compilation and finalisation of a baseline report;
- To design the ACF FS surveillance system: criteria of selection of wards for the sentinel site data collection; criteria of selection of households to be interviewed on a monthly basis, selection of micro indicators to be followed and tools to be implemented, questionnaire for monthly household interviews; guidelines for thematic focus group discussion, guidelines for macro-level data collection;
- To facilitate and monitor the proper and timely data collection by monitors in the field;
- To facilitate and monitor the proper and timely data entry and analysis;
- To compile and finalise monthly FS Surveillance results reports;
- To organise, plan and monitor the implementation of all activities in the field and follow level of achievement (following LFA indicators);
- To collect macro-level data on the humanitarian context, on the economic and social trends and on the interventions of other stakeholders (level of coverage of identified needs), in order to complement the field data collection;
- To ensure the timely dissemination of relevant information and of FSS bulletins to stakeholders;
- To prepare and present the FSS results during agricultural working group meetings;
- To identify problems and formulate solutions in any step of the implementation of the programme

OBJECTIVE 2: PUBLICATION OF FS SURVEILLANCE BULLETINS.

- To compile and finalise 4 FS Surveillance bulletins meant for external publication.

OBJECTIVE 3: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENERAL MONITORING SYSTEM IN COLLABORATION WITH NEWU AND FAO.

- To ensure the permanent collaboration with FAO for the proper implementation of the General Monitoring system, in order to remain in coherence with the settled approach ;
- To ensure the permanent collaboration with AREX for the proper data collection by AREX field officers;
- To monitor the proper data entry (of questionnaires filed by AREX field officers) and to submit datatables to FAO;
- To participate to data analysis with FAO when relevant.

OBJECTIVE 4: HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT.

- To manage and supervise the field team (6 monitors);

- To plan the work of the team and follow their achievements at weekly and monthly basis;
- To recruit staff when needed;
- To identify training needs and design and organise training to build up the capacity of staff in achieving their objectives, in collaboration with external entities when possible;
- To design Job Descriptions and define time bound objectives;
- To monitor the performances of the staff (Evaluation);
- To ensure that the rules and regulations of the organisation are strictly followed by team members;
- To plan and follow staff leaves;

OBJECTIVE 5: RESOURCES MANAGEMENT.

- To follow FSS component budget lines, to follow expenditures of past months and prepare the expenditures forecast for the coming month (to be submitted to the Administrator);
- To prepare internal order forms for the purchase of items, to collaborate closely with Logistics for the identification of suppliers and requested quality for specific items and services (printing of bulletins…) and follow the purchase process ;
- To submit the weekly vehicle request.

OBJECTIVE 6: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COORDINATION.

FS internal coordination

- To organise meetings at team level for coordination, planning and achievements monitoring on a regular basis;
- To animate FS meeting with all FS staff when requested by needs of the programme;
- To ensure the link with the coordination team.

Internal coordination (base and mission)

- To participate to the Base, expatriates or general meetings when needed;
- To share the results of the FSS systems with the other programmes and teams of the mission, in particular to provide relevant information for the implementation of the projects and for the formulation of future interventions.

External coordination:

- To represent ACF in meetings related to the Food Security surveillance sector in her/his area of intervention;
- To meet with actors (local NGOs, INGOs, Research Institutes) to know the dynamics and approaches on-going in her/his operational area;
- To meet with the District Councils representatives to update our knowledge on development orientations and national policies for the Food Security sector.
- To ensure the coordination with AREX and NEWU for the proper implementation of the General monitoring system in the three identified districts;
- To collect information and collaborate with other stakeholders developing surveillance systems and disseminate results when relevant;

OBJECTIVE 7: REPORTING.

- Weekly activities update to the FS coordinator;
- Minutes of meetings;
- Monthly technical reporting to FS coordinator, Head of mission and Headquarter;
- Donor reports (intermediary and final, and others requested, to ECHO and FAO): done in close collaboration with the FS coordinator and HoM;
- Technical reports for capitalization: Baseline survey, FSS monthly report, FSS bulletins;
- Concept papers and project proposal in collaboration with Coordination team.

OTHER DUTIES.

- To participate in assessments in other parts of the country when needed (with ACF or other agencies);
- To participate to FS strategy formulation and FSS system strengthening at mission level.

APPENDIX 5: ACF-IN CHARTER OF PRINCIPLES

ACF-IN is a non-governmental, non-political, non-religious, non-profit organisation. It was established in France in 1979 to deliver aid in countries throughout the world. The aim of Action contre la Faim is to save lives by combating hunger and diseases that threaten the lives of vulnerable children, women, and men.
Action contre la Faim intervenes in the following situations:

- in natural or man-made disasters that threaten food security or that result in famine;
- in situations of social/economic breakdown, linked to internal or external circumstances that place groups of people in extremely vulnerable positions;
- in situations where survival depends on humanitarian aid.

Action contre la Faim brings assistance either during the crisis itself through emergency interventions, or afterwards through rehabilitation and sustainable development programmes. Action contre la Faim also intervenes to prevent certain high-risk situations.
The goal of all Action contre la Faim programmes is to enable beneficiaries to regain their autonomy and self-sufficiency as quickly as possible.
All members of Action contre la Faim worldwide adhere to the principles of the charter and comply with them in their work.

INDEPENDENCE

Action contre la Faim acts according to its own principles so as to maintain its moral and financial independence. Action contre la Faim's actions are not defined in terms of domestic or foreign policies nor in the interest of any particular government.

NEUTRALITY

A victim is a victim. Action contre la Faim maintains a strict political and religious neutrality. Nevertheless, Action contre la Faim may denounce human rights violations that it has witnessed as well as obstacles put in the way of its humanitarian action.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

Action contre la Faim refutes all discrimination based on race, sex, ethnicity, religion, nationality, opinion or social class.

FREE AND DIRECT ACCESS TO VICTIMS

Action contre la Faim demands free access to victims and direct control of its programmes. Action contre la Faim uses all means available to achieve these principles and will denounce and act against any obstacle preventing it from doing so. Action contre la Faim also verifies the allocation of its resources to ensure that the resources reach those individuals for whom they are destined. Under no circumstances can partners working together with or alongside Action contre la Faim become the ultimate beneficiaries of Action contre la Faim aid programmes.

PROFESSIONALISM

Action contre la Faim bases the conception, realisation, management and assessment of its programmes on professional standards and its years of experience to maximise its efficiency and the use of resources.

TRANSPARENCY

Action contre la Faim is committed to respecting a policy of total transparency to beneficiaries, partners and donors and encourages the availability of information on the allocation and management of its funds. Action contre la Faim is also committed to providing guarantees of its good management.

APPENDIX 6: LIVELIHOOD ECONOMY ZONES IN TAJIKISTAN

The areas can be classified into four zones: (IA) Mountainous - high land availability; (IB) mountainous - low land availability; (IIA) plains - high land availability; (IIB) plains - low land availability. Livelihoods and determinants of food security are defined for each zone:

	A. HIGH LAND AVAILABILITY	B. LOW LAND AVAILABILITY
I. MOUNTAINS	* Locations: **West Kourgan Tyube; Central Khatlon; East Kouliab** * Main types of production: Livestock; Fruit; Cereals; Potatoes; Wild products; Forestry * Cereal availability: Medium to High (>80% of per capita requirements) * Key determinants of food security: Higher land availability (>0.2 ha per capita) compensates for Lower yields (<1mt per ha); Lower levels of irrigation (<33% of irrigated land); Good access to pasture * Risks: Bad harvests due to low rainfall, crop disease, mudslides; Land degradation due to cultivation of marginal land * Productive capacities: Able to expand land under cultivation * Vulnerability: Able to withstand bad events due to diversity of livelihoods	* Location: **Nurek District** * Main types of production: Energy; Cereals; Livestock * Cereal availability: Lower (<80% of per capita requirements) * Key determinants of food security: High dependence upon wage income; High rates of unemployment; Lower land availability (<0.13 ha per capita); Lower yields (<1mt per ha); Low levels of irrigation (<33% of arable land) * Risks: Bad harvests due to low rainfall, crop disease, mudslides; Land degradation due to cultivation of marginal land * Productive capacity: Very limited capacity to expand agricultural production; Increased employment depends upon macro-economic improvements * Vulnerability: Limited capacity to cope with bad events due to low levels of production and limited food and income earning opportunities
II. PLAINS	* Locations: **South and south west Kourgan Tyube** * Main types of production: Cotton; Cereals; Vegetables; Industry * Cereal availability: Medium (>80<150% of per capita requirements) * Key determinants of food security: Medium land availability (>0.13<0.2ha per capita) mediates for high decrease in yields (>30% decrease from pre-Independence levels); Good access to pasture; Households less dependent upon income-earning activities; Reduced access to markets due to border closures and harassment * Risks: Bad harvests due to 'Afghan winds'; Political insecurity * Productive capacity: Potential to increase production through repair of irrigation systems * Vulnerability: Better able to cope with bad events than IIB due to higher levels of production and more reliable livelihoods	* Locations: **Central and north Kourgan Tyube; Central and south Kouliab** * Main types of production: Cotton; Cereals; Vegetables; Industry * Cereal availability: Low (<80% of per capita requirements) * Key determinants of food security: Lower land availability (<0.13ha per capita) means less able to compensate for high decrease in yields (>30% decrease from pre-Independence levels); Poor access to pasture; Households more dependent upon income earning activities * Risks: Political insecurity; Reduced demand for labour; Flooding * Productive capacity: Potential to increase production through repair of irrigation systems * Vulnerability: Less able to cope with bad events than IIA due to lower levels of production and less reliable livelihoods

Bibliography

• ACF-IN (2001) An introduction to working in food security – Handbook to accompany a one-week induction course for food security Officers. Internal document.
• ACF-IN (2001) Glossary of key terms – for Joint Technical Training April 2001. Internal ACF working document.
• ACF-IN (2000) Identification des besoins des populations pour une mission exploratoire. Internal ACF working document (draft).
• ACF-IN (2005) Technical strategy paper - Action contre la Faim International. Internal ACF working document (draft).
• ACF-IN (2005) Food Security Surveillance Guidelines : Part 1 and Part 2. Internal document.
• ACF-IN (2006) Conceptual Framework of Malnutrition. Internal ACF working document.
• ACF-IN (2006) Community-Driven Participation in Humanitarian Relief Programming.
• ACF-IN (2006) Cash-based Interventions Position Paper.
• ANDERSON M. (1996) Linking Relief and Development – A manual to Aid in Programming Assistance to Break the Cycle of Disasters and Promote Sustainable Development.
• AUSAID (2003) AusGUIDElines.
• BONNARD P. & al. (2002) Report of the food aid and food security assessment: a review of the title II development programme, Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance Project (FANTA).
• DUFFIELD and TAYLOR (2004) Emergency Nutrition Assessment Guidelines for field workers. Save the Children UK.
• EURONAID (2002) PCM Introduction – PCM Course and Background (CDROM).
• EUROPEAN COMMISSION (2004) Aid Delivery Methods. Volume 1: Project Cycle Management Guidelines.
• FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANISATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS, (1996) World Food Summit Minutes, Rome (FAO).
• GOSLING L. and EDWARD M. (1995) Toolkits: A Practical Guide to Assessment, Monitoring, Review and Evaluation' Save the Children Fund, London
• GRUNEWALD F. (2000) Minutes from the ACF Food Security training. Internal ACF working document.
• HALLAM A. (1998) Evaluating Humanitarian Assistance Programmes in Complex Emergencies, Good Practice Review Number 7, Relief and Rehabilitation Network, ODI.
• HODDINOTT J. and YOHANNES Y. (2002) Dietary diversity as a food security indicator. Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance Project (FANTA).
• ITAD ltd (1996) The Logical Framework Approach - A Project Management Tool.
• LAILLER A. (2000) Famine Early Warning Systems and response: a diagnosis and compared assessment of the major functioning Famine Early Warning Systems. Internal ACF working document.
• LAUTZE S. (1997) Saving Lives and Livelihoods – The Fundamental of A Livelihoods Strategy / Feinstein International Famine Centre.
• LE NORMAND I. (1996) Food Security training document – Context Analysis. Internal ACF working document.
• MASON F. (2001) Nutritional causal analysis. Internal ACF working document.
• MASON F. and LEATHER C. (2001) Approach to Food Security Assessments – for presentation in Oxford July 2001. Internal ACF working document.
• PIROTTE C. and HUSSON B. (1997) Entre Urgence et Développement – Pratiques Humanitaires en questions / Karthala.
• PIROTTE C. & al (eds). (1999) 'Responding to Emergencies and Fostering Development: the dilemmas of humanitarian aid' Zed Books, London.
• PRESIDENT'S TASK FORCE (1984) Report on the President's Task Force on Food Assistance, Washington, DC.
• PRETTY J. & al (1995) 'Participatory Learning and Action: a trainer's guide'. London: IIED.

• PRUDHON C. and LeNORMAND I. (1999) Analyse de la situation alimentaire et nutritionnelle des populations d'un contexte donné. Internal ACF working document (draft)
• PRUDHON C. (1999) Malnutrition in a Crisis Situation- Manual for Therapeutic Nutritional Feeding and Nutritional Programme Planning. ACF/Karthala.
• SCHOENEBERGER H. (2001) Food Security: the thorny path from crisis to Sustainable Development. Agriculture and Rural Development Volume 8, n°2, p16-19.
• SEAMAN J. & al. (2000) The Household Economy Approach - A resource manual for practitioners. Save the Children Development Manual.
• WOLFE W. S. & al. (2000), Building Household Food Security Measurement Tools for the Ground Up, Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance Project (FANTA).
• YOUNG H. & al. (2001) Evaluer la sécurité alimentaire en vue de sécuriser les moyens d'existence dans une situation d'urgence. Dossier Thématique n°36. ODI / Réseau des Pratiques et Politiques Humanitaires.
• YOUNG H. & JASPERS S. (1995) Nutrition Matters: People, Food, and Famine.

NOTES

Design Graphic: Séverine Béchet, www.studiosbdesign.com
Cover photography: © J. Goldstein – Liberia
Printed in January 2008, by Moselle Vieillemard, la Prairie de Villebon, 91140 Villebon-sur-Yvette.
Recycled paper Cyclus print
First published: January 2008

ACF - INTERNATIONAL NETWORK

CANADA
7464 rue St-Denis
Montréal, QC, H2R 2E4 Canada
E-mail: info@actioncontrelafaim.ca
Tel: (514) 279-4876
Fax: (514) 279-5136
Web: www.actioncontrelafaim.ca

SPAIN
C/Caracas 6, 1°
28010 Madrid, España
E-mail: ach@achesp.org
Tel: 34 91 391 53 00
Fax: 34 91 391 53 01
Web: www.accioncontraelhambre.org

UNITED STATES
247 West 37th, Suite #1201
New York, NY 10018 USA
E-mail: info@actionagainsthunger.org
Tel: 212-967-7800 Toll free : 877-777-1420
Fax: 212-967-5480
Web: www.actionagainsthunger.org

FRANCE
4 rue Niepce
75014 Paris, France
E-mail: info@actioncontrelafaim.org
Tel: 33 1 43 35 88 88
Fax: 33 1 43 35 88 00
Web: www.actioncontrelafaim.org

UNITED KINGDOM
First Floor, rear premises,
161-163 Greenwich High Road
London, SE10 8JA, UK
E-mail: info@aahuk.org
Tel: 44 208 293 6190
Fax: 44 208 858 8372
Web: www.aahuk.org

ACTION CONTRE LA FAIM
ACCION CONTRA EL HAMBRE
ACTION AGAINST HUNGER
ACF INTERNATIONAL NETWORK