

Minutes of Ag2Nut CoP and FSIN CoP co-sponsored call, March 27

Topic: What is needed for global monitoring of access to adequate nutritious food? Part II
[Ag2Nut CoP](#) call, co-sponsored with the [FSIN community of practice](#)

Date: Thursday, Mar 27, 2014

Time: 10:00 am, Eastern Daylight Time (New York, GMT-05:00)

Recording of the call:

<https://jsi.webex.com/jsi/ldr.php?RCID=a35f92fa93d18343b4c0731f1cc9995e>

Many thanks to USAID's SPRING project, especially Aaron Buchsbaum and John Nicholson (SPRING) for supporting the call.

Background

On February 27, the topic of monitoring access to adequate nutritious food was discussed, with high interest among the communities of practice. The call minutes, presentations, and recording are available on the Ag2Nut and FSIN websites:

<https://knowledge-gateway.org/ag2nut/discussions/2e411e18>

<http://www.fsincop.net/news-events/detail/en/c/216869/>

To follow up, on March 27, we briefly reviewed last call, and took the conversation forward by starting to *identify efforts to develop and use indicators* on this topic.

Discussion

Anna Herforth moderated the call and started the discussion of indicators by introducing a framework. Indicators are organized by which aspect of food security they measure – availability, access, utilization, or stability – and at what level (national, community, household, individual). The focus is on indicators that could be potentially useful for monitoring access to *nutritious* food (and not necessarily comprehensive list of all possible food security indicators).

Alexis Hoskins announced that FSIN will have a technical working group in measurement of food security, and this discussion would help feed into that.

Members contributed and discussed indicators they knew of or were developing. **The Food Indicators spreadsheet started on the call can be accessed here – all members are invited to continue to add to it:** <http://bit.ly/QgYgSD>

Other discussion not captured on the spreadsheet

Jody Harris commented that individual-level indicators could be applied to different age/life-cycle groups (women, young children, very young children who are still breastfeeding, etc.)

Timing of surveys: To capture the stability of nutritious food access, participants discussed the feasibility of carrying out surveys multiple times/year.

Cynthia Donovan: Key component not addressed is periodicity. Once a year is inadequate to inform in ag environments. This brings in the need that Carlo mentioned to bring in statisticians, but also agriculturalists. Might have to consider costs in this as well, as part of feasibility. Finding something ideal but infeasible is not as valuable as finding a proxy that can be collected efficiently and reliably; part of dietary diversity score issue.

Alice Temu: To Cynthia, would it be helpful to conduct data in different seasons? As you pointed out, dietary diversity varies in different times and I think it may be helpful to have a clear picture of year round availability. Thank you.

Carlo Cafiero: To Alice and everyone. repeated data collection in different season raises issue on how to maintain representativity, if the assessment is to be made at national level. Only few cases exist of "continuing surveys" (for example in Brazil there is a project to do that).

Alice Temu: Thank you Carlo. It may be costly too, especially at National level.

Carlo Cafiero: Exactly!

Terri Ballard mentioned that for the household and individual level indicators on this table, they can be applied with any frequency that the implementer wants. The experience-based indicators have a recall period that could be changed according to the interests of the surveyor. Re: costs, don't think any of these indicators are being proposed as a stand-alone indicator; should always be included in a larger survey for economy as well as context.

Cynthia Donovan: The Integrated ag/income surveys under WB are also working with periodic revisits to the households to address the seasonality issues. Again, revisiting this is quite expensive with large sample surveys.

Some of the technical/validation aspects of FCS were discussed by WFP staff and Carlo Cafiero.

Anna Herforth noted that different indicators may be more useful in different contexts. (For example, agricultural diversity or functional diversity most useful in contexts where people depend on their own farms or local markets for much of their food; FCS may be most useful in contexts where there is more deprivation, compared to situations where there is growing obesity and NCDs.)

Jody Harris mentioned a new paper she and Terri Ballard and others have co-authored (not yet available) which has reviewed current indicators of the access level of food security (such as

FCS, HDDS, WDDS, HFIAS, ELCSA) for how they have been validated/what they are valid proxies for. This will help inform the use of these indicators.

Anna Herforth noted that this paper will help us to understand where we are – and will help make it clearer how that compares to the ideal, where we want to be.

Terri Ballard noted that certain indicators may be best adapted for projects vs. global monitoring

Resources contributed

Carlo Cafiero: An inter-agency and expert group on Agricultural, food security and rural development statistics has been formed last year under the UN Statistical Commission. It is a forum to set standards at the international level for relevant statistics, including on food security. (Brings in the statistical perspective which has been somewhat underutilized; statisticians can contribute how to make proper influences out of data collected.)

Carlo Cafiero shared the link to a new Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation paper on post-2015: <https://docs.gatesfoundation.org/documents/Post%202015%20Food%20Security%20Discussion%20Paper.pdf>

Amanda Pearson: There is a 2013 FoodSecure working paper from University of Bonn that reviews food and nutrition security indicators. It classifies indicators by availability, access, utilization....It might be a useful reference as you focus on nutritious food. <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2237992><http://ssrn.com/abstract=2237992>

Alexis Hoskins and Veronique Deschutter shared resources related to WFP VAM (Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping) – <http://vam.wfp.org/>

- Quarterly Publications
 - Global Food Security Update – a quarterly bulletin outlining Food Security trends in vulnerable countries <http://www.wfp.org/content/global-update-food-security-monitoring>
 - Market Monitor – a quarterly bulletin outlining trends and impacts of staple food prices in vulnerable countries <http://www.wfp.org/content/market-monitor>
 - The Assessor eNewsletter – a quarterly enewsletter on Food Security analysis work, priorities and initiatives
- The Rundown - a weekly digest of the latest assessment reports published on our website
- Food price database: <http://foodprices.vam.wfp.org/>

Announcements made on the call:

Emily Levitt Ruppert: The Home Fortification Network (HF Network) is an emerging online community of practice created to connect home fortification programme implementers, and to provide practical and technical guidance. Post your questions or comments, share your experiences, and participate in more discussions facilitated by implementers in the field. This is an open community of practice and we welcome all interested individuals to champion this forum; help grow our community! <http://network.hftag.org/>

Next steps – Creating an interactive database of Food Indicators:

The information collected in the March 27 call is available through a Google spreadsheet. We invite you to contribute missing pieces, add new ones and use the information for your work. **The Ag2Nut and FSIN Communities of Practice are invited to contribute additional indicators that you may be using, developing, or aware of, that are not yet on the list. Access the interactive spreadsheet here: <http://bit.ly/QgYgSD>**

Don't worry if you don't have complete information -- others may fill it in. When an empty box is filled in, it changes from blue to clear. Please join in!

The purpose of this living document is to raise awareness of the indicators that do exist for monitoring access to and consumption of adequate nutritious food. These may be useful for community members' own research. It can also point to areas for which feasible indicators for global monitoring need to be further developed.

This information may also inform global food security conversations, such as those surrounding the post-MDGs, the FSIN technical working group, the FAO suite of food security indicators, and the ICN2 accountability framework.

Registered for the March 27 call:

	Name	Job Title	Company Name	Country/Region
1	Aaron Buchsbaum	Knowledge Management Coordinator	SPRING Project	USA
2	Adilia Caravaca	President	WILPF International	Costa Rica
3	Alexis Hoskins	Programme Advisor; FSIN	World Food Programme	Italy
4	Alice Temu	Nutrition Consultant	Private	Canada
5	Alicia Martinez	Food System Researcher and Community Dietitian	BSAIN	Europe - Americas
6	Alissia LOURME RUIZ	PhD student	Cirad	France
7	Amanda Lewis	International Agricultural Development	University of California, Davis	USA
8	Anna Herforth	Independent consultant	WB, FAO, SPRING	USA
9	Carla Boussem	Cross-cutting sector advisor	Feed the Future	USA
10	Carlo Cafiero	senior statistician	UN FAO	Italy
11	Catherine Leclercq	Nutrition Officer	FAO	Italy
12	Cecilia Gonzalez	Technical Officer for Agriculture-Nutrition & Haiti Program PO	World Relief	USA
13	Domitille Kauffmann	Nutrition and Resilience Adviser	FAO	ITALY
14	Dramane BAKO	Monitoring and evaluation officer	Millennium Challenge Account	BURKINA FASO
15	Emily Ruppert	Consultant	GIZ	USA
16	Goulida Downer	Program Director/Asst Professor	Howard University College of Medicine	USA
17	Gudrun Stallkamp	Nutrition Advisor	Concern Worldwide	Ireland
18	Ines Reinhard	senior planning officer	GIZ	Germany
19	Joanne Arsenault	Project Scientist	UC Davis	USA
20	Julien Morel	Nutrition Security Advisor	Action contre la Faim (ACF)	France
21	Leah Koeppel	Intern	Ashoka	USA
22	Meaghan Murphy	Food Security & Livelihoods Specialist	FHI 360- LIFT II Project	USA
23	Melissa Antal	Program Officer	The Manoff Group	USA
24	Paolo Prosperi	PhD Candidate	IAMM/CIHEAM	France
25	Rebecca Heidkamp	Asst Scientist	Johns Hopkins SPH	USA
26	Ruba Kahnji	Information Manager	FAO	Syria
27	Sandrine Chetail	Senior Advisor	Mercy Corps	France

28	Suzanne Heitfeld	Food and Nutrition Security Graduate Intern	CARE	Atlanta, Georgia
29	Terri Ballard	consultant	FAO	Italy
30	Veronique De Schutter	communication Officer	World Food Programme	Italy
31	Amanda Pearson	MPH candidate	George Washington University	USA
32	Astrid Mathiassen	Researcher	world food programme	italy
33	Jody Harris	Sr Research Analyst	IFPRI	UK
34	Hugo Melgar-Quinonez	Associate Prof. and Director	McGill Institute for Global Food Security	Canada