

FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOOD ASSESSMENTS: A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR FIELD WORKERS

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CONTENT SUMMARY

Brief Description: This practical guide to Food Security and Livelihoods (FSL) assessments provides the technical explanation and operational details required to lead a comprehensive or rapid FSL assessment.

Uses: The document shows field workers how to implement an FSL assessment. Its purpose is to gather information on the FSL situation of a crisis-affected population in order to identify appropriate responses. An FSL assessment will answer a number of key questions, including:

- What has been the impact of the crisis on the zone?
- Which groups are at risk? Where? When? Why?
- What type of response is required to assist these groups?
- How much assistance is required? How much assistance is provided by others?
- How should beneficiaries be selected?
- When should assistance be provided and for how long?
- What results are we seeking to obtain with our response?

Tool Components: The core technical components of the FSL assessment guide include the following:

1. Conceptual framework
2. Gathering information
3. Sampling and assessment planning
4. Core components of a food security & livelihood assessment
5. Analyzing results
6. Identifying solutions
7. Disseminating information

OPERATIONS

Number of Staff Required: The number of staff required will depend on the scope of the assessment. Larger FSL assessments will demand many people's involvement, including administrators, logisticians, enumerators, interviewers, specialists, drivers, translators for staff, questionnaires, and training, team leaders and/or monitors, and data encoders.

Time: Comprehensive FSL assessments vary from 21 to more than 60 days, depending on context, scope, and resources. Recruiting/training enumerators and developing/testing field tools can take more than 30 days. Field implementation can take 15-30 days, often followed by time-intensive data entry and analysis.

Cost of Assessment: The cost will depend on the scope and length of the assessment. The budget will be determined by the tools and sampling methods

employed, which will in turn inform the expertise, number of survey team members, vehicles, and other equipment/resources needed.

Training: Assessment team training can take 4–6 days depending on the scope of the assessment. Two days of the training include the piloting and revision of the tools.

Geographic Targeting: The targeted geographic area will be determined by assessment goals and available budget. Significant information is collected at the household level; the guide provides instructions on sampling.

Type of Data Collection: An FSL assessment includes a secondary data review, key informant interviews, focus group discussions, household questionnaires, market trader interviews, and possibly mid-upper arm circumference.

Degree of Technical Difficulty: The staff member leading the FSL must have previous assessment experience and solid FSL technical understanding. This staff member must be able to conduct the training and manage the other staff members.

Complements other Resources: An FSL assessment may include a variety of indicators that could be used individually, such as dietary diversity and the coping strategies index. It also relies on secondary data, which can be sourced from national level surveys or other assessments.