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| Food Security and Livelihoods Assessment Tools Overview - Africa Region 2021 |

# Purpose of this guideline

This guideline summarises the steps that need to be taken when conducting assessment for food insecurity and livelihoods operation or programmes and which tools to apply. All standard tools can and should be adapted according to country and area situation. However, protection, gender and inclusion questions as well as questions on community engagement and accountability are mandatory.

The guideline is divided into four (4) steps. Each set of tools needed in the relevant step can be found by following the links in the text box at the end of each step description. All the tools can be found [here](https://ifrcorg.sharepoint.com/%3Af%3A/s/DCPRR-AFRICA/EqGxQ6VrYVlJmKiFcKBhuIwB_R_TjzHA_3j5qoY6Fa--kQ?e=AadmXl).

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# Overview of tools and data collection

## STEP 1: National level and secondary data

* At national level, try to obtain any data/reports that would be relevant to inform your planning and response itself.
* National level data can be collected by engaging with the relevant ministry/department(s) and other relevant stakeholders.
* The main purpose at this step is to understand the context of the situation, the gaps in the response and which geographical area to position and conduct the FSL assessment.

### This stage is useful to gather info on:

* The overall food insecurity situation in the country i.e. which regions are most affected and their population
* Projection/trends of food insecurity situation in the next mid and long term
* Any initiative/response being implemented by government and/or plans in FSL (immediate and early recovery)
* Other organisations working with the Government or that are responding independently
* The National Society’s likely access to and acceptance in affected areas, together with wider security considerations to help consider feasibility (and timelines) of any respone

**NOTE:** *STEP 1 can be skipped IF there is enough evidence/facts from secondary data. Such facts should however be recorded and used for planning and inform the below steps.*

### The tool to be used in STEP 1 can be found [here](https://ifrcorg.sharepoint.com/%3Af%3A/s/DCPRR-AFRICA/Er64ktqvFhJMnVBwWBZMBsYBiPHSPbOAahsc4PMmXsl_6g?e=i5tb0w)

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| **Key Informant Interview Guide, National Level** [**here**](https://ifrcorg.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/s/DCPRR-AFRICA/Ecj71LUQFa1Gg9K_cl4v7KIBNargk8-oZlDYXOVBS56tyA?e=QSbeud) |
| **Secondary data sources**This could for example be [FewsNet](https://fews.net/), [humanitarianresponse.info](https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/home), [mVAM](https://dataviz.vam.wfp.org/) (WFP), Clusters/Sectors in country (especially FSL), [National Cash Working Groups](https://www.calpnetwork.org/community/), [REACH](https://www.reach-initiative.org/), Government Disaster Management platforms etc.  |

## STEP 2: District and community level data

You need to ensure that you have enough data and information from STEP 1. Once you are satisfied with the above information from National Level or secondary sources you can start STEP 2.

* Identify sub-regions where you need to do further needs assessments, starting with District or other local levels
* Make sure you speak to a cross-section of the community (e.g. women, men, elderly, youth, people living with a disability, and other minority groups) and not only community leaders, to ensure you are hearing the perspectives of everyone.
* Identify and engage with the local administrators or persons in charge/knowledgeable on food insecurity situation in the area.
* Be prepared to get the information from and coordinate with multiple stakeholders and affected populations in the same area as necessary.
* Main purpose is to understand the FSL situation (impact, scope -current and projected); most vulnerable population’s main needs; the response coverage / gap at short and mid term (basic needs assistance and livelihoods recovery); protection and access concerns; and the most relevant response options.
* Review and make a plan to integrate the CEA minimum actions for assessments to ensure your assessment is being conducted in a participatory way.[[1]](#footnote-2)
* Steps 1 and 2 should give you enough information to proceed with the programme design.

### This stage is useful to gather info on:

* Further demographic of the population and identification of any groupings to consider
* Further information on local relevant climatic conditions and how these affect people’s food security and livelihoods status
* Areas most affected and population living in those areas
* The main livelihoods activities, and sources of foods and income for the population
* The media landscape in the targeted area (e.g. mobile phone network coverage, presence of local radio and TV stations, trusted local newspapers etc.)
* Characteristics of the most vulnerable households/people, as well as social and power dynamics in targeted communities
* Availability of financial service providers to assess CVA delivery mechanisms and ability of community to access FSPs
* Market analysis and ability of markets to support the needs of affected populations
* Impact of food insecurity for particularly vulnerable groups
* Projection/trends of food insecurity situation in the next mid and long term.
* Protection, gender, inclusion and access concerns and risks
* Necessary cash-plus or complementary activities to include in programming
* Any ongoing initiatives in the area to respond to food insecurity and livelihoods (short and mid-term)
* Any other services provided and existence of referral mechanisms between actors (private, public, humanitarian agencies etc.)
* Any other factors that have a bearing on food security situation and possible interventions e.g. group tensions, conflict, food storage capacities

### The tools to be used in STEP 2 can be found [here](https://ifrcorg.sharepoint.com/%3Af%3A/s/DCPRR-AFRICA/El8zvSDiBNVNoIcUAG4ClxoBGtacHztgikfCfImmcdbgtw?e=sFTlOM)

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| **Key Informant Interview Guide, District Level** [**here**](https://ifrcorg.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/s/DCPRR-AFRICA/EUClpJQCmdBGt80En8zGnfgBnmYgtZuIq13ZL3U-DxpY0Q?e=dA3wSx) |
| **Key Informant Interview Guide, Community Level** [**here**](https://ifrcorg.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/s/DCPRR-AFRICA/ERBzuJHJ4sVNoHX4G1WzdCYBKT00s2ASgUby9RTzFjitiA?e=RxeBcn)Include, community representatives of all groups, not just leadership (see more in guide) |
| **Key Informant Interview Guide, Specialists** [**here**](https://ifrcorg.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/s/DCPRR-AFRICA/EaRWYbeNaJRPlm5R32CER4IBSoB2zpSbWnUEMQJNBHPumQ?e=2DzY7M)Include Livestock and Agriculture specialists  |
| **Key Informant Interview Guide, Health Centres** [**here**](https://ifrcorg.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/s/DCPRR-AFRICA/EVWB7EzUBUNBkQRw_K2R8AkBdJY6YLcWheCdt55zwN2dZw?e=pbVky8) |
| **Key Informant Interview Guide, Protection Actors** [**here**](https://ifrcorg.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/s/DCPRR-AFRICA/EQiqzP2BI49Dt6XRbo3z0VIBDBvLkfYKeAleaa7C2YbYSg?e=yfFweH) |
| **Focus Group Discussion Guide, Affected Populations** [**here**](https://ifrcorg.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/s/DCPRR-AFRICA/Eem6RrfOgChKju6xmzUnkccBDsa-2rsdokOxFlbh42vAuQ?e=7nZpvV) |
| **Market Assessment Interview Guide** [**here**](https://ifrcorg.sharepoint.com/%3Ax%3A/s/DCPRR-AFRICA/EXDeepWlgvVIqEM0T7UDSQoBQtQVbSMPdoJIOpvAkIWrtw?e=6b8QkN)Include; traders, market representatives, price collection tool, market observations. This tool includes a separate guide to the market assessment tools (see several sheets in Excel)  |
| **EMMA Market System Mapping Guide** [**here**](https://www.emma-toolkit.org/sites/default/files/bundle/Step6.pdf)Useful for guidance on market system and supply chain mapping. |
| **Rapid Assessment for Markets (RAM)** [**here**](https://www.livelihoodscentre.org/-/market-assessments-rapid-assessment-for-markets-ram-ifrc-)Toolkit to entire RAM for those interested in using this instead of the market assessment included in this toolkit (do however note that the RAM does not include questions on gender and protection, which should therefore be added)  |

## STEP 3: Household level data

When there is a possibility and time available, a household level need assessment and baseline survey(s) should be conducted. This can be done if the operation in question is an Emergency Appeal or another longer-term operation. Step 3 allows for broader inclusion of affected populations.

The data analysis should be used proactively to make any adjustments or adaptations to the programme (designed on the basis of steps 1 and 2).

* Household level needs assessments can be conducted broadly with affected populations.
* Ensure that you engage a subset of the affected population, which is representative of all the different economic and social groups in the community.
* Ensure that your household level needs assessment data analysis is triangulated with your data from steps 1 and 2.
* Baseline – endline tools are simple, quantitative household surveys that can be carried out directly with the targeted households/individuals. These capture real-time data on the food security status of households by measuring (for example);
	+ Food Consumption Score (FCS) – 7 day recall
	+ Reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI) – 7 day recall
	+ Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS) – 1 day recall

### This stage is useful to gather info on:

* Household demographic data and vulnerability status
* Household food sources, stocks and storage capacity
* Livelihood activities/income sources
* Household expenditure
* FCS, HDDS, coping strategies and other food insecurity indicators
* Protection, gender, inclusion and access concerns and risks
* Intra-household targeting Market information and availability of key commodities (food, livelihoods inputs, other basic needs)
* Preferences for sharing and receiving information from the National Society, as well as how people prefer to raise complaints or share feedback.
* Preferences for how the community want to participate in decision making within the programme.[[2]](#footnote-3)

### The tools to be used in STEP 3 can be found [here](https://ifrcorg.sharepoint.com/%3Af%3A/s/DCPRR-AFRICA/EtxJT6NnM01Dmj3N2Xqois8BhBYhMnzi0Zw0zZaPRbXRWw?e=S7umJd)

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| **Household Interview Guide (Quantitative), Needs Assessment**  |
| **Household Targeting / Vulnerability Assessment and Verification tools** This is considered part of the project implementation. |
| Household Baseline (Quantitative), including FCS, HDDS, and CSI This is considered part of the project implementation once targeting and verification has been done.  |

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| **Sample size calculation**Depending on the number of population at risk (for baseline survey) and targeted population (for mid-term, PDM and endline evaluation), you can calculate the needed sample using an [online sample calculator](http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html). It is recommended that the sample meets a 95% confidence level and allow a 5% margin of error. Keep the response distribution at 50% to have the largest sample size. It is important to also factor in the budget available and if budget-constrained you can adjust your level of confidence to 90%. While sampling, it is important that you proportionately distribute the sample by the key factors (e.g. geographically, vulnerabilities, social groups etc.) to ensure your results are representative of the population. For PDM, mid-term and endline evaluation, use the beneficiary households’ list to select the sample (ensuring representation as above). If you do not have a list of target households for baseline survey, use systematic random sampling to select the households to be interviewed for the baseline. The steps for systematic sampling are below but can be adopted depending on context: * + 1. Based on the sample calculation and distribution, you should have determined the number of households to be interviewed per district.
		2. If the district has less than 500 households,
			- Determine the household interval by diving the total number of household (N) by the number of samples needed per district (n), i.e k=N/n.
			- Determine the starting point.
			- Randomly select the first household within the first “k” households from the starting point.
			- Interview every kth household from the interviewed household until you reach**“n”** interviews.
		3. If you have more than 500 households in a district:
			- With the help of local leaders, sub-divide the district into equal segment of 100 households.
			- Randomly select a third of the segments.
			- Divide the number of interviews to be done in that district equally among the segments.
			- For each segment, perform the steps in two above

*Please reach out to your PMER focal points if you need more guidance on sampling.* |

## STEP 4: Monitoring (corresponding to above tools)

Monitoring is essential throughout programming and post-distribution to incorporate real-time adaptations into the project.

**Please note!** While this package includes tools on monitoring that are aligned to the needs assessment tools, monitoring of the programme should be considered as an integrated component of the wider operation and should be reflected in the M&E plan. Furthermore, the monitoring tools of course need to be contextualised to the final project design.

### This stage is useful to gather info on:

* Household food sources, stocks and storage capacity
* Change in people’s livelihoods activities and income sources
* Household expenditure
* Satisfaction on the targeting and beneficiary selection process
* Complaints and feedback by beneficiaries
* Relevance and sufficiency of community engagement and accountability set-up
* Quality control, appropriateness, usage, and immediate impacts of the distributed items.
* Protection, gender, inclusion and access concerns and risks
* Status of affected population’s resiliency and coping mechanisms
* FCS, HDDS, CSI and other food insecurity endline indicators
* Market impacts, developments, functionality and access
* Monitoring of the security situation and any changes in this

### The tools to be used in STEP 4 can be found [here](https://ifrcorg.sharepoint.com/%3Af%3A/s/DCPRR-AFRICA/EoOS6vnb5TFPknxPC_R9NyEBF9H_KnfB4jmY-nw5yZKlHQ?e=6R8tNR) (currently in development)

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| **Household Interview Guide (Quantitative), Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM)**  |
| **Household Edline (Quantitative), including FCS, HDDS, and CSI** |
| **Focus Group Discussion Guide, PDM, Affected Populations** |
| **Key Informant Interviews, Community level**  |
| **Market Monitoring Interview Guide** (traders, price monitoring)  |

## Links to Kobo forms to be used in assessments

You can change language of the form to either French or English

Vous pouvez changer la langue du formulaire en français ou en anglais

You can find instructions how to set up Kobo tool [here](https://ifrcorg.sharepoint.com/sites/DCPRR-AFRICA/Shared%20Documents/FSL/FSL%20needs%20assessment%20tools%202021/Kobo%20tool%20intructions)

1. [Market assessment Form](https://eenew.ifrc.org/x/uWffcOHt)
2. [Food Security and Livelihoods Needs Assessment \*\* Key Informant Interview Guide – National Level](https://eenew.ifrc.org/x/jZU6eLCi)
3. [Food Security and Livelihoods Needs Assessment \*\* Key Informant Interview Guide – Community Level](https://eenew.ifrc.org/x/ICO3eMXC)
4. [Food Security and Livelihoods Needs Assessment \*\* Key Informant Interview Guide – District Level \*\*](https://eenew.ifrc.org/x/spD1kj9m)
5. [Food Security and Livelihoods Needs Assessment \*\* Interview/Meetings with Protection Actors in Locality\*\*](https://eenew.ifrc.org/x/vJOQ6em9)
6. [Food Security and Livelihoods Needs Assessment \*\* Key Informant Interview Guide with Health Centres \*\*](https://eenew.ifrc.org/x/qkkaFAix)
7. [Food Security and Livelihoods Needs Assessment \*\* Key Informant Interview Guide with FSL Specialists – District (Or National) Level \*\*](https://eenew.ifrc.org/x/TM7Mzvbb)
8. [Food Security and Livelihoods Needs Assessment : Household survey](https://eenew.ifrc.org/x/Nr0INeFt)
1. <https://communityengagementhub.org/resource/ifrc-cea-guide/>, CEA Guide pg. 21-32 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Use tool 2 in the CEA toolkit for suggestions on the types of questions to include in an assessment. The toolkit can be downloaded here: https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/document/community-engagement-and-accountability-toolkit/ [↑](#footnote-ref-3)