



Evaluation Report

Integrated Food Security and Humanitarian Phase Classification (IPC)

National IPC Workshop

Harare 25th – 29th May 2009

Background

The IPC is primarily a tool for analyzing and classifying the severity of food security situations at the national and sub national levels. All analysis is backed up by both quantitative and qualitative evidence. The IPC is also a process whereby key food security organizations and the national government literally sit together to look at the evidence and come to a common consensus on the severity of a crisis.

In 2008, the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVac) organized an IPC technical training and awareness workshop, following which a decision was made to try and apply IPC in Zimbabwe. Hence, the purpose of the five-day workshop was to use IPC in the food security, nutrition and livelihood analysis in Zimbabwe. Technical support for the workshop came from the East and Central Africa Food Security and Nutrition Working Group (FSNWG) and the Global IPC steering committee which is composed of FAO, WFP, FEWS, OXFAM, GB, CARE International, Save the Children US and UK, and the EC Joint Research Centre others. This initiative is part of a global multi-agency effort to improve protocols for food security analysis, assessment and response and linking to ongoing initiatives at the country, regional and global levels.

This report thus summaries the evaluation of the workshop provided by participants and various stakeholders. The participants' comments generally centred on data collection, data quality, implementation of IPC and its usefulness as a tool (see table 1).

Data Collection

Participants expressed the need for clear communication on the type of data to be collection as well as the level at which this should be done. However, it was generally felt that for a more useful classification and analysis, data needed to be collected at the lowest possible levels. In-order for this to be possible, the food security and nutrition cluster needed to be decentralised to the district levels.

Table 1: A Summary of Participants' Evaluation Comments

Data Collection	<p>Need to collect data from the lowest possible level Need for clear communication specifying type of data and level prior to such meetings Need to develop assessment calendars to create synergies to avoid duplication Food Security /Nutrition cluster decentralization to district level/provincial Need to have current data disaggregated at low level (ward-district-province-national)</p>
Data Quality	<p>Need for up to date information Screening of available data is vital There is need for regular update of relevant data Need to choose appropriate period for IPC analysis Importance of having most recent data in filling templates Thorough data review before use i.e. data validation Enables use of secondary data for decision making Helps in generation of diverse data which can be used for different purposes Qualitative outcomes not quantifiable Data gaps – missing data set which needs to be collected Need for consensus on the data that we are analyzing especially time period Convergence of data is critical in meta analysis IPC is can only be said to be scientific if the reports are generated scientifically Adjust some of the indicators to suit the Zimbabwe situation e.g. water quality Scientific analysis to portray an objective food security situation</p>
Implementation of IPC	<p>Resuscitation of Food and Nutrition management teams at all levels. Rolling out IPC principle to these teams IPC requires co-ordination at different levels – district, provincial and national There is need for consensus of all stakeholders at each level for the system to work Requires expertise Capacitate government structures (MOHCW, Agritex-resources) Provincial teams for IPC Synchronization of parallel structures (NGOs, Government ministries) Need for a multi-sectoral approach to come up with a clear picture of the food security situation of the country Need for harmonization and linkages of food security activities at all level Transparency, data sharing and coordination at all levels</p>
IPC as a tool	<p>The tool allows for comparability The tool is participatory, transparent and allows stakeholders to reach consensus The tool is comprehensive, it bring all aspects of food security The IPC also contains a section on weaknesses of the data used (self assessment) The use of Maps makes the data clear The tool does not replace existing tools but its complimentary The IPC requires standard methodology and harmonization surveys to be carried The tool is not a response planning tool A tool that helps us classify the country into different food security phase classification</p>
General	<p>It tends to be subjective as it depends on the group composition so not scientific</p>

Comments	<p>It requires recent information, and so expensive because there is need for continuous updating.</p> <p>It is difficult to get all the relevant stakeholders on board</p> <p>The IPC requires close monitoring of stakeholders to ensure updated information an exercise which needs a big budget</p> <p>Need a team of different technical experts as facilitators of IPC</p> <p>Steps in IPC analysis</p>
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Data Quality

Data quality was of greatest concern for most participants shown by the number and varied views about the issue. In addition to this, was the appropriateness of some indicators provided in the analysis template to the Zimbabwean context. This observation points to the need for a thorough review of the analysis template as well as the data before the analysis and classification process can commence. Another important point raised was the need to agree on the period for the analysis and making sure such data was available.

Implementation of IPC

Participants stressed the need for strong coordination and partnerships in terms of data collection and analysis for all parties. Such an environment required transparency and data sharing and this highly depended on trust among those involved. Another important issue to be considered was that of capacity constraints in terms of expertise particularly in government. To this end, the resuscitation of Food and Nutrition management teams at all levels would be useful. The first step towards this would entail the rolling out of the IPC principle to these teams.

IPC as a Tool

In general, IPC is considered a useful tool because it is participatory, transparent and allows stakeholders to reach consensus. It allows for comparability and is very comprehensive (see Table 1).

General Comments

Some participants felt the IPC tool was not as scientific as it tends to be subjective and depends on the group composition. Moreover, the tool required recent information, and this was expensive because there is need for continuous updating. The need to get all the relevant stakeholders on board presented challenges on data availability and quality.

Way Forward

In taking this process forward, the participants provided their comments as follows:

- GOZ and Donors should mobilize resources to enable implementation of IPC and invest in data collection at grassroots level
- The need to adopt IPC as a tool in Zimbabwe
- Need to adapt some indicators to the Zimbabwean context
- Creating awareness of IPC was crucial
- Relevant data to be collected from ward level
- Quality control mechanism to be put in place for screening of data
- To re-establish proper and effective data collection at the lowest possible level
- Compile a directory of IPC trained Food Security Specialists
- Stakeholders collect data timely so that at any given time we have updated information
- Standardize data collection methodologies
- Data should be generated at district level
- Need for IPC training to all stakeholders at provincial and at district level
- Awareness training of IPC to policy makers
- Set up committees at national and provincial level for IPC implementation and monitoring
- Need to revive the Food and Nutrition Management Teams at district, provincial and national levels to ensure coordinated collection and collation of data
- Need for clear leadership with terms of reference to lead and manage the whole process
- Need to capacitate the FNMT to manage the process at all levels
- Need for good advocacy to ensure buy-in by relevant stakeholders
- The national technical team needs to be exposed to IPC process as it is implemented by countries experienced in using the tool