



Towards Effective Food Security Responses

FAO is improving emergency response protocols against a backdrop of system wide UN humanitarian reform.

Humanitarian reform is an issue at the centre of the UN policy agenda; Donors and international agencies are working together to improve the predictability, timeliness and effectiveness of humanitarian response through a range of measures including the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative; the CAP Needs Analysis Framework; the Cluster Leadership Approach and the newly

upgraded Central Emergency Response Fund. In this rapidly evolving scenario, how can a food security perspective contribute to improved humanitarian response?

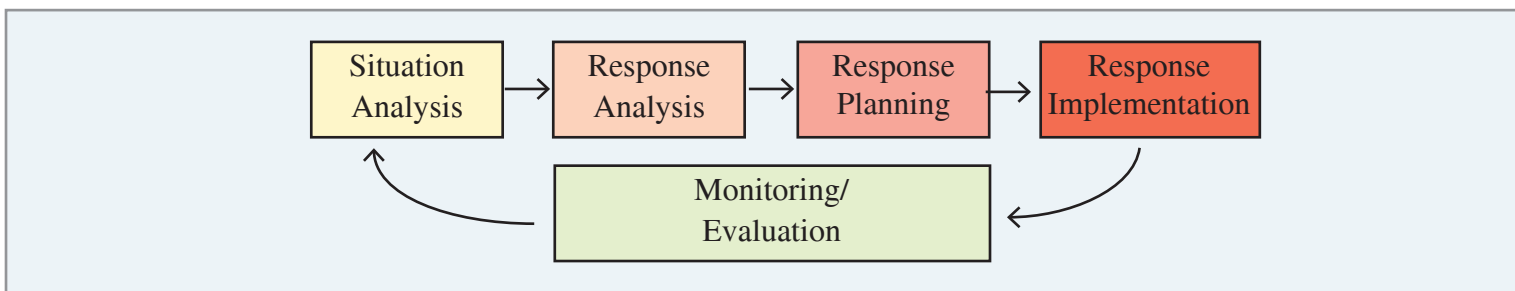
The FAO, for example, is developing an emergency response framework which identifies immediate food security priorities and measures for improving

the productivity and resilience of food systems in the medium and long term. The framework recognizes that persistent complex and protracted food emergencies call for diversified response options. These include social protection, livelihood restoration, and improving the resilience of food systems.

Emergency Response Protocol for Food Security

The framework considers emergency response strategies as a process with long term planning horizons rather than as a series of ad-hoc emergency needs assessments. It also includes feedback mechanisms along the various stages of the project management cycle.

Figure 3: Emergency Response Protocol



The emergency response protocol (**Figure 3**) includes the following major elements:

- **Situation Analysis:** The foundation aspects of a given situation, including its severity, magnitude, proximate and underlying causes, are identified and gain technical consensus.
- **Response Analysis:** The range of potential response options for improving the short and long term situation, as well as implementation requirements, are identified.
- **Response Planning:** Operational requirements and systems, including advocacy and fund raising, are identified and set up.
- **Response Implementation:** Effective response is operationalised to ensure desired impact.
- **Monitoring / Evaluation:** Changes in the Situation Analysis and the impact of response are monitored and evaluated.

Rationale for the Response Protocol

The rationale for the response protocol is to provide:

Transparent and Timely Approaches to Crises: The response protocol identifies a clear logical sequence and the full range of components that should take place in ongoing crisis response. It focuses on the changing nature and scale of humanitarian assistance, recognizing that complex emergencies require more extensive planning to address situations that stretch into the longer term and are uneven across time and space.

Broad Based Food Security Responses: The response protocol operationalises the concept of strategic response analysis and considers appropriate medium, short and longer term response options. It moves beyond standard response options (such as food aid, seeds and tools) to include social protection, livelihood restoration and resilience of food systems which are more relevant in humanitarian interventions than ever before.

Evidence Based Approach: The protocol delineates the need for systematic baseline and pre-crisis food security information as a basis for continuous assessment, monitoring and evaluation in countries prone to recurrent disasters and protracted crises.

Work to Date

Under the FAO Netherlands Partnership Programme, FAO is institutionalizing a response protocol that delivers “food security relevant responses to different types of crises based on a comprehensive framework that analyzes and addresses people’s needs.”

A range of technical tools support FAO’s role in crisis response as it relates to the emergency disaster cycle. These include :

- (i) Crop and Food Supply Assessment Missions (CFSAMs);
- (ii) Global Information and Early Warning System for Food and Agriculture (GIEWS); and
- (iii) Ad hoc Missions, Agricultural Assessment Missions, Sub sector analyses (e.g. nutrition, livestock, infrastructure), and Recovery and Relief Missions.

Other ongoing initiatives to improve food security analysis and response mechanisms are outlined below:

The Integrated Food Security and Humanitarian Phase Classification (IPC) is a tool for improving analysis and decision making in emergency situations that is being developed by FAO and the Food Security Analysis Unit (FSAU), Somalia. The IPC tool is a standardised classification system integrating food security, nutrition and livelihood information into a simple statement indicating the severity of a crisis and implications for humanitarian response.

Livelihood approaches have been incorporated into rapid assessments for sudden disaster responses and post emergency scenarios such as the 2004/2005 Tsunami and the 2005 Pakistan earthquake.

Country level support linking food security information with policy/strategy making, programme formulation and interventions has been strengthened. Specific programmes include the EC-FAO Food Security Information for Action Programme that supports Food Security Information Systems in twenty countries, SETSAN (Mozambique) and SIFSIS (Sudan).