For the first time, the IPC Technical Manual includes a complete range of classification scales: Acute Food Insecurity, Chronic Food Insecurity and Acute Malnutrition. Each scale informs specific types of action needed, thus providing decision-makers with invaluable information for the strategic design of actions to address food insecurity and malnutrition. The scales have been fully harmonized, thus enabling:

- new scales to be applied more easily at the country level as protocols are shared across all scales, allowing analysts greater fluidity across the entire IPC portfolio;
- the path for integration of the three scales, with similar analytical parameters and a consolidated conceptual framework, increasing the ability to compare and establish linkages between the three conditions.

In addition, revisions have been made based on lessons learned and latest technical developments, including revisions to reference tables, parameters for identification of areas that receive significant humanitarian food assistance, as well as parameters for estimating projected populations expected to be acutely food insecure. The IPC Technical Manual Version 3.0 also includes more elaborate communication protocols, with more attractive and adaptive modular communication templates. Throughout the Manual, guidance to users has been refined and made more precise in order to promote higher-quality analysis and global comparability. The manual includes new protocols such as:

- **Famine classification**: Protocols for use in the most severe crisis contexts, setting the global benchmark for declarations of Famine.
- **Classification of areas with limited or no access to collect evidence**: Specific protocols for classification under extreme circumstances, maintaining IPC standards through adherence to minimally recommended parameters.
- **Evidence reliability assessments**: More specific criteria providing better guidance on the use of evidence for classifications.

The IPC Technical Manual Version 3.0 is organized into two parts:

- **Part I** provides the general user, including donors, implementing partners and governments, with adequate information to appreciate and critically utilize IPC products.
- **Part II** provides the analyst with the protocols, including tools and procedures, to conduct the classification itself.

Between the publication of the IPC Technical Manual Version 2.0 and 3.0, a number of Guidance Notes and Working Papers covering specific aspects of the IPC were developed. These are part of IPC Resources and provide useful supporting guidance for this Manual, which will be of particular interest to advanced analysts, trainers and facilitators. The IPC Resources can be accessed through the IPC website ([www.ipcinfo.org](http://www.ipcinfo.org)).
WHAT IS THE IPC?

The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is a common global scale for classifying the severity and magnitude of food insecurity and malnutrition. It is the result of a partnership of various organizations at the global, regional and country levels dedicated to developing and maintaining the highest possible quality in food security and nutrition analysis. Increasingly, the IPC is the international standard for classifying food insecurity and malnutrition.

The IPC is a ‘big picture’ classification focusing on providing information that is consistently required by stakeholders around the world for strategic decision-making. Nuanced information may also be needed to inform particular decisions or answer certain questions. The IPC provides the essential information needed in a wide range of contexts in consistent, comparable and accountable ways.

The IPC communicates actionable information for strategic decision-making. It analyses and consolidates complex food security and nutrition information, and presents it in a simple and accessible form. The IPC provides the evidence base to assess the situation by asking the following questions: how severe, how many, when, where, why, who, as well as the key characteristics. Together, these questions form the basis for situation analysis and help inform decision-making, which is the focus of the IPC (Box 1).

The IPC estimates the number of people affected at different severities of food insecurity and malnutrition, and communicates the key drivers and characteristics of the situation, providing decision-makers with key information to support response-planning.

IPC protocols are not designed – nor should they be used – to assess the impact of humanitarian or developmental assistance on food security and nutrition, nor to monitor the achievement of goals, which require separate monitoring and evaluation methods.

The IPC distinguishes between acute food insecurity, chronic food insecurity and acute malnutrition since different interventions are needed to address each situation. Furthermore, understanding their co-existence and relationship is invaluable for strategic decision-making. The IPC is a platform for presenting the linkages between food insecurity and malnutrition, as well as acute and chronic food insecurity, to support more integrated and better coordinated response-planning.

WHY IS THE IPC NEEDED?

Within the inherently complex, multidisciplinary and cross-sectoral fields of food security and nutrition, there was a widespread need for an analytical approach that would be robust and transparent, comparable and applicable across locations, and relevant for decision-making. To meet this challenge, the IPC has become a global reference for classification of food insecurity and increasingly for acute malnutrition because it is:

- **Generic** enough to be utilized in an array of food security and nutrition situations and contexts;
- **Simple** enough to be practical and understandable at field level, making it useful for multiple stakeholders;
- **Rigorous** enough to become an international standard.

HOW DOES THE IPC WORK?

The IPC provides the evidence base to assess the situation by asking the following questions: how severe, how many, when, where, why, who, as well as the key characteristics. Together, these questions form the basis for situation analysis and help inform decision-making, which is the focus of the IPC (Box 1).

The IPC estimates the number of people affected at different severities of food insecurity and malnutrition, and communicates the key drivers and characteristics of the situation, providing decision-makers with key information to support response-planning.

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