IPC Integrated Food Security Phase Classification

Evidence and Standards for Better Food Security and Nutrition Decisions

IPC GUIDANCE NOTE

IPC ANALYSIS WORKSHOPS IN PRACTICE

JULY 2025

The IPC aims to inform decision-making in an agile, effective, and timely manner. IPC analysis workshops should be light and flexible, enabling rapid deployment in response to sudden shocks or evolving crises, while maintaining a balance between efficiency, quality, and inclusiveness—core principles of the IPC approach.

MODALITIES AND LOCATION

Whenever possible, IPC analyses should be conducted virtually. Face-to-face analyses are only recommended in specific circumstances, such as for particularly complex analyses or when new guidance or protocols are introduced. Where fully virtual analyses are not feasible, a hybrid approach can be considered, ensuring adequate logistics for active participation of virtual participants. If face-to-face analyses are the only option, they may be organised in one step (at the national level or in one centralised location), or in two steps (a decentralised analysis (pools) and a central consolidation - depending on the scope of the analysis (geographic coverage, number of analysis units) and size of the country.

Location: IPC analysis workshops should be organised where the overall combined logistical costs (for travel, DSA and venue) are the lowest possible, while ensuring stable internet connectivity and plurality of participation. In some cases, this may entail hosting the workshop in the city where the majority of participants are already based. In other instances, it may be more cost-effective to convene in a nearby town or suburb that is less costly than larger metropolitan areas. IPC Technical Working Groups (TWG) are encouraged to support organisations with limited financial resources to participate in the analysis, thereby promoting greater diversity and inclusivity.

Venue: IPC face-to-face analyses may be conducted in any facility that can accommodate participants and provide a stable internet connection. To ensure cost-efficiency, preference should be given to meeting spaces offered by members of the IPC TWG and/or at venues usually made available for Cluster meetings. The use of commercial venues—such as hotels or conference centres—is generally discouraged unless no suitable alternatives are available.

PARTICIPATION

Plurality must be preserved and encouraged in every IPC analysis, ensuring balanced representation from government technical services, United Nations agencies, international and national/local non-governmental organisations, and technical organisations. In accordance with the IPC quality standards, each IPC analysis is led by a Level 3-certified IPC Facilitator, supported by a co-lead and Level 2 co-facilitators for each analysis group. All analysis participants should be at least Level 1 trained. Participation should be limited to individuals who are prepared to actively participate in the analysis. While new practitioners are always welcome, priority should be given to previously trained and experienced IPC analysts to ensure optimal efficiency. This is especially the case when no normative IPC training is planned ahead of the analysis.

In most contexts, the ideal number of participants ranges between 30 and 40. A smaller group may be appropriate when the number of units of analysis is fewer than 20, provided that plurality is maintained. Conversely, a larger number of participants may be justified when the analysis covers a high number of areas

(e.g. over 100), or when it is conducted in two steps—decentralised and centralised consolidation. However, experience has shown that exceeding 50 participants often leads to inefficiencies. In such cases, it is preferable to extend the duration of the workshop rather than increase the number of participants.

DURATION

Given that the first day of an IPC analysis workshop is typically dedicated to kick-off activities—such as presenting the evidence base, defining analysis parameters, and establishing key assumptions—and the final day is reserved for the plenary session, vetting of results, and formulation of key messages; the duration of any analysis will always exceed two days. The total number of days required for the analysis is determined by the number of analysis units and the number of analysts involved. Drawing on two decades of experience across more than 30 countries, it is generally observed that, under optimal conditions, an experienced analyst can complete the analysis of one area per day. For example, an analysis involving 30 areas and 30 analysts would typically require between three to five days. However, less experienced analysts may require between one-and-a-half to two days per analysis unit. Therefore, to maintain efficiency while fostering capacity development, it is recommended to aim for a balanced composition of the analysis team—ideally comprising at least 70 percent IPC-certified practitioners and no more than 30 percent new analysts.

TRAINING

A Level 1 training should ideally be conducted prior to the analysis if more than one-third of the invited participants have not been trained before. Otherwise, a one-day refresher training is considered sufficient. Level 1 trainings can be conducted virtually and are the preferred option. The recommended approach combines IPC e-learning through the dedicated platform with two days of virtual training. A four-day in person training should only be considered when connectivity constraints prevent equitable access to virtual training for all participants.

PREPARATION

To avoid delays and increased costs, analyses should only begin once all necessary data has been received and uploaded to the analysis platform. This includes population data, humanitarian food security assistance data, and food security and nutrition data, which must be consolidated and verified. Sufficient time should be allocated to verify alignment of indicators with the IPC Reference Table, identify any data gaps, and coordinate with TWG members to address those gaps. This approach ensures a more efficient, accurate, and cost-effective

CONTACTS

For queries or to request support, contact the IPC Global Support Unit at info@ipcinfo.org.