



IPC Asia Update

Newsletter of the Regional Support Unit

JULY 2012 - ISSUE 01

Welcome... to the new IPC Asia Regional Support Unit's newsletter.

To keep you informed, we bring to you updates and news on how the project is proceeding. Your photos, news, updates, ideas or interesting stories are most welcome - please send them through to our Communication Officer. We trust that you will find this informative and useful to your work. This first issue is meant to provide a comprehensive update overview.

What is the IPC ? And what is not?

The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is a multi-agency initiative involving CARE, FAO, the European Joint Research Centre, FEWSNET, Oxfam GB, Save the Children UK/US, and the World Food Programme (WFP).

Decision makers rely on food security analysis to successfully perform their work, and they directly benefit from consolidated findings, greater comparability of indicators, greater transparency of evidence and standardized reports to enable stronger linkages between information and action. There is a need for a common approach to consolidate existing food security analyses so as to have a common understanding of the key issues.

Thus the purpose of IPC is to standardize complex analysis of food security situations through consensus building around evidence-based classification of severity of food insecurity. The IPC aims for optimal decision support by making the best use of available evidence; by doing so in a transparent manner; and by jointly engaging with all relevant stakeholders. In summary the IPC aims to enhance the quality and reliability of information resulting in more effective decision making.

As on date, the IPC has been introduced in over 30 countries across, East, West and South Africa; Latin America and parts of Western and Central Asia. The present project provides resources for piloting the IPC in South and South-East Asia with the aim of establishing the IPC process at both the regional and country levels. Currently, there are four focus countries: Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan. However, due to a high level of interest from governments, stakeholders & donors

it was decided to expand the scope of the Asia Regional project to Cambodia and Philippines with a limited output.

The IPC is one piece in a much larger puzzle of data, analysis and institutions. The IPC is not a food security data collection system or methodology for directly measuring food insecurity. It is a complementary "add on" that draws from and provides focus to existing analytical systems, enables comparability, and links analysis to action.

The IPC does not replace the need for specific methods that collect and analyze various dimensions of food security in any particular way. Rather, the IPC approach incorporates and is strengthened by specific analytical methods. The IPC focuses on answering questions related to the situation analysis, and stops short of determining recommendations for specific action. This intentional limitation aims to ensure that the IPC analysis is neutral in order to provide unbiased and comprehensive information for coherent response programming at institution and agency level.



Focus Project Countries Activities

Nepal

The RSU conducted an Inception Mission with bilateral discussions with the Government of Nepal, key partners, and donors in April with a follow up mission in June. The aim was to (i) review the NeKSAP institutional set up, and (ii) review the existing NeKSAP phase classification system and formulate plan for its conversion to IPC 2.

Upon successful completion of these missions, the Government of Nepal (GoN)

assured the RSU of its commitment and the IPC in Nepal will be housed in the NeKSAP, Ministry of Agriculture Development. Following joint discussions with government counterparts as well as key stakeholders, a detailed plan of action has been agreed upon for completing the action in Nepal. This document has been disseminated widely in Nepal. A budget has been finalized and partially transferred to the FAO Representative Office for implementation.

Coming Activities

Comprehensive training on IPC Version 2.0 will be conducted in mid-August (dates to be finalized) in Kathmandu. Following this training, there will be an analysis workshop in Kathmandu in September where the Analysis Report and an IPC map will be produced.



Bangladesh

Following bilateral discussions with the Government (including the Under-Secretaries in the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management) in March & April, it was agreed by the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) that the IPC will be housed in Food Planning & Monitoring Unit (FPMU), Food Division, Ministry of

Food and Disaster Management.

A work plan and budget has been formulated with discussions with WFP and disseminated to other organizations for input and feedback. An RSU mission earlier in July has refined the work plan and the operational arrangements in close consultation with the key partners.

Coming Activities

The establishment of multi-agency IPC National Technical Working Groups (NTWG) is planned for August/September in Bangladesh.

There will be a training for the NTWG in Dhaka in October (dates to be finalized after consultations with all partners) and following this an analysis workshop will be held.

Myanmar

Permission is pending with the Government of Myanmar (GoM) for implementation of the IPC. Senior officials in the Department of Agriculture have been sensitized to IPC and discussions at the Minister level are ongoing. A draft work plan has been formulated in consultation with WFP which will be further modified and finalized once the GoM approves the IPC project.





Pakistan

RSU conducted an initial scoping mission in April and a follow up mission in June. Meetings included the RSU briefing senior officials in the Ministry of Food Security & Research, international NGOs, donors, the Food Security Cluster and UN agencies regarding the IPC, its functions and the specific advantages of IPC for Pakistan. The Government of Pakistan (GoP) designated the Ministry of Food Security & Research to host the IPC project.

Senior officials at Federal and Province level participated in a one day IPC Stakeholder Consultation workshop on the IPC in Islamabad on 7th June. Following the GoP decentralization policy, the project is conducting Province level stakeholder consultations in Baluchistan, Punjab, Sind, KPK/FATA, Gilgit

Baltistan and Kashmir). The workshops served to introduce the IPC and its working, the situation of food security in Pakistan, as well as experience sharing with Nepal. The workshops are well represented by government, UN agencies, INGOs, NGOs and academia. Level of participation and discussion by the participants is encouraging. The experience proves useful to the Pakistan team as well as the RSU. A follow up RSU mission (July 4th – 11th) has been conducted to support the Province level consultations.

A detailed plan of action has been agreed upon for successfully implementing the pilot IPC project in Pakistan. A budget has been finalized and partially transferred to the FAO Representative Office for implementation.

Coming Activities

The IPC National Technical Working Group (NTWG) is going to be formed in July/August.

Comprehensive training on IPC Version 2.0 is scheduled in the first week of September (1st - 5th) at National level and will include participants from the provincial level.

Following the training in the first week of September there will be an analysis workshop at national level in the second week of September. As in the case of Nepal, an analysis report and an IPC map will be produced.



Supplementary Project Countries

Through the FSN Group and in meetings with regional officers in WFP, UNICEF and FAO, the Regional Support Unit (RSU) has expressed interest in assisting any country interested in applying IPC in the region. Towards this end, the project is working with WFP and FAO counterparts in Cambodia and Philippines. Initial missions to Cambodia and Philippines are scheduled later in July in order to meet key government officials, partner agencies and to jointly formulate objectives and goals that can be achieved by project end as well as looking towards the longer term objective of establishing the IPC in these countries. In these two countries, the project will focus on preparatory activities with a comparatively more modest output. The RSU has also initiated talks with Indonesia to explore possibilities and interest for the IPC in that country.

Philippines

It is likely that the IPC will be housed within the National

Nutrition Council. Discussions have already been initiated by the RSU. Following talks with the Government of the Philippines (GoP) & WFP, it is expected that training on IPC 2 for National Government Agencies (National Nutrition Council, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Health, Department of Agriculture, and Bureau of Agricultural Statistics), FAO, WFP, other partners (OXFAM, CARE, Save the Children, ACF) and local NGOs will be conducted in October/November 2012.

Cambodia

A preliminary RSU mission is planned in the third week of July to meet key Government counterparts and other key stakeholders, to discuss possible dates for IPC training and to define the scope of action for the project.

Preparatory activities carried out in Cambodia during this initial phase will be instrumental in ensuring that high quality IPC products can begin to be generated in 2013.

Sharing Experiences and lessons.... IPC Regional Steering Committee

The IPC project enabled Mr Hem Raj Regmi (Under Secretary, Ministry of Agricultural Development, Government of Nepal and NeKSAP senior official), to travel to Islamabad for the IPC Pakistan Stakeholder Consultation workshop on 7th June, 2012. Mr. Regmi was invited as a resource person to share IPC experiences from Nepal as well as provide insight and input towards establishing the IPC in Pakistan. His presentation was very well received by the participants, particularly from the Government of Pakistan (GoP) counterparts.

In the coming months the project will continue to ensure that food security experts in the focus countries will be given the opportunity to travel to other focus countries whenever IPC activities are conducted.



FAO RAP has decided to establish an IPC Regional Steering Committee to create the platform for technical issues relating to the IPC rollout in Asia. This committee would initially be chaired by the FAO ADG/RR and would consist of representatives from many of the core IPC partners (WFP, CARE, OXFAM, Save the Children, FEWSNET, EC) as well as other agencies including UN agencies, INGOs, donors etc. The Terms of Reference have been drafted and will be shared with the FSN members.



Regional Activities

The Regional Unit was set up in Bangkok in April 2012. As on date formal authorization from Governments for three of the four focus project countries have been obtained; Pakistan on the 4th of May, Nepal on 10th of May & Bangladesh on 10th of June. Permission from the Government of Myanmar is still pending and discussions are on-going.

The IPC was presented at the Food Security Network (FSN) Group Meeting in Bangkok on 29th of May. Attendees included participants from ASEAN, UN agencies, NGOs, and donors. In addition

the Regional Support Unit (RSU) has conducted bilateral meetings with senior officials in FAO, WFP, UNICEF and OXFAM. Awareness raising activities with ASEAN and SAARC will be intensified in future, as well as keeping organizations informed about the project achievements at country level.

With regard to IPC training activities, it is expected that the IPC Global Support Unit, Rome will release at the end of the month, both IPC V2 Manual and IPC training materials (Level One - Experts and Level Two - Trainers). The RSU training

activities are scheduled accordingly for both IPC Experts and Trainers.

Thirteen food security experts have undergone a comprehensive IPC training: Nepal - five (WFP and FAO), Pakistan - four (WFP and FAO), Bangladesh - one (WFP), Myanmar - two (WFP) and Afghanistan - one (WFP). We have also initiated a roster of IPC experts we will continue to expand as the project is rolled out. Engagement with ASEAN and SAARC is being sort, in particular, preparation to present IPC in regional meetings organised by ASEAN and SAARC.

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