

# IPC CERTIFICATION STRATEGY

## QUALITY AND COMPETENCY REVIEW OF CANDIDATES FOR IPC LEVEL 3 CERTIFICATION

### Background:

Per the revised Learning and Certification Strategy developed in late 2018, as part of the process of **revitalizing Level 3 certification (L3)**, it was proposed that some form of qualitative review be incorporated into the certification process for prospective L3s. Indeed, qualitative review had been part of the previous L3 certification framework, but as it involved Steering Committee approval of each candidate, it had proven unworkable in practice.

This guidance note sets out a proposed process and procedural sequence based on recommendations from IPC Global Support Unit (GSU) colleagues in both Rome and the field. It recognizes that the constituency of prospective L3s is wide. The competency tool therefore needs considerable **flexibility**.

L3 certification represents the highest level of professional attainment for the IPC. Moreover, since the GSU has committed to ensure that IPC analyses are always led by L3 certified staff, the total number of L3 certified staff is indicative of existing capacity to adequately support IPC analyses at the global level. Therefore L3 certification is not to be offered lightly, or achieved without effort. As a general guide, the baseline question for L3 attainment should be, **'can this individual prepare and neutrally run a full analysis on their own, even without additional GSU support?'** If the answer to that question is yes, then the candidate is L3 potential; if the answer is less than that, then additional training, analysis experience and additional support are required before the candidate is certified as L3.

This note presumes that it is appropriate to assume that IPC L2s will be expected to work towards L3 certification, but that certification should not, on the whole, be either automatic or assumed. It is further noted that L3 certification is a scale-specific proficiency in Acute Food Insecurity, and does not necessarily equate to Chronic Food Insecurity and Acute Malnutrition.

### L3 Certification Requirements:

Although presented as a distinct requirement from the co-leading training and analysis, the GSU quality and competency review includes the GSU review of the performance of the candidate during these facilitation experiences as it is explained further below. Recalling that IPC analysis takes place in multiple languages, **L3-level certification can be undertaken in English, French or Spanish**, for any of the three classification systems. If a candidate is bi- or multilingual, that should be entered into the recommendation letter prepared by the sponsoring GSU personnel. Special arrangements may also be made for competency assessment in Arabic and Portuguese.

The competency review has two stages: the first takes place before the candidate starts to co-lead IPC analyses and trainings as part of the L3 certification requirements and once fully achieved the IPC Level 2 certification<sup>1</sup>. This step aims at assessing whether the L3 candidate possesses the needed technical competencies<sup>2</sup>. The second stage of the competency review takes place when the L3 candidate has attained all (other)<sup>3</sup> requirements for L3 certification. During this step, a GSU panel discusses the performance of the candidate during co-facilitation of workshops to determine if he or she has the required set of non-technical competencies (i.e. facilitation skills, mediation, neutrality<sup>4</sup>, organizing capacity, etc.). This feedback is systematically provided by the person leading the analysis or training in which the L3 candidate participated as co-lead.

This note serves to address the highlighted step below.

<sup>1</sup> This obviously will not be possible for candidates that have already started to engage in co-facilitation. However, for these people, the competency review should be conducted before their next co-facilitation assignment.

<sup>2</sup> The first stage of the competency review will be used by the GSU to confirm that selected staff can start to engage in workshop co-facilitation to meet the L3 requirements. The results of the review will also be used to identify aspects of the candidate's knowledge about the IPC that need to be improved and therefore areas of work during the practice of co-facilitation.

<sup>3</sup> If the candidate has not attended the facilitation skills training when all the other L3 certification requirements have been fulfilled, a grace period of 12 months to complete this mandatory training can be granted on the GSU's discretion. During that grace period, candidates are allowed to lead relevant IPC analyses and trainings without attending the facilitation training.

<sup>4</sup> Political interferences and particular agendas of the institutions participating in IPC analyses and processes, including institutions to which facilitators pertain, can compromise neutrality. L3 lead facilitators are expected to be neutral in their facilitation, as well as to ensure that neutrality is respected throughout all the analysis and reporting process.

IPC v3.0 Certification Level	Roles in IPC Training and Analysis	Requirements to Achieve Certification		
		Acute Food Insecurity	Chronic Food Insecurity	Acute Malnutrition
<b>Level 3</b> (IPC Lead Trainer and Analysis Facilitator)	<b>Lead</b> training and analysis facilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-lead analysis in at least two countries</li> <li>Co-lead at least one Level 1 training</li> <li>Pass GSU quality and competency review</li> <li>Complete IPC Level 3 facilitation training</li> <li>Facilitate a training or analysis at least once per year to keep status</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-lead analysis in at least two countries</li> <li>Co-lead at least one Level 1 training</li> <li>Pass GSU quality and competency review</li> <li>Complete IPC Level 3 facilitation training</li> <li>Facilitate a training or analysis at least once per year to keep status</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-lead analysis in at least two countries</li> <li>Co-lead at least one Level 1 training</li> <li>Pass GSU quality and competency review</li> <li>Complete IPC Level 3 facilitation training</li> <li>Facilitate a training or analysis at least once per year to keep status</li> </ul> <p>[AMN L3 certification requires an advanced degree in nutrition or a related field]</p>

### Competency assessment process:

The GSU defines L3 certification targets for the entire duration of the strategic program. Annual targets would also be needed considering that the determination of the total number of L3 certified personnel has to be guided by the idea of ensuring adequate support to analyses taking place in priority countries, regardless of when these take place and whether some of them may be simultaneous.

As of January 2019, there are 115 L2 Certified IPC practitioners around the world. This potentially means that over 100 people will be interested in being IPC L3 Certified and, sooner or later, will need to undergo a Competency Assessment. Furthermore, the competency tool will continue to be required for more newly certified practitioners.

As such, the competency assessment process needs to be flexible enough to allow for a rapid and straightforward application. At the same time it needs to be rigorous enough so as to ensure that the person that gets certified will respond effectively to the expectations of the L3 certification.

### The competency review process develops as follow:

**L3 Candidate Reference:** The IPC Regional Coordinator (for regional counterparts) or GSU Senior Management Team provides a recommendation letter for a candidate to be certified as Level 3. The sponsoring GSU staff can:

- Recommend L3 without further assessment:** this should be applied on an exceptional basis only, for those current GSU staff and outstanding non-GSU counterparts already operating at a level analogous to L3. In this case, the L3 candidate is dispensed from the competency assessment but not from the attainment of the other requirements.
- Recommend L3:** This recommendation suggests that the sponsoring GSU staff recommends that candidate is assessed for Level 3 status. The recommendation highlights

greatest strengths and concerns, especially on technical knowledge and presentational and facilitation skills of the proposed candidate.

**Technical Competences Assessment:** The L3 candidate is asked to review a selected worksheet of a past IPC analysis and complete a quality review form. The worksheet is selected by the GSU quality assurance team. It could correspond to an analysis for which a review has already been conducted by the GSU quality assurance team or an analysis for which this review is still pending. A panel or a designated member of the IPC Quality Assurance Team reviews the assignment and decides on endorsing his enrolment in the Level 3 certification process. If the enrolment of the candidate is not recommended, the next steps should be suggested and may include a request to attend more trainings or analyses or to complete further assignments. If the enrolment in the L3 certification program is recommended, the GSU quality assurance team should produce a note explaining which aspects of the candidate's technical knowledge need to be improved during the co-facilitation experiences<sup>5</sup>.

**Final Endorsement:** Once the L3 candidate has completed the requirements on co-facilitation of trainings and analyses, a panel is composed by the GSU, and eventually senior officials of IPC partner agencies, to discuss and review the feedback about how the candidate performed as co-facilitator. GSU staff having co-led analyses with the L3 candidate will be called in to provide references. The GSU panel recommends whether the L3 candidate should be certified or not. If the conclusion is that the person should not get certified, the GSU panel should inform GSU management on the rationale for rejecting the certification of the candidate and propose corrective measures that would allow the L3 candidate to opt again to L3 certification (e.g. acting as co-facilitator in an additional analysis or training workshop). The GSU management makes a final decision and informs the candidate and his or her managers.

<sup>5</sup> The note should be shared with the corresponding GSU lead facilitator for appropriate follow-up during the analysis. A similar note should be written in the case a candidate is not recommended for L3 certification. In this case, the feedback will serve to inform the candidate what aspects of his competency need to be worked on for being accepted to the L3 certification scheme at a later stage.