GUIDANCE ON HNO CHAPTER FOR FOOD SECURITY CLUSTERS

ABSTRACT
This document is meant to guide the Food Security Cluster/Sector (FSC/S) teams in the production of the FSC-specific HNO chapter narrative, which constitutes Part 3 of the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO).

Global Food Security Cluster
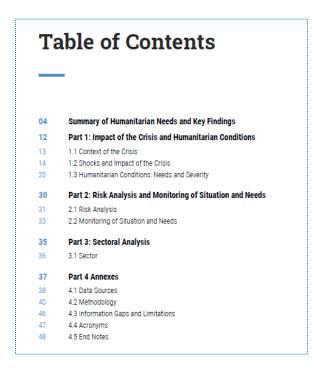Latest update: August 2023

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Introduction

Ensuring needs assessment and analysis is a cluster core function and represents the initial step of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC). In the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), each cluster provides detailed information on specific sectoral needs that are linked to the identified humanitarian crisis.

The picture below shows the standard HNO table of contents based on the 2024 annotated template.

Table of Contents

According to the template circulated by OCHA, **the space allocated to each cluster chapter narrative is one page** (graphs, figures and numbers excluded). In fact, reality shows that the narrative sectoral chapter length differs depending on each country and that for some countries it is not even present. Indeed, the trend is showing a cut out of the sectoral section, incorporating it into the intersectoral narrative (Part 1 and Part 2).

Given this and apart from the specific space that OCHA allocates to each country, **FSC teams are strongly recommended to develop a comprehensive food security needs analysis, publish it online/on the website and to refer to it (link) in the HNO official document**. Indeed, a solid

sector-specific narrative is important both to legitimate the work of the FSC and for stakeholders, partners, and donors to refer to when developing their response strategies.

For the HNO narrative, the FSC provides the following information to OCHA:

- Sector-specific analysis of needs and drivers of food insecurity (including the PiN and severity analysis[1])
- Sector projections of needs, depending on risk analysis and assumptions
- Sector monitoring indicators (combined for all clusters in a dedicated inter-sectoral session on "Monitoring of situation and needs").

Sector-specific analysis of needs

Link to intersectoral analysis

The sectoral analysis of needs and drivers has a **bi-directional link** with the intersectoral analysis: on one side sectoral analysis informs the intersectoral one by providing the information on drivers, data on food security outcomes, etc.; on the other side the sectoral analysis should be informed by intersectoral elements, as jointly identified by the "analysis team" (usually an extended ICCG/IMWG) and described in Part 1 and Part 2 of the HNO. In particular, the food security chapter should describe specifically the food security needs of the selected intersectoral priority population groups and/or geographic locations, while also linking to the key intersectoral thematic issues.

As a result of this bi-directional link, a reader of the HNO would understand the influence of each sector on the overall humanitarian conditions and would find coherence between sectoral and intersectoral analysis of needs.

Disaggregation

The sector-specific narrative should describe the needs of the affected population by **layering the analysis using different lenses**, i.e., disaggregating the information and data by populations groups (e.g., host communities, refugees, IDPs, migrant workers, returnees, etc.), geographical locations (or type of locations – e.g., rural vs urban, livelihood zones), Sex, Age and Disability, and/or any other criteria that makes sense in the specific country-context.

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[1] For guidance on PiN and Severity, please refer to https://fscluster.org/document/fsc-2023-pin-and-severity-calculation

While adopting FS lenses to the disaggregation exercise (using criteria relevant for FS analysis and response), **remember to incorporate elements related to key population groups and geographic areas flagged by the intersectoral group** (see paragraph above).

As a general rule, if disaggregated data are not available on a certain element, it is preferable to explicitly **acknowledge the data gap rather than ignoring it**, especially for sensitive categories (e.g. disability).

The narrative should **avoid generic statements** but instead always **be evidence based**, hence adding value and credibility to the narrative.
Below few examples of good statements and statements to be avoided.

Disaggregation category	Good statement example
Population group	The majority – 83% - of the **refugees** in South Sudan are adopting negative coping strategies to fill the food assistance gap including selling of assets, cash borrowings, etc.
Geographic location	Over 65 per cent of those food insecure in the West Bank, some 365,000 people, live in vulnerable households in **Areas A and B**.
Urban / rural	Food security analysis for **rural populations** in meher and belg dependent areas shows that about 12.9 M people will be in crisis or worse condition.
Livelihood sources	For **farming households**, crop pests and diseases, damaged irrigation systems, and problems accessing seeds and fertiliser were the major challenges faced in 2023.
Gender	Among **female-headed households** living in camps, 15 per cent report that food needs are the primary reason for taking on debt.
Age	The **elderly** constitute 36 per cent of the conflict-affected population (41 per cent in areas closest to the "contact line") and account for **43 per cent** of the estimated people in need of food assistance and social protection.
Disability	Female-headed **households with a disabled or chronically ill member** are worse off (e.g. poor food consumption at 37 to 38 per cent against 32 per cent for households without any disabled.

Disaggregation category	Examples of statements to be avoided
Livelihood sources	The decline in economic activities negatively impacts the livelihoods of urban households, especially those operating in the informal sector.
Gender	Overall, women have worse food consumption levels than men.
Disability	Persons with disabilities and female headed households are particularly and disproportionately affected.

Disaggregated data / information can be retrieved from **different sources**. Below a list of the most used sources:

- WFP-RAM and FAO can provide disaggregated data on different type of households from their HH surveys;
- MSNA can also provide disaggregated data from its HH survey;
- FSC Partners' assessment reports can provide valuable qualitative and quantitative information on needs patterns, even if not nationwide (e.g., CARE rapid gender analysis, etc.);
- FSC protection and gender focal points (when available) should be consulted to gather information on different needs of affected people by sex, age and disability;
- Specialised agencies or organizations (e.g., Organizations of Persons with Disability, Humanity and Inclusion, HelpAge) can provide also either quantitative data or qualitative inputs and information on people's perceptions and priorities.

Disability inclusion

Persons with disability have a heightened risks to be trapped into food insecurity.
The following actions are recommended for a more inclusive HNO process and analysis.

For a more inclusive HNO process:

➢ Ensure that needs assessment processes (including FGDs and KIIs) are accessible and inclusive.

➢ Ensure needs assessments collect information disaggregated by disability (for household-level indicators, disaggregate between households with a disabled member and households without).

➢ Involve people with disabilities (PwD) and their organisations (OPDs) in consultations on their priority concerns, as well as barriers they face accessing food security assistance.

WFP/Carol Taylor

…. Reflected in the HNO chapter:

➢ Disaggregate PiN by disability.

➢ Describe what PwD themselves identify as their priority concerns.

➢ Analyse the factors contributing to heightened risk for persons with disabilities and describe how disability-related factors interact with other structural inequalities and contextual factors to increase or mitigate risks.

　➢ e.g., "stigma, discrimination and social exclusion by communities due to certain socio-cultural attitudes and practices have the consequence of restricting access to employment opportunities for people living with disabilities"

➢ Describe steps that were taken to understand barriers and facilitators to accessing food security assistance (when data has been collected in consultation with specific groups of PwD, reference this in the HNO).

Risks and projections

Sector-specific risks and assumptions should be provided, based on cluster analysis or endorsement (not done by any individual FSC team member).

Narrative – examples:
- The food security situation among IDPs, Vulnerable Resident Populations (VRP) and returnees is expected to remain poor throughout 2024 due to the degradation of livelihoods and socio-economic constraints.
- Based on the assumptions of a funding outlook that allows for 50 per cent rations coupled with other economic shocks, 12,6 million people are likely to experience high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) conditions between January and June 2024.

These risks and assumptions inform and are informed by the joint risk analysis (Part 2 of the HNO).

While narrative information of risks and assumptions are always recommended, **PiN projections are not mandatory, and FSC teams should include them only when available and appropriate** (i.e., IPC/CH projections are available) – otherwise it is preferable to leave it blank.

Projected needs (2020-2021)
Thousands of people (k)

	PEOPLE IN NEED	OF WHICH: MINIMAL	STRESS	SEVERE	EXTREME	CATASTROPHIC	ASSOCIATED FACTORS	MOST VULNERABLE GROUPS
June 2020	502k	482k	482k	482k	482k	20k	Conflict	Group one and two
December 2020	347k	247k	247k	247k	247k	100k	Drought	Group three
June 2021	331k	155k	155k	155k	155k	176k	Internal displacement	Group two
December 2021	290k	90k	90k	90k	90k	200k	Conflict	Group one and two

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Monitoring indicators

Monitoring indicators are useful to keep track of the humanitarian situation. The food security chapter should include only monitoring indicators **valuable to understand how the situation is evolving**. According to the HNO 2024 standard template, the monitoring indicators are no longer included into each sectoral chapter, but they will be incorporated in a dedicated section, called 'Monitoring of situation and needs' (under Part 2).

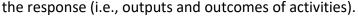**Examples** of monitoring indicators to be used in the HNO food security chapter are:
- For countries with an IPC or Cadre Hamonisé: % change in IPC/CH 3+.
- For countries using CARI: % change in households severely and moderately food insecure.
- Other methodologically sound food security sector indicators such as Food Consumption Score, rCSI, HHS, etc.

Monitoring

#	INDICATORS	SOURCE	FREQUENCY
01	Food consumption	mVAM and MSNA	Quarterly
02	Livelihood/food coping strategies	mVAM and MSNA	Quarterly
03	Households abandoning agricultural	MSNA	Annual

#	INDICATORS	BASELINE 2020	SOURCE
01	% of people in IPC phase 3 and 4	33%	IPC Acute Analysis 2020
02	% of shock-affected HHs with a poor food consumption score	46%	SFSA, Post Distribution Monitoring and WoA Assessment 2020
03	% of HHs who have lost their source of income due to conflict, natural disaster or reduced employment opportunities	43%	HEAT assessments and Seasonal Food Security Assessment (SFSA) 2020

It is important **not to confuse the HNO indicators with the HRP indicators**, that indeed monitor the response (i.e., outputs and outcomes of activities).

Monitoring indicators:

Not HNO indicators but HRP

Monitoring Indicators

#	INDICATORS
1	Number of people receiving food assistance
2	Number of people provided with access to fuel-efficient technologies
3	Number of people provided with emergency agriculture / livelihoods resilience support to enable them to maintain or resume food production (crop kits, fisheries kits and livestock, forestry and natural resource management)
4	Number of people provided with trainings (capacity building)
5	Number of food security sector Information management products
6	Number of Food Security Sector meetings

GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY CLUSTER

References

- Global Food Security Cluster, Cluster Coordinator Handbook January 2023 (Chapter 9): not yet available on the FSC website as of August 2023 – *please ask your gFSC focal point for access*.

- HNO FSC Webinar Material June 2023: [2024 HPC Webinar #1 – HNO FSC chapter, PiN & Severity (EN) – 05 June 2023 | Food Security Cluster (fscluster.org)](#).

- FSC Tip Sheet on Disability Inclusion in the HNOs and HRPs FSC chapters: [Tip Sheet on Disability Inclusion in the HNOs and HRPs Food Security Chapters | Food Security Cluster (fscluster.org)](#)