

## Description of the EC/FAO Food Security Information for Action Nutrition Activity in Kenya, 2006-2008.

### Development and implementation of simple tools for monitoring food access/consumption at the household level for use in national and sub-national surveys and monitoring exercises, Kenya.

Kenya has developed an effective multi-sectoral approach to food security which the President of Kenya leads. The Kenya Food Security Meeting (KFSM) is the main coordinating body that brings together food security actors in a forum where information is exchanged, options debated and decisions on activities formulated for referral to the Government of Kenya and donors. It is an open forum of high level presentation of a broad grouping of organizations at the national level with interest in food security. KFSM provides the mechanism to channel decisions upwards to the appropriate government bodies and donors, and is a mechanism for advising, accountability and legitimacy. The KFSM meets once a month, and is chaired by the Government of Kenya's Office of the President. There are a number of sectoral working groups under the KFSM that make up the Kenya Food Security Steering Group (KFSSG). The overall role of the KFSSG is to act as a technical 'think tank' and advisory body to all relevant stakeholders on issues of drought management and food security. The steering group provides effective guidelines on methods and approaches for the coordination of both information and appropriate response measures. The KFSSG strives to promote, strengthen and support the multi-agency approach to drought management and food security which has evolved in Kenya. The Health and Nutrition Working Group is responsible for all issues related to nutrition within the wider food security context.

The Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division of FAO, as part of the EC/FAO Food Security Information to Action Programme, has carried out a number of activities in Kenya with both national and international relevance. Partners for these activities included the Arid Lands Resource Management Project (ALRMP) under the Office of the President as well as the affiliated FAO ALRMP project, the Nutrition Department of the Ministry of Health, the Applied Human Nutrition Programme of the University of Nairobi, and the African Institute of Health and Development. Additionally, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Planning and National Development and the National Bureau of Statistics have participated in meetings and workshops sponsored by FAO.

Overall, the activities in Kenya have pertained to the introduction of simple standardized tools to measure household access to food and nutritional quality of the diet. The tools include the Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS) developed by the Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance Project (FANTA) and the Dietary Diversity Score at household (HDDS) and individual (IDDS) level. These tools are simple to administer and analyze and do not require specialized skills or software. They can be incorporated into surveys at minimal extra cost. A strong element of the EC/FAO nutrition activity in Kenya has been to raise the awareness of government and other food security stakeholders about these tools and to develop their capacity to make informed choices on the tools and indicators employed to measure food and nutrition food insecurity at national and decentralized levels.

### Major Activities 2006-2008

1. A field exercise was carried out in **August 2006** to adapt and translate the HFIAS, HDDS and IDDS in Kibera (Nairobi) and Kilifi District. The activity was conducted by Dr. Alice Mboganie Mwangi of the University of Nairobi, and involved food security or nutrition specialists from the ALRMP, University of Nairobi, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, FAO AGN, FAO-ALRMP Project, and FANTA. The exercise produced questionnaires for the HFIAS, IDDS and HDDS translated into Kiswahili and pre-tested for language clarity and comprehension. The report on field adaptation of the tools is available which includes an explanation of the tools and translated versions in Kiswahili.  
See: [http://www.foodsec.org/tr/nut/kenya\\_adapt\\_hfias.pdf](http://www.foodsec.org/tr/nut/kenya_adapt_hfias.pdf)
2. A national stakeholder meeting was held in **December 2006** to introduce the tools, describe the field adaptation work and stimulate discussion on potential use of these tools in food and nutrition security analyses. Participants were asked to evaluate the usefulness of the tools according to their strengths, weakness, opportunities and constraints, which provides a strong basis for organizations to make informed choices on assessment tools for food and nutrition security. A report of the stakeholder meeting is available.  
See: [http://www.foodsec.org/tr/nut/workshop\\_kenya\\_nov2006.pdf](http://www.foodsec.org/tr/nut/workshop_kenya_nov2006.pdf)
3. The Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division organized the international workshop "Simple tools for measuring household access to food and dietary diversity", which was held in Nairobi from 21-23 March, 2007. The purpose of the workshop was to bring together experts in food security and nutrition from Governments, universities, and international agencies, to discuss the utility of the tools that FAO is promoting and to identify potential areas for their integration into food security information systems at national and decentralized levels. The EC/FAO Programme supported participation by representatives from the six countries collaborating with AGN on the EC/FAO. The workshop was attended by more than 50 persons from Kenya, Mozambique, Malawi, Burkina Faso, West Bank/Gaza Strip, South Africa, Uganda and the US. The workshop provided an

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invaluable opportunity to share experiences across countries and to have an international platform for discussing food and nutrition security assessment tools that meet differing purposes. The workshop proceedings and the workshop facilitator's report are available.

See report: [http://www.foodsec.org/tr/nut/nut\\_report.pdf](http://www.foodsec.org/tr/nut/nut_report.pdf)

See Facilitator's notes: [http://www.foodsec.org/tr/nut/facilitator\\_kenya\\_march2007.pdf](http://www.foodsec.org/tr/nut/facilitator_kenya_march2007.pdf)

4. ALRMP requested assistance by The Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division through the EC/FAO Programme to review the gaps in nutrition information collection for food security analyses in Kenya and to evaluate the feasibility of integrating the HFIAS and HDDS into assessments. Dr. Alice Mboganie Mwangi of the Applied Nutrition Programme of the University of Nairobi and Ms. Mary Wachira of the Nutrition Department, Ministry of Health, were contracted by FAO to review all available documents and to visit several ALRMP districts where the early warning system was operational. The district visits were carried out in July 2007 by Dr. Mwangi, Ms. Wachira and Ms. Ballard from AGN. See the review of food security assessments to identify nutrition information gaps:  
[http://www.foodsec.org/tr/nut/fsn\\_review\\_kenya.pdf](http://www.foodsec.org/tr/nut/fsn_review_kenya.pdf)
5. Based on the information obtained from the ALRMP review activity, described above, Dr. Alice Mwangi of the University of Nairobi, Dr. Mary Amuyunzu-Nyamongo of the African Institute of Health and Development, and Ms. Mary Wachira of the Nutrition Department, Ministry of Health, were contracted by FAO to write a proposal for integration of HFIAS and HDDS into food security assessment platforms in Kenya. The proposal was meant to provide detailed justification and planning for carrying out pilot integration projects in three ALRMP districts, including capacity development for data collection teams and district planning organizations. Monitoring and evaluation mechanism of the pilot projects were outlined. The proposal will be used by the FAO Representation in Kenya to solicit donor agencies for funding to carry out the pilot projects. The terms of reference for the proposal writing activity and the concept note of the proposal are available. ToRs for the ALRMP project: [http://www.foodsec.org/tr/nut/tor\\_ALRMP.pdf](http://www.foodsec.org/tr/nut/tor_ALRMP.pdf)  
Concept Paper on Integration of HFIAS and HDDS in Kenya:  
[http://www.foodsec.org/tr/nut/integration\\_nut\\_kenya.pdf](http://www.foodsec.org/tr/nut/integration_nut_kenya.pdf)
6. A workshop led by ALRMP was held May 23, 2008 to discuss the choice of methodology for measuring dietary diversity in Kenya. There were several presentations on different methodologies, including the Household Dietary Diversity Score - HDDS (FANTA/FAO) which uses a 1 day dietary recall and the Food Consumption Score – FCS (WFP) which uses a 7 day dietary recall. Recommendations were made to pilot the two different methodologies using the HDDS questionnaire of 16 food groups. The two methodologies yield scores that are based on a different number of food groups – 12 for HDDS and 8 for FCS, which can be aggregated from the original 16 food group questionnaire. In the pilot tests, data will be collected for 1 and for 7 days to facilitate choice of an appropriate recall period for the country. A first round of pilot tests will be conducted by UNICEF in July, 2008 as part of a series of nutrition studies being conducted in 5 districts. The ALRMP food security and nutrition surveillance structure will test the two dietary diversity methodologies in August 2008 for eventual utilization in the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) for an information source for the key outcome indicator on dietary diversity. General feeling was that there will be a need to review the concept of household dietary diversity since four food groups may not represent a nutrient-diverse diet. Further studies using data from Somalia or Kenya could provide guidance on this. A core group comprising ALRMP, FAO, University of Nairobi, WFP and the Ministry of Health will review the draft dietary diversity questionnaire. Workshop members will be called again at a future date to review progress.

The work done by FAO on promoting measurement of dietary diversity, including capacity development in the use of the HDDS, has been instrumental in assisting the Government of Kenya to make an informed decision about the best method to adopt for use in the country. AGN has offered continued assistance to ALRMP in the form of reviewing pilot data and assistance with data analysis. With respect to the proposal to integrate HFIAS and HDDS into the ALRMP surveillance structure and other food security assessment platforms (Activity no. 5 above), FAO will await the final decision by GoK on the methodology to be adopted for measuring dietary diversity and subsequently, the proposal will be modified accordingly.

## Contacts

Marie Claude Dop ([marieclaude.dop@fao.org](mailto:marieclaude.dop@fao.org))  
Calum McLean ([calum.mclean@fao.org](mailto:calum.mclean@fao.org))  
Alice Mboganie Mangi ([amwangi@uonbi.ac.ke](mailto:amwangi@uonbi.ac.ke))  
Terri Ballard ([terri.ballard@fao.org](mailto:terri.ballard@fao.org))

