



VULNERABILITY SCORING SYSTEM AAH/ACF CASH TRANSFER PROGRAMS – 2016

PRESENTATION OF THE CASH TRANSFER PROGRAM

Action Against Hunger (AAH) engages in cash transfer programs in Yobe and Borno to provide short-term assistance to extremely vulnerable households that have been affected by the conflict. In 2016, AAH began implementing four new programs in Yobe that provide cash assistance to vulnerable households. To ensure AAH is continuing to reach the most vulnerable populations affected by the crises, we have updated our vulnerability scoring criteria based upon program evaluations, recent assessments and through a recent beneficiary vulnerability assessment, conducted in three LGAs (Damaturu, Potiskum and Fune) in Yobe. This assessment engaged community members in focus group discussions to verify vulnerability criteria. Based upon this analysis, AAH has developed a short gender-sensitive questionnaire containing questions on household bio-data, economic data, food consumption, nutrition and water access. Secondary questions are also incorporated in a way that limit bias responses. This questionnaire aims at being a quick and operational tool that can be coded and then uploaded to smartphones for field data collection. The responses can then be scored electronically to ensure impartial and reliable identification of the most vulnerable respondents. An explanation of the updated scoring criteria is outlined below.

SCORING

The following vulnerability categories have corresponding questions in the questionnaire. Responses are collected through mobile phones and are then ranked from 1 to 4 points based on estimated vulnerability level and weight. One (1) is categorized as least vulnerable and four (4) as the most vulnerable.

Head of Household (HoH)

Through AAH's recent vulnerability assessment, the focus group discussions identified Head of Household (HoH) categories listed below as vulnerable. However, AAH recognized that while certain groups of people such as person with disability (PwDs) or elderly persons are more likely to be vulnerable to certain hazards than others, they may not all be vulnerable, nor are vulnerable in the same ways. As these groups have been identified as vulnerable in relation to their resilience against the crises, we have included them in the scoring criteria. However, because demographic characteristics are not necessarily representative of vulnerability, all groups under this category receive an equally weighted point.

Vulnerability Criteria	Characteristics	Scoring
Head of household	Single adult -headed household (18+)	1
	Child Headed (Under 18)	1
	Person with Disability (PwD) Headed (Physical, Sensory—deaf, blind, mute, Mental, Chronically Ill)	1
	Elderly Headed (Over 65)	1
	PLW Headed	1

Protection Concerns

The Protection Sector and NRC both conducted recent (May 2016) protection assessments, which highlighted the severity of this issue. Civilians that have been victimized are often already highly vulnerable and subsequently in need of additional support. As humanitarian assistance and attention on this area has mostly targeted official IDP camps, this criteria has been included to prioritize victims not in formal camps that are in need of assistance. While cash and food assistance is not sufficient to address the psycho-social needs, it can decrease the burden of securing food needs during periods of unproductivity.

Vulnerability Criteria	Characteristics	Scoring
Households with civilian members traumatized from being harmed by the conflict through physical risks or SGBV	Severely traumatized through physical risks preventing productivity, including the following incidents: attacks or bombings, killings of civilians by military/armed groups, other physical violence (abuse, torture, mutilation), tensions/hostility with host community, arbitrary arrest/detention, release from abduction (under Armed Opposition Group)	2
	SGBV issues include rape/sexual abuse and sexual exploitation and domestic violence/abuse/neglect.	2

Dependency Ratio (DpR)

The dependency ratio was calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Number of (Children under 18 years old + Elderly persons >65 years old + Adults with Disability)}}{\text{*Active Persons 18-64 years old}}$$

Regarding persons with disability (PwD), without being assisted by someone, were included in the calculation. The following weights are applied to the DpR:

Vulnerability Criteria	Characteristics	Scoring
# in household less than 18 years, elderly, disabled)/ *active HH members	DpR <=2	1
	DpR between 2.1 and 3	2
	DpR between 3.1 and 3.9	3
	DpR =>4: 4 points	4

Income

This criteria has been updated from income source to include more rigorous and measurable selection criteria that ensures the intervention is targeting the most vulnerable population. Income or “productive income” is being calculated based on the average monthly proportion of income spent on non-productive items (food, rent, health) as a high proportion of income spent on non-productive items can lead to underinvestment in livelihood, leading to higher risk.

Vulnerability Criteria	Characteristics	Scoring
Proportion of income expended on non-productive items	<25 %	0
	25- 50 %	1
	51 – 75 %	2
	76 – 100 %	3
	> 100 %	4

Income derived from a single source is more vulnerable to shocks. Multiple sources, or the potential to diversify, can increase livelihood resilience. As our program timeframes target assistance during lean months, the seasonality affecting income should be consistent during the transfer months. However, AAH will also collect information on income sources as a means of triangulating productive income with source of income.

Household Debt

High levels of non-productive debt put livelihood assets at risk (collateral); repayments may reduce essential expenditure leading to negative coping strategies and; high levels of existing debt can reduce ability to access additional credit. According to the AAH vulnerability assessment, 32% of IDPs are in debt with a debt average 20,000 Naira. Therefore, the following weights have been allocated to the incremental debt levels.

Vulnerability Criteria	Characteristics	Scoring
Debt Ratio	0 Naira	0
	<10,000 Naira	1
	10,000-15000 Naira	2
	15,000- 20,000 Naira	3
	>20,000 Naira	4

Household Hunger Score (HHS)

As both Yobe and Borno States have been classified under the March 2016 Cadre Harmonise in crisis food situation with at least one in five households or 20% affected, household hunger is a key component to vulnerability. The HHS is a qualitative indicator to measure household food security as perceived by the household. It is important to note that the HHS focuses on the food quantity dimension of food access and does not measure dietary quality. The scoring system classifies households into three different categories: 1) little to no hunger in the household 2) moderate hunger in the household 3) severe hunger in the household. The following weights have been applied:

Vulnerability Criteria	Characteristics	Scoring
Household hunger scale	Little to no hunger in the household	0
	Moderate hunger in the household	2
	Severe hunger in the household	4

Food Consumption Score (FCS)

The FCS is a recognized indicator of household dietary adequacy focusing principally on consumption and utilization in terms of nutritious intake. This composite score is based on dietary diversity, food frequency, and the relative nutritional importance of different food groups. The FCS contains 9 groups: Main staples (Cereals, Tubers), Pulses, Vegetables, Fruits, Meat and fish, Milk, Sugar, Oil and Condiments. Each group has been weighted (according to WFP standard): Cereals are weighted 2; Tubers are weighted 2; Pulses are weighted 3; Vegetables are weighted 1; Fruits are weighted 1; Meat and fish are weighted 4; Milk is weighted 4; Sugar is weighted 0.5; Oil is weighted 0.5; and condiments are weighted 0. The WFP guiding principle for determining the weights is based on the nutrient density of the food groups, with foods with relatively high energy, good quality protein and a wide range of micro-nutrients that can be easily absorbed being ranked the highest.

The total scores have been categorized into three groups of having poor (below 21), borderline (21.5 – 35) and acceptable food consumption (above 35). The following weights correspond to the three groups:

Vulnerability Criteria	Characteristics	Scoring
Food consumption score	FCS Above 35	0
	FCS Between 21.5 -35	2
	FCS Below 21	4

Malnutrition

With global acute malnutrition (GAM) rates in children under 5 in Borno and Yobe well above the generally accepted emergency rate of >10% (GAM Borno: 19.1% and GAM Yobe: 12.9%), identification of malnourished household members has been added as an indicator for vulnerability. During beneficiary identification, all households with children under 24 months and pregnant and lactating women will be screened for Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) and Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) through measuring Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC). The following weights have been applied:

Vulnerability Criteria	Characteristics	Scoring
MUAC Screening	Presence of Moderate Acute Malnutrition members in HH	1
	Presence of Severe Acute Malnutrition members in HH	2

Water & Sanitation

Water is essential for health and many livelihoods and more time taken to access water reduces time for other activities. Poor access to water can also lead to increased risk of waterborne and communicable diseases. Additionally, water points or latrines that are far from shelter increase the potential for SGBV. With several recent assessments indicating inadequate access to water points that increases vulnerability-especially among women and children-this criteria has been added as an important consideration for vulnerability. The following weights have been applied to the amount of time required to fetch water, as this directly corresponds to productivity and safe distance to water points:

Vulnerability Criteria	Characteristics	Scoring
Average time to collect water	0 – 30 minutes	0
	31-60 minutes	1
	> 61 minutes	2