Food Security Cluster/Sector
PiN and Severity Calculation Methodology

This document is meant to guide the Food Security Cluster/Sector (FSC/S) teams to calculate the number of People in Need (PiN) for the sector, as well as to determine the sectoral severity of needs in the various areas of analysis.

(Latest update: June 2022)

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1. People in Need (PiN) methodology

The Food Security Clusters/Sectors (FSC/S) should use standard tools and methodologies, when available, to continue identifying and analysing Food Security PiN figures.

1.1 PiN methodology in a country with IPC/CH

In the case where a country has an Integrated Phase Classification (IPC)[1] Acute Food Insecurity (AFI) or a Cadre Harmonize (CH)[2], **the FSC/S PiN should refer to populations in IPC AFI/CH phase 3+ (phase 3, 4 and 5)**.

Note: this applies when the IPC analysis is recent and covers the concerned HNO / HRP period. It is recommended to use the next year's projected analysis if the Technical Working Group and the IPC GSU (Global Support Unit) are confident about the quality of the data. Indeed, as the HNO/HRP covers the following year, it is more relevant to use this data, except in the case of seasonality (i.e., the lean season peak is not covered by the projections).

IPC/CH results and FSC/S PiN – specific cases:

- In specific cases, the FSC team can produce a PiN figure which is higher than the population in IPC/CH phase 3+. This is the case, for instance, when:
    - Additional refugee or IDP influxes are expected, and these have not been estimated in the IPC analysis.
    - For specific population groups (e.g., IDPs/refugees or, in exceptional circumstances, people in quarantine / isolation centres[3]), the totality of the group is considered to be dependent on aid, hence those caseloads are added fully within the PiN, and not applying the AFI % as per IPC analysis.
    - IPC/CH analysis does not cover the whole country or all population groups. In this case, FSC/S teams should use alternative methodologies as presented in 1.2 below.
    For guidance and advise, please contact the gFSC team.
- In some countries with major humanitarian interventions (e.g., Yemen, Afghanistan, South Sudan), the results of the IPC analysis are impacted by the presence of significant humanitarian food assistance; discussion is currently ongoing at global level (within the IPC

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[1] As of June 2022, the following HPC countries have an IPC AFI: Afghanistan, Burundi, CAR, DRC, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Lebanon (planned), Mozambique, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Yemen. For more information on the IPC:
http://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/manual/IPC_Technical_Manual_3_Final.pdf
[2] As of June 2022, the following HPC countries have a CH: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Mali, Niger and Nigeria.
[3] During the COVID-19 pandemic, FSC partners have provided food assistance to people in quarantine and isolation centres (e.g., people coming in the country and testing positive, hence isolated in centres)

TAG and SC[4]) on the possibility to calculate populations in need without assistance. If you have any question related to this, please contact the gFSC team.

Any misalignment with the above guidance (e.g., increase or reduction of PiN from IPC/CH3+) must be discussed with the gFSC team as soon as misalignments are being considered. In fact, while there may be exceptional circumstances for which a misalignment is needed, solid technical justification needs to be ensured.

Additional considerations:
- When possible, ensure that IPC/CH results (maps, figures, population charts, etc.) are included in the FSC/S chapter of the HNO.
- The FSC/S teams should ensure that the timing of IPC/CH is compatible with the HNO timeline. If the IPC/CH analysis and results are late for the Global Humanitarian Overview (GHO) launch (usually early December), the usual practice for the FSC/S is to use the data of the previous analysis as placeholder and update it when the new IPC/CH results are available. For the country HNO/HRP, recent IPC data should be used.
- Stakeholders should refrain from using food security data coming from any individual assessment (e.g., CFSAM, EFSA, MSNA) to calculate a separate or temporary food security PIN, either as a stand-alone indicator or as a composite, in place of the IPC/CH. Food security data from relevant assessments (FS specific or multi-sector) should be submitted directly to the respective FSC/S teams (who will share with the IPC/CH Technical Working Group) and / or to the IPC/CH TWG directly for inclusion – rather than to an HNO working group, or non-FSC/S and non-IPC/CH focal point for FS PIN calculation. Submitting food security data to the IPC/CH ensures that the estimated magnitude and severity of food needs are vetted by a multi-stakeholder group of analysts and not overly dependent on a single indicator, data source, or analyst, ensuring a consensus-building process. Note: there can be situations in which it may be necessary to rely upon assessment data for PiN estimation / adjustment, without going through the IPC/CH analysis or update. For instance, in case of sudden onset natural disasters happening after the IPC/CH analysis, quick updates of the PiN are necessary, and it may not be possible to incorporate this into an IPC/CH update process on time for the HPC calendar.

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[4] The IPC Steering Committee is responsible for strategically guiding and positioning the IPC globally; the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) is responsible for advising the Steering Committee on technical matters.

1.2 PiN methodology in a country without IPC/CH

For the remaining countries where there is no IPC/CH, or when the IPC/CH results are not available, the FSC/S teams should utilize other available recognised methodologies, i.e., those validated by the Food Security Information Network for the Global Report on Food Crises[5].

If none of these is available, country-specific agreed upon methodologies (discussed with SAG / CLAs) will have to be used, following discussion with the gFSC.

Methodologies validated by the FSIN / GRFC (beyond IPC/CH):

- WFP Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators of Food Security (CARI)[6]
- Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) classification

1.2.1 CARI

In the case where a country has a CARI[7], **the FSC/S PiN generally equals CARI3+ caseload**.

In specific cases, the FSC team can produce a PiN figure which is different from the population in CARI3+ - refer to 1.1 for examples.

For guidance and advice, please contact the gFSC team.

Note: in some countries, the remote-CARI (rCARI) methodology is implemented through remote surveys (phone or web-based). Since this is not yet a validated methodology for the FSIN/GRFC, using rCARI for PiN calculation should be discussed with the gFSC.

1.2.2 FEWSNET classification

As FEWS NET classification[8] is IPC compatible (i.e., it follows key IPC protocols, except consensus building), **the FSC/S PiN should refer to populations in phase 3+ (phase 3, 4 and 5)**.

Note: FEWS NET classification is not built on multi-partner technical consensus, so it does not necessarily reflect the consensus of national food security partners. FSC/S teams are recommended to discuss with the

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[5] The FSIN is a technical platform for exchanging expertise and best practices on food security and nutrition analysis. It promotes independent and consensus-based information and highlights critical data gaps. Composed of 17 partners, the FSIN facilitates the Global Network Against Food Crises's first pillar which is centered on better understanding global food crises.
https://www.fsinplatform.org/sites/default/files/resources/files/GRFC%202022%20Final%20Report.pdf

[6]   https://resources.vam.wfp.org/data-analysis/quantitative/food-security/cari-the-consolidated-approach-for-reporting-indicators-of-food-security

[7] The CARI is a method used to analyse and report the level of food insecurity within a population. Being a console made up of four indicators, the CARI ensures that results are not dependent on / biased by a single indicator.
The CARI uses four food security groups: 1) Food secure; 2) Marginally food secure; 3) Moderately food insecure; 4) Severely food insecure.

[8] https://fews.net/fews-data/333

cluster partners at national level for consensus on its use, and reach out to the gFSC for advice and guidance in such circumstances.

1.2.3 Other methodologies

In absence of the above, other methodologies could be used to estimate the PiN figures. Examples:

- In contexts of in-camp population which depend fully on humanitarian assistance, the ENA methodology can be used.
- The HEA methodology can also support PiN definition.

Note: As the appropriateness of these methodologies may vary from context to context, **FSC/S teams are requested to discuss their approach with the gFSC team prior to using any of the above (or alternative methodology).**

1.3 General considerations about PiN calculation

1.3.1 How to calculate PiN in absence of (recent) data

It may happen that some areas of the country, under the scope of the HNO/HRP, are not accessible for assessments, hence the FSC/S lacks reliable data to calculate the PiN figure. In such circumstances, proxies may have to be used; WFP (RAM), FAO (Needs Assessment), FSC assessment working group (if present) or technical food security partners can provide support, and the gFSC can also be contacted for advice.

1.3.2 Acute PiN

In some countries, OCHA may be requesting clusters to submit PiN figures disaggregated by "Acute PiN" and non-acute. Please note that it has been agreed at global level that referring to the "Acute PiN" (i.e., population in severity 4+5) is not a recommended practice and in fact the concept of "acute PiN" is not mentioned anywhere in the JIAF / HPC guidance. To ensure a transparent representation of needs, avoiding confusion and misinterpretation, the gFSC strongly recommends having only one PiN number (please refer as well to the JIAF helpdesk newsletter here).

1.3.3 PiN by sub-pillars

For the same reasons as above, calculating the PiN by sub-pillars of the Humanitarian Conditions is not the correct methodology, and this practice was discontinued as of the 2021 HPC. Country teams should refrain from calculating PiN at sub-pillar level. In case of insistence from the HCT / OCHA, please contact the gFSC team for guidance.

1.3.4 Calculating the PiN at different / lower administrative levels

Data collection is typically designed to be representative for certain admin levels and/or population groups. Using that data for more granular analysis than the level for which it was designed and collected could lead to substantial errors.

However, in several countries, FSC/S teams are requested to submit PiN figures at a lower level than the one for which data was collected (or for which the IPC analysis was done). In such cases, the following approach is recommended:

➢ Refer to the disaggregated PiN figures as "estimations", done for planning purposes, to facilitate targeting of most vulnerable / at risk areas; clarify that data collection (and / or IPC analysis) was done at a different level.

➢ Involve partners to ensure they contribute to and validate the approach used for disaggregating the PiN at lower admin level.

➢ Discuss with technical colleagues (e.g., WFP RAM, FAO Needs Assessment team, FSC assessment working groups (if exist) or technical FSC partners) the possible criteria to be used for disaggregation:

    a. If there are no specific criteria to be used, a pro-rata can also be calculated (applying the % of AFI to the admin area population)

    b. Examples of criteria that could be used to weight the PiN at lower level:

        i. Food security indicators for which data is available at lower admin level (e.g., FCS).

        ii. indicators strongly related to food security (e.g., multi-dimensional poverty, per-capita GDP, malnutrition rate).

        iii. contextual / humanitarian factors that have implications on food security (level of conflict, displacements, epidemics).

    Remember to use such indicators only if data is recent and reliable (and available at the requested admin level).

    c. The use of Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with a mix of indicators (such as the ones mentioned in point b) that are collected in different points in time/different sample/ etc. is highly discouraged.

➢ Remember that total PiN figures at the higher admin level should always match the results of the IPC, CARI or other agreed PiN calculation methodology at country level.

2. Severity Methodology

The FSC/S PiN is mostly calculated based on degree indicators, i.e., indicators that disaggregate the PiN figures into severity phases. As a result, severity classification of food security at area / population group level can be done starting from the PiN disaggregation, by applying the standard cut-off points.

2.1 Severity classification using FS standard methodologies

PiN Methodology	Severity Scale	Cut-off points for area classification
IPC / CH (or IPC-compatible)	Five severity classes (IPC/CH phases)	The food security situation of the most food insecure 20% of the population is used to classify each area
CARI	Four severity classes	The food security situation of the most food insecure 25% of the population is used to classify each area
Other methodology	Please contact the gFSC team	

Whenever severity is requested at the same admin level as provided by the IPC/CH or the CARI, FSC/S teams should refrain from using severity classification methodologies (or criteria) that differ from the IPC/CH or CARI results.

2.2 Calculating the severity at different / lower administrative levels

As mentioned under the PiN section, FSC/S teams may be requested to submit severity classification at a lower level than the one for which data is available.

While the preferred approach would be to push back against such "forced" classification, if faced with no options, the FSC/S teams should keep these elements into account:

➢ Starting from the disaggregated PiN, classify the area as the most food insecure 20 or 25% (depending on whether IPC/CH or CARI was used for PiN calculation) of the population

➢ Do not classify severity based on quota / distribution of food insecurity (e.g., the 10 areas with highest prevalence are classified in severity 5, the following 10 in severity 4, etc.), as this will imply lack of comparability (a district with, say, 18% of AFI can be classified as severity 4 this year, while next year the same district with 25% of AFI could not make the cut, while clearly being in a more severe situation). Cut-offs need to be determined (and explained).