STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES
HARMONIZATION OF FOOD ASSISTANCE RESPONSE

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Contents

BACKGROUND ........................................................................................................................................3
PURPOSE OF THE SOP ..........................................................................................................................3
SECTION 1: OPERATIONAL PLANNING ..............................................................................................4
SECTION 2: TARGETING AND REGISTRATION .....................................................................................5
SECTION 3: CONDITIONALITY ..............................................................................................................8
SECTION 4: TRANSFER VALUE ...........................................................................................................9
SECTION 5: TRANSFER MODALITY .....................................................................................................10
SECTION 6: WAY FORWARD ..............................................................................................................11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annex</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annex 1</td>
<td>4 W</td>
<td>FSC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex 2</td>
<td>Rapid assessment questionnaire</td>
<td>INGC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex 3</td>
<td>EFSA questionnaire</td>
<td>INGC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex 4</td>
<td>Vulnerability criteria – rapid onset</td>
<td>FSC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex 5</td>
<td>Sampling guidelines</td>
<td>SMART standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex 6</td>
<td>Community advisory committee ToR</td>
<td>FSC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex 7</td>
<td>Vulnerability criteria – slow onset</td>
<td>FSC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex 8</td>
<td>Nutval</td>
<td>Global nutrition cluster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex 9</td>
<td>Cash Based Transfers value calculator</td>
<td>CWG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex 10</td>
<td>Transfer modality assessment tools</td>
<td>CWG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex 11</td>
<td>Transfer modality decision tree</td>
<td>CWG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BACKGROUND

Following response to the 2016 El Nino in Mozambique and After Action Review (AAR), Food Security Cluster (FSC) members agreed on the need to standardize food assistance response and develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to define future activities. The main areas covered by this SOP are a) operational planning b) targeting and registration c) conditionality d) transfer values and e) transfer modalities.

PURPOSE OF THE SOP

The purpose of this SOP is to provide guidance on the process to be followed for food assistance. The proposed actions are recommended with the below key principles in mind:

- How to meet food needs of all affected populations;
- How best to enhance programme design and ensure that programme objectives are met;
- Operational feasibility considering constraints faced in the Mozambique context;
- Community and beneficiary ability to adhere to set out guidelines;
- Coherence and synergy with government policies and programmes.

This SOP presents the overlying guidelines and any deviations must be done in consultation with the Food Security Cluster with clear justifications provided.

This SOP supersedes “STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP) ON GEOGRAPHICAL/BENEFICIARY TARGETING: 2016/2017 EL NINO RESPONSE” and “SOP: CASH BASED TRANSFERS” developed in November 2016.

The SOP will be updated as and when required.
SECTION 1: OPERATIONAL PLANNING

1. Allocation of Geographical Locations for Assistance

1.1. The FSC will be the platform for determining the allocation of districts among different FSC members.
1.2. Only districts that have been identified by official government assessments to be in need of assistance should be considered.
1.3. Each district will be assigned a lead actor that will be overall responsible for food assistance in the respective district. Decision on selection of locations of operation for each actor will be made based on a) presence of actor in the area b) experience of working in the area and c) caseload to be covered vis a vis. available funding and d) endorsement of actor by local authorities.
1.4. The FSC should be informed in writing or in relevant meetings on the intention to expand operations to a new district to ensure that there are no overlaps between FSC members.

2. Determination of Beneficiary Numbers for Assistance

2.1. All FSC members are expected to make reference to the government approved reports or the approved equivalent when deciding on the number of people to reach.
2.2. The number of people targeted should at all times not be more than approved national figures for the number of people in need. Intentions to reach more people compared to official numbers should be done based on a strong technical justification backed by FSC, HCT and INGC.
2.3. A scale-up over the officially approved estimate for the number of people in need of assistance should be backed by a strong technical justification and endorsed by relevant government authorities.

3. 4W

3.1. Based on the government approved figures, a 4W indicating who is doing what, where and when as well as funding availability/gaps will be completed by the FSC members as per the enclosed template in annex 1.
3.2. Following review, the final 4W accompanied by mapping of locations endorsed by the FSC will be shared with the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) as well as relevant authorities.
3.3. SOPs on humanitarian response will be reviewed and changes made as required. The FSC coordinator will be responsible for presenting any changes to the authorities and the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT).

4. Information sharing:

4.1. FSC members planning assessments should to the greatest extent possible, opt for joint assessments where possible. Information on future assessments should be shared with FSC members and interested and able FSC members should join in the relevant assessments.
4.2. FSC members must share all relevant information gathered through secondary data, assessments or field mission at the FSC.
4.3. Information may be shared in FSC meetings, or where urgent, shared with the FSC coordinator for circulation to the wider group.

SECTION 2: TARGETING AND REGISTRATION

1. Rapid on-set emergency

1.1. Geographical targeting:

1.1.1. Rapid multi-sectorial assessment conducted by the National Institute of Disaster Management (INGC) as the coordinating body to indicate: a) initial numbers of affected populations b) location of affected population and c) extent of damage and needs. It is recommended that where possible, support from humanitarian partners is provided to INGC in conducting this assessment.

1.1.2. While the INGC assessment may be multi-sectorial in nature, the FSC will take into account information on food security and livelihoods only.

1.1.3. In cases where INGC is unable to conduct the assessment or information is not made available by the third day of a request from the government for assistance, a joint rapid assessment made up of a team from the FSC will be conducted to provide initial figures using the questionnaire in annex 2. FSC will be in favor of a multi-sectorial assessment where and when possible.

1.1.4. Based on findings of the assessments indicated in 1.1.1. or 1.1.3, and following government request, FSC members will need to provide immediate support for up to a maximum of 30 days based on the initial figures within a maximum of 72 hours following government request.

1.1.5. However, response should be spaced out; a maximum of 15 days ration is to be provided at once in order to cater for potential beneficiary movements, influx and outflux in case of IDPs in temporary accommodation services.

1.1.6. 15 days following the disaster, INGC will conduct a follow up assessment (EFSA) using the questionnaire in annex 3 in order to refine the response. Results from the EFSA are expected to be made available by day 25 (ten days following assessment).

1.1.7. In addition to the INGC assessment, the FSC will be responsible for assigning a focal point to coordinate with INGC for the collection of remote sensing data from Water Management National Unit (DNGRH), National Institute for Metrology (INAM) and/or FEWSNET, or WFP to indicate rainfall levels, vegetation index, precipitation levels, soil moisture etc., to be used to complement EFSA findings when and where relevant.

1.1.8. Decision on the duration of assistance will be made based on the assessment findings and must be agreed upon within the FSC.

1.2. Household targeting:

1.2.1. Once results of the EFSA are provided, FSC members will be responsible for either a) working directly with communities to obtain a list of vulnerable households or b) working with authorities to provide a list of vulnerable households.

1.2.2. For both of options “a” and “b” stated above, FSC members will be responsible for sharing the vulnerability criteria with the authorities and communities to obtain list of affected HHs.
1.3. **Vulnerability criteria:**

1.3.1. For rapid onset response, all disaster affected populations are, by definition, eligible to humanitarian assistance and plans should be made on this basis.

1.3.2. However, a prioritization exercise may be conducted based on funding and operational capabilities. Should there be constraints in reaching all disaster affected, prioritization will be made by considering the below three categories:

   i) Head of household characteristics (single headed, elderly, child headed, disabled or chronically ill);
   
   ii) Household member characteristics/nutrition related (1 or more chronically ill member, 1 or more pregnant or lactating woman, over 3 dependents);
   
   iii) Disaster affected characteristics (loss of production or labor opportunities, displaced, home or household items lost);
   
   iv) INAS beneficiaries enrolled in PSSB programme

1.3.3. Households must a) fulfil at least two characteristics within the stated vulnerability criteria, b) be existing INAS PSSB beneficiaries or c) eligible for INAS PSSB programme to be entitled for assistance to be part of the first priority for assistance.

Please refer to annex 4 for details on the vulnerability criteria.

1.4. **Verification exercise:**

1.4.1. In order to ascertain accuracy of the received lists of households, actors must conduct a verification exercise of the affected populations using the existing INGC questionnaire (annex 2).

1.4.2. All actors must use the same sampling methodology in line with SMART sampling methodologies for verification exercises.

1.4.3. A simple random sampling methodology assuming a 5% margin of error and a minimum of 90% confidence interval should be used. For assistance on calculation of sample size, FSC members may refer to this link. For additional information on types of sampling and guidelines, refer to annex 5.

1.4.4. Should the verification exercise indicate a large inclusion/exclusion error, actors must re-engage with community committees to provide a revised list.

2. **IPC classification and/or slow on set emergency:**

2.1. **Geographical targeting**

2.1.1. Endorsed SETSAN assessments will be used to identify the IPC classification per district or districts affected in addition to the affected number by district. Results of SETSAN assessments will be presented within the FSC.

2.1.2. Based on the IPC classification and agreed number of affected people by SETSAN/INGC confirmations, FSC members will provide district authorities with the vulnerability criteria for the selection of communities.

2.1.3. District authorities supported by FSC members and/or FSC member Cooperating Partners (CPs) will be responsible for identifying which communities were most affected and require assistance. This information will be cross checked against remote sensing data as an added layer of confirmation.
2.1.4. In instances where remote sensing data does not match with the list of communities provided by local authorities, verification of information will be done through conducting Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) in a) communities selected by district authorities and b) those indicated by remote sensing data to allow for a comparison between the two.

2.1.5. Based on the results of the FGDs, FSC members will discuss with authorities on the final communities to be selected.

2.2. Household targeting:

2.2.1. Following selection of communities, and based on the approved vulnerability criteria, community authorities and a community advisory committee will be responsible for developing a list of the affected individuals/households. The committee will be formed of community representatives and will have specific responsibilities as detailed in annex 6. Community leaders will not be part of the committee.

2.3. Vulnerability criteria:

2.3.1. The below vulnerability criteria will be considered:
   i) Head of household characteristics (single headed, elderly, child headed, disabled or chronically ill)
   ii) Household member characteristics/nutrition related (1 or more chronically ill member, 1 or more pregnant or lactating woman, number of dependents)
   iii) Household economy characteristics (land access, loss of labor opportunities and livestock assets)
   iv) INAS beneficiaries enrolled in PSSB programme

2.3.2. Households must either a) fulfil at least two characteristics within the stated vulnerability criteria, b) be existing INAS PSSB beneficiaries or c) eligible for INAS PSSB programme to be entitled for assistance.

Please refer to annex 7 for details on the vulnerability criteria.

2.4. Verification exercise:

2.4.1. In order to ascertain accuracy of the received lists of households, actors must conduct a verification exercise of the affected populations using the existing INGC questionnaire (annex 2).

2.4.2. All actors must use the same sampling methodology in line with SMART sampling methodologies for verification exercises.

2.4.3. A simple random sampling methodology assuming a 5% margin of error and 95% confidence interval should be used. For assistance on calculation of sample size, agencies may refer to this [link]. For additional information on types of sampling and guidelines, refer to annex 5.

2.4.4. Should the verification exercise indicate a large inclusion/exclusion error, actors must re-engage with community committees to provide a revised list.

3. Household size & gender:
3.1. Given that transfer value/ration are determined based on the kilo calories required per individual, in order to meet the set out food security objectives, the actual household size should be used for the provision of assistance.

3.2. However, in the below scenarios, agencies may exceptionally use the average household size 5 or the average established by the government following results of census or relevant assessments:

i) Lack of appropriate registration systems and or methodologies, leading to inaccurate data on household sizes.

ii) Emergency situations where it is difficult to immediately gather information on household size and immediate response is required.

3.3. To the greatest extent possible, the main household recipient must be female. It is encouraged that an alternate also be identified to receive assistance in case of absence of the main recipient during distributions.

4. Registration systems:

4.1. Humanitarian agencies should aim to collect a minimum set of data for targeted populations including: household name, location/community, alternate, gender, age and gender breakdown, and number of pregnant and lactating women. These fields constitute the minimum data to be gathered. However, additional information such as mobile number, marital status, disabilities etc. may be captured as necessary.

4.2. The two main systems currently being used are World Vision’s Last Line Mobile System (LLMS) and WFP’s SCOPE system. FSC members are all encouraged to use one of those two systems for registrations. In cases where registration is done by one actor, they are encouraged to share relevant information with other agencies.

4.3. No two agencies should conduct registrations in the same location, rather they should refer to available information.

4.4. FSC members must consult and provide information to the existing INGC database when and where relevant.

SECTION 3: CONDITIONALITY

1. Three types of conditionality will be considered for food assistance:
   i. Unconditional assistance: meaning beneficiaries do not have to undertake any type of activity to receive assistance;
   ii. Soft conditionality assistance: meaning beneficiaries will have to participate in light activities such as trainings, social behavior change activities, hygiene campaigns etc. in order to receive assistance; and,
   iii. Conditional assistance: meaning able bodied beneficiaries will have to participate in heavier duty type of activities to receive assistance, typically asset creation activities.

2. In the selection of conditionality various factors need to be taken into consideration:
   i. Speed of response and IPC classification/level of need: how fast agencies need to respond depending on level of need
ii. Planning: time available for planning conditional assistance
iii. Cost efficiency and effectiveness: taking into consideration impact of proposed activities and value for money considering the impact versus costs being put in
iv. Minimum technical standards/work norms and sustainability
v. Displacement: return of populations to original area or resettlement following displacement
vi. Access: to plan, implement and monitor the activity continuously
vii. Needs to support reconstruction/restoration of livelihoods
viii. Ability of HHs to engage in work: Irrespective of type of conditionality selected as a general response type, considerations must always be made for HHs that may not be able to engage in conditional activities allowing them to benefit from unconditional assistance.

3. It is recommended that conditionality be defined depending on IPC level and type of response:

3.1. IPC classification:

3.1.1. In IPC 2 locations, FSC members should aim for conditional assistance with the exception of rapid onset disasters.
3.1.2. In IPC3 a combination of unconditional, soft conditionality and conditional assistance could be provided depending on the specific context.
3.1.3. In IPC 4 and 5 only unconditional assistance should be considered.

3.2. Rapid onset:

3.2.1. Particularly during immediate response, agencies should aim to provide unconditional assistance for a minimum of 60 days. While the duration will be determined by needs assessments and each specific context, FSC members should aim not to exceed 4 months of unconditional assistance.
3.2.2. Following the immediate response, agencies may move to soft conditionality or conditional assistance depending on the context and on IPC classification (if available) as indicated in 3.1. The move to conditional will be made once the above mentioned conditions are met.

3.3. Slow onset:

3.3.1. During slow onset, all of unconditional, soft conditionality or conditional assistance may be considered based on IPC classification (if available) as indicated in 3.1, with a recommendation to focus on conditional assistance only where proper planning and preparation are done.

Refer to Table 1 for a summary on conditionality to be considered based on IPC classification.

SECTION 4: TRANSFER VALUE

Setting the transfer value and ration provided will be made based on the below process:
i) Assuming 2,100 kilo calories as the average required per person per day, needs assessment should indicate an estimate of what % of the food needs families are able to cover through their own means.

ii) In cases where assessments do not clearly highlight the kilocalorie gap, FSC members will aim to provide a 100% ration to those in IPC 5 locations, minimum of 90% ration to those in IPC 4 locations, minimum of 75% ration to populations in IPC 3 areas and minimum of 50% ration to those in IPC 2 areas.

iii) In cases of displaced people with total loss of assets and food stocks, 100% ration will be provided.

Specific to Cash Based Transfers (CBT), the below process will be followed:

1) Based on the food preferences across the various provinces, a fixed food basket per province is to be used as a basis for calculating the value. The food basket will be composed through taking into account the dietary preferences as well as nutritional value as indicated by Nutval (annex 8). The food basket value may be complimented by relevant expenditures such as transport or milling costs where required.

2) The Cash Working Group (CWG) will compile market price information from available sources including SIMA and WFP mVAM and circulate to the CWG on a monthly basis during periods of implementation.

3) The value of the assistance must be continuously reviewed based on the market prices. If there is a deviation of +/-10% the voucher value must be updated. To assist in assistance of value calculation, refer to annex 9.

4) The assistance value may differ across provinces as the food composition will be different. However, values may not differ within the same district.

5) Values must be aligned to government social protection values (PASD) to the greatest extent possible. A deviation of 15% maximum may be accepted. If cases of higher deviation, the food basket composition may be revised in discussion with the CWG.

SECTION 5: TRANSFER MODALITY

1. FSC members should ensure that the transfer modality selection is made based on appropriate assessments that confirm appropriateness of each modality depending on location of intervention. A comparison in terms of cost efficiency and effectiveness, beneficiary preferences, impact, operational ease must therefore be made before deciding on a transfer modality.

2. To provide overall guidance, a joint market assessment done by FSC members should be conducted to provide information on market functionality across selected provinces. Additionally, the cash working group will be responsible for initiating discussions with SETSAN to include questions on market functionality across the assessed districts. This would mean that once assessment results are available, agencies would already have information on market functionality across the different locations.

3. At a micro level, agencies would need to conduct assessments using standard tools as agreed within the cash working group and enclosed in annex 10. The assessments would need to cover the below aspects:
   
i) Market functionality: if not covered in the assessment mentioned in point “2”, look into supply flow, volumes being traded, proximity of markets to beneficiaries, prices etc.
ii) Availability of Service Providers (SPs): including banks, telecommunication companies or IT companies and assess possibility of partnership
iii) Cooperating Partners (CPs): considering CP capacity, experience, financial procedures and risk measures
iv) Authority regulations: consultations with authorities at different levels to assess willingness and understanding of different transfer modalities
v) Security assessment: highlighting risks that may be associated with the different transfer modalities.
vii) Cost efficiency/effectiveness: considering cost of delivering assistance through the different transfer modalities.

4. This range of assessments will assist in informing the appropriate transfer modality depending on location.
5. To assist in the decision on the transfer modality, refer to the decision tree in annex 11.
6. FSC members must share assessment results within the FSC.
7. FSC members should aim to provide assistance through the same transfer modality within a district, but different transfer modalities may be used within a province.

**SECTION 6: WAY FORWARD**

The FSC recognizes the need for additional and complimentary SOPs to support in harmonization of response. As such, the FSC plans on developing the below additional SOPs within coming months:

1. Development of SOPs for Monitoring and Evaluation.
2. Development of SOPs/guidelines on Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) with an emphasis on feedback and complaint mechanisms and protection of populations during intervention periods.
3. Guidelines on productive assets and asset creation activities
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<th>IPC 4</th>
<th>IPC 5</th>
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<td>Ration size</td>
<td>No assistance</td>
<td>&gt;= 50%</td>
<td>&gt;= 75%</td>
<td>&gt;= 90%</td>
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<td>Unconditional</td>
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<td>All applicable</td>
<td>All applicable</td>
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<td>Remarks</td>
<td>More than four in five households (HHs) are able to meet essential food and non-food needs without engaging in atypical, unsustainable strategies to access food and income.</td>
<td>Even with any humanitarian assistance at least one in five HHs in the area have the following or worse: Minimally adequate food consumption but are unable to afford some essential non-food expenditures without engaging in irreversible coping strategies.</td>
<td>Even with any humanitarian assistance at least one in five HHs in the area have the following or worse: Food consumption gaps with high or above usual acute malnutrition OR Are marginally able to meet minimum food needs only with accelerated depletion of livelihood assets that will lead to food consumption gaps.</td>
<td>Even with any humanitarian assistance at least one in five HHs in the area have the following or worse: Large food consumption gaps resulting in very high acute malnutrition and excess mortality OR Extreme loss of livelihood assets that will lead to food consumption gaps in the short term.</td>
<td>Even with any humanitarian assistance at least one in five HHs in the area have an extreme lack of food and other basic needs where starvation, death, and destitution are evident. Evidence for all three criteria (food consumption, acute malnutrition, and mortality) is required to classify Famine.</td>
<td>Loss of assets and livelihoods, displacement, breakdown in markets</td>
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