Harmonized Food Security and Nutrition Assessments in Emergency Situations — A Case of South Sudan

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About the Republic of South Sudan

• Became the world’s newest nation on 9th July 2011 but slipped into civil war in December 2013.

• An estimated 2.1 million South Sudanese are refugees in the neighboring countries, with Uganda hosting 1 million of them.

• An estimated 1.88 million South Sudanese are internally displaced.

• Since the crises erupted, South Sudan continues to be overwhelmed by the consequences of a protracted conflict that have manifested in multiple crises at political, economic and social fronts.

• An estimated 6 million (50% of the population) people were severely food insecure in June-July 2017.

• High prevalence of morbidities associated with limited access to health services.

• The situation of acute malnutrition in many parts of South Sudan remains Critical with a global acute malnutrition (GAM) rate above the WHO 15% Emergency threshold.
Food Security, Livelihood and Nutrition Assessments

• Given the precarious humanitarian situation, periodic food security and nutrition assessments have been very crucial in informing decisions on appropriate responses and preventive measures.

• The Food Security Monitoring System (FSMS), started in 2010, was a key critical data source for the IPC analysis.

• FSMS is seasonal and was conducted nationally three times per year (March (Post-harvest), June/July – Lean Season; and November (Harvest Season)).

• The timing of FSMS assessments is timed to coincide with the main IPC comprehensive analyses.

• FSMS allows monitoring of trends and changes in key food security indicators over time.

• FSMS has continuously undergone significant changes in terms of assessment methodology, and volume of information collected.
Harmonization of Food Security & Nutrition Assessments

SHIFTING FROM Food Security Monitoring System (FSMS) TO Food Security and Nutrition Monitoring System (FSNMS)

• Initially, FSMS was a collaborative initiative led by WFP with the support of FAO and the involvement of government and NGOs.

• The FSMS focused mainly on Food Security related information.

• UNICEF fully joined in 2014 as key player with the introduction of NUTRITION component, hence the change of the name from FSMS to FSNMS in 2014.

• To date, a total of 20 rounds of FSMS/FSNMS have been conducted, out of which 19 of them were representative at State level.

• The recent assessment, Round 20 conducted in July 2017, was representative at County level mainly for FS component.

• During round 20 – in each sampling unity (county), 7-9 clusters were selected (84-108 HHs). As per the recent IPC, minimum of 100 children in five cluster per unit of sample is adequate for IPC nutrition analysis.
How FSMS/FSNMS has Evolved

2010 – 2014
(Round 1-13)

Sentinel System
• 10 purposively selected sites representing different livelihood zones from each State.
• 25 randomly selected households per site.

2014 – 2016
(Round 14 – 19)

State Representative Survey
Two-stage cluster sampling
• Equal sample size and clusters for each State.
• Round 14: 25 cluster by 17 HHs.
• Round 15-19: 28 clusters by 15 HHs.
• Data collection is done using tablets.

2017 +
(Round 20 +)

County Representative Survey
Two-stage cluster sampling
• County based sample size and cluster determination.
• Over sampling in few FS&N hotspot counties.
• Clusters
  • Round 20 - 7-9 clusters by 12 HHs.
  • Round 21 - 7 clusters by 15 HHs.
• Data collection is done using tablets.
What information does FSNMS capture?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOOD SECURITY</th>
<th>NUTRITION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Food Consumption</td>
<td>• Anthropometric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sources of Food</td>
<td>• Morbidity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Income Sources</td>
<td>• Infant and Young Child Feeding (Alternate)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Expenditure</td>
<td>• Maternal nutrition (MUAC Measurements)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Agriculture (Crop and Livestock)</td>
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<td>• Coping Strategies</td>
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<td>• Assistance Received</td>
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<td>• Shocks</td>
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Contribution of FSNMS to Humanitarian Action

- FSNMS data is one of the critical sources of information for the IPC analysis which is important for:
  - Identification of areas affected
  - Identification of how many are affected
  - Identification of why they are affected
  - Prioritization of resources
    - Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO)
    - Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP)
  - Monitoring trends of the food security and nutrition situation
  - Providing early warning information for (early) action
FSNMS Product – II. Complementary feeding (children 6 to 23 months)

**Trends of Minimum Dietary Diversity (6-23 months)**

- CES
- EES
- Jonglei
- Lakes
- NBS
- Unity
- UNS
- Warrap
- WBS
- WES

**Trends of Minimum Meal Frequency (6-23 months) by State**

- CES
- EES
- Jonglei
- Lakes
- NBS
- Unity
- UNS
- Warrap
- WBS
- WES

**Trends of Minimum Acceptable diet (6 to 23 months) by State**

- CES
- EES
- Jonglei
- Lakes
- NBS
- Unity
- UNS
- Warrap
- WBS
- WES
An estimated 4.4 million (37% of population) people are classified as severely food insecure.

An estimated 4.9 million (42% of population) people are classified as severely food insecure. Some counties are classified in Famine or high likelihood/risk of Famine.

An estimated 5.5 million (45% of population) people are classified as severely food insecure.

An estimated 6 million (56% of population) people are classified as severely food insecure.
Lessons Learned

• Sustainability of data collection – was revisited and given the high cost and logistical intensity of the assessments, the frequency was reduced from three (3) to two (2) assessments annually.

• Assessment cost – is shared among the three key agencies (WFP, UNICEF and FAO)

• Quality of data – improving through training

• Sampling methodology – is continuously being adapted to respond to information needs (representation at County level), cost (conflict severely affects access hence cost of services), Still keep adapting improved methods.

• Joint FSNMS provides a platform for a collective and unified voice among the key food security and nutrition stakeholders who include the Government, UN, NGOs etc.

• In conflict-affected States – access is negotiated with a number of actors e.g. Government, Opposition, Non-alliance etc.

• Broaden partnerships – FEWSNET is fully joining.

• Comprehensive assessments provide a better and comprehensive picture than stand-alone nutrition or food security surveys, not to mention cost savings.
Way Forward

- Integrated food security and nutrition assessments/surveys should be encouraged as they give a better and more comprehensive picture of the situation, and also save costs because you collect both sets of data in one exercise.

- Where possible, stand-alone anthropometry surveys should include basic food security modules (FCS, HHS and HDDS) for better interpretation of the results and to also inform the IPC process.

- In emergency settings where insecurity and access are major issues, there is need to develop standardized guidelines for joint food security and nutrition assessments.

- A need to develop food security data quality check guidelines for practitioners handling the collection and analysis of food security data.
Thank You