

8.3 HOW TO COMMUNICATE THE RESULTS OF A CFSVA

Sharing information is an essential component of humanitarian response. Food security analysis serves its purpose only if it leads to more efficient, appropriate, and targeted responses to a food crisis. It is intended to enable WFP managers to examine response options and recommendations, for partners to consider interventions in other complementary sectors, and for donors to allocate resources.

It is therefore crucial to ensure that key food security and vulnerability analysis findings, and food and non-food response options, are communicated in an effective way to the wider humanitarian community, in country as well as in the donor capitals.

WFP has a responsibility to communicate CFSVA findings to all stakeholders, humanitarian actors, and interested parties. This is in line with WFP's commitment to transparency. It also strengthens the links between assessment recommendations and decisions on programme design and funding allocations. Sharing information will also foster dialogue and contribute to building a common understanding of a problem.

Beyond being a programming tool, the CFSVA constitutes **an information base**. A CFSVA provides an in-depth understanding of food insecurity faced by communities and threatening livelihoods. It also provides data on the characteristics of the households (demographics, asset ownership, sources of income and labour, access to infrastructures such as markets and health posts, their shocks and coping strategies, etc.), their level of susceptibility to various risk factors (droughts, floods, pests, insecurity, etc.), and their ability to cope. The breadth of data and analysis can be used outside the food security sector, making it essential to share the information as widely as possible. In addition, in an emergency this information should be easily accessible, as it is a key reference for assessing the effect of a new crisis.

Communicating the results of a CFSVA is an important step, despite being the last, of the CFSVA process. Attention must be paid to this activity, despite fatigue at the end of the process. Without effective communication, it is unlikely that the data and analysis will be used outside WFP.

Remember, CFSVA findings are used for multiple purposes and should be communicated to a range of audiences, including the following:

WFP audience

- Managers, who require reliable and transparent information to make sound decisions about the scale and scope of a food insecurity and vulnerability;
- Programmers, who rely on CFSVA reports for designing interventions that are appropriate and operationally feasible; and
- Staff at all levels, who need timely and accurate information that can be communicated to government, donors, and other humanitarian actors for programming, resource mobilization, and advocacy purposes.

The wider humanitarian community

- The host government, which uses the results for its own programming and policy-making;
- United Nations partners, which will need to know about the food security situation of a given country in order to design and implement their own operations and for coordination purposes;
- NGO partners, which will use WFP findings to complement their own analysis and design and to implement their own interventions;
- Implementing partners, who will need to understand the food security situation to implement interventions in the most efficient and transparent manner;
- Donors, who need information on the magnitude and severity of a crisis in order to make funding allocation decisions; and
- Media, in order to report on the situation using balanced and accurate information.

The following sections discuss the channels and communication tools through which the findings of the CFSVA can be disseminated.

8.3.1 CFSVA executive brief

In addition to the main report, the CFSVA team leader should prepare an executive brief which presents the key findings in a concise and easily accessible way.

In theory the executive brief could be different from the executive summary. The executive summary summarizes the findings of the report. The executive brief provides information tailored to fit the information needs of the audience, information that would be useful for decision-makers. However, it is possible to combine the executive summary and executive brief into only one document. This brief should be distributed separately from the report.

Audience: It is intended for humanitarian decision-makers (WFP, donors, government representatives, United Nations partners) who are not interested in the technical aspects of the assessment and who need to have a clear overview of the food security situation and the appropriate responses. It is also intended for local authorities.

These actors need to know the following:

- Who is food insecure, or vulnerable to food insecurity?
- How many people are food insecure, or vulnerable?
- Where are they?
- Why are they food insecure or vulnerable?
- What is the likelihood that the situation could deteriorate?

The executive brief should present the various recommended responses, and their objective, content, target group, and duration.

When to prepare it?

The team leader should start preparing the executive brief when the findings, main conclusions, and recommendations are available and internally agreed upon. It should be a stand-alone document.

When to use it?

The brief can be used to start disseminating the information before the final report is available. For example, it can be used at a debriefing with partners. However, the brief must first be cleared by the country director.

Format (See format and guidance in Annex 7):

It should be ideally two to three pages. It should contain legible visual instruments, such as a map, tables, charts, or graphics to facilitate the reader's understanding. Names and e-mail addresses of the people responsible for the assessment, who can be contacted for additional information, need to be provided.

8.3.2 Official launch

For every CFSVA, an official launch should be organized to present the results and recommendations to the government, partners, and donors at a high administrative and political level. The presentation should be viewed as an opportunity to ensure a wide dissemination of the results and high visibility for donors. It is advised to work with the public information officer and WFP's Communications and Public Policy Strategy Division at Headquarters to invite journalists and prepare a press release.

CFSVAs typically include recommendations for both food and non-food responses. For WFP, the presentation to stakeholders is an opportunity to bring the non-food recommendations to the attention of partners so that they can consider them for their own decisions and planning.

The launch must be organized in advance to ensure good attendance. Both technical staff and managers or decision-makers from the following audience should be invited:

- United Nations partner agencies
- Government representatives from the relevant ministries
- Local and international NGOs
- Implementing partners
- Donors

8.3.3 Disseminating by e-mail and hard copy

The country director is responsible for disseminating the report. Once finalized, the report and the executive brief should be e-mailed to all relevant stakeholders, both inside WFP and outside WFP. This should be done in a systematic way. A proper list of recipients in the country but also at the regional level should be drawn up (in the case of WFP, the support of Headquarters and the regional bureau should also be sought).

Mailing or delivering hard copies should also be considered, as some decision-makers and managers will not have the time to open their e-mails, download the report, and print it out, and therefore may find it more convenient to receive a printed version. The official launch could be a good opportunity for disseminating hard copies to all partners.

8.3.4 Media work

The media are another important channel for disseminating information. It is important to ensure that the Public Information Officer (in the country office or regional bureau) is aware of the CFSVA from the start; he/she should be informed of the analysis progress, findings, and recommendations. The Public Information Officer acts as a spokesperson and deals with media inquiries and may have to answer journalists' questions on the survey, so it is important to keep him/her in the loop.

Public Information Officers have various tools or methods in communicating information: including press releases, media advisories, news briefings, press conferences, web stories.

To inform the media on the findings, a press release is likely to be the most appropriate tool. The purpose of a press release is to issue a straightforward message. It is for the country director to decide if a press release will be issued. Various factors will be taken into account when deciding to issue a press release, such as the importance of the findings, whether they are newsworthy, the political context, and the fund-raising needs.

The press release can be issued internationally, regionally, or in the country only (in which case, it will be a local press release).

The Public Information Officer is responsible for preparing the press release. Press releases are written following specific guidelines (e.g. with the most newsworthy information at the top), using non-technical language, and are tailored to fit journalists' needs.

8.3.5 Posting on websites

Once cleared by the country director, the report should be sent to the Food Security Analysis Service at WFP Headquarters, for posting to the WFP internal and public websites.

Posting on other websites should also be considered:

- Reliefweb, run by OCHA, disseminates humanitarian information by updating its website around the clock. Relevant reports can be e-mailed to submit@reliefweb.int.
- United Nations country team websites often include a list of documents and reports produced by United Nations agencies.
- Humanitarian Information Centres, managed by OCHA, when present in the country, are a good place to post reports.¹³⁰

¹³⁰ The Humanitarian Information Centre (HIC) is a service endorsed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). On behalf of the IASC, OCHA acts as steward of HICs, which aim to ensure that individuals and organizations involved in humanitarian operations have access to the benefits of information management tools to assess, plan, implement, and monitor humanitarian assistance. HICs are an inter-organizational resource whose products and services are available to the entire humanitarian community

8.3.6 Advocacy

Advocacy is a coherent strategy to influence policy formation, reform, and implementation. In the context of CFSVA, advocacy ranges from working with governments to inform understanding of food security conditions and recommending ways to alleviate poverty and hunger, to lobbying to donors, or raising general public awareness (WFP 2004).

Advocacy should address both food and non-food options for assisting needy populations. This is because food and nutrition insecurity is multifaceted, and in addition to food assistance, interventions may be required in such areas as education, hygiene promotion, water and sanitation, infrastructure development, and agriculture.

WFP may not be able to implement some of the response recommendations, and must therefore encourage the government or other organizations to do so. The presentation meeting is the starting point for discussions with possible collaborating partners. This should be followed up by more specific meetings with interested agencies. The purpose of such meetings is to:

- provide a detailed explanation of the reasons why particular interventions have been suggested;
- emphasize the complementary nature of different interventions, food and non-food; and
- seek commitments from other organizations regarding intervention in specific sectors.

It is usually necessary to organize a series of such meetings.

8.4 KEY REFERENCES: REPORT PREPARATION AND DISSEMINATION

- Caldwell, Richard. 2006. Using Tables and Graphs for Presenting Results: A session provided to the ADRA Monitoring and Evaluation Training. Bangkok, Thailand.
- FEWS NET/WFP. 2006. Rwanda Food Security Update: Poor Households Food Stock Already Gone. September.
- WFP. 2006. *Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis: An External Review of WFP Guidance and Practice*.
- ibid. 2007. CFSVA Methodology Workshop Report. Rome. April.