**Focus Group Discussions Questionnaire**

**OBJECTIVE**

The focus group discussions will allow us to gather qualitative data that will help us gain deeper insight and understanding of how the populations of interest cope when faced with a lack of food or money to buy food. Thus gain information for the design of the LCS module questionnaire (refinement and inclusion of strategies).

**RESEARCH SCOPE**

Population groups of interest include:

Ensure that all population groups of interest participate through focus group discussions. This will allow you to capture the different coping strategies applied by different populations.

* displaced
* residents
* refugees
* migrants
* etc

Context settings of interest include:

It is vital to also ensure coverage of all contextual settings that are present in your country office.

* rural
* urban
* camp
* etc

**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION FORMULATION**

* A group of people sharing at least one common characteristic; however, different population groups must be grouped separately. The main different social groups and minorities should be represented.
* Groups should consist of 6–10 individuals.
* You should repeat the exercise for several focus groups to ensure that the list reflects a broad opinion.
* Make sure that FGDs are conducted with adult and young men and women to understand the differences in their behaviors/needs. It is also important to conduct FGDs with persons with disabilities in the presence and with the support of their guardians if needed.
* Although there is no hard rule on how many focus groups are "enough," ideally, you should continue conducting FGDs until no new information is gathered ("saturation"). Yet, a minimum of six to eight is recommended for each culture or location, or until we reach saturation.

**INSTRUCTIONS**

* **Tool translation and voice recording:** The tool must be translated into the local language and dialect to ensure smoothness of the discussion and full clarity on all ends. after taken the participants’ consent, the responses must be recorded, in the local language and dialect so not to miss out on any information.
* **Facilitation and note takers:** The group shall be led by a native speaker. One or two other persons should take notes.
* **Livelihood coping strategies:** 
  + Conduct FGDs with the relevant community(ies), where the four general categories of coping strategies would be presented, and the list of coping strategies would be discussed.
  + Discuss the current shocks as well as the historical shocks and how households and communities used to adapt and cope.
  + Probe to find out if any other relevant local strategies are not included in the list. If this is the case, then add them to the list.
  + Be sure that you only include (ex-post) livelihood coping strategies for food security. Ex-post measures are actions taken after a shock to mitigate or isolate the impact of the shock, such as the selling of productive assets. You can refer to the full list of such livelihood coping mechanisms [here](https://resources.vam.wfp.org/data-analysis/quantitative/food-security/livelihood-coping-strategies-food-security). Ex-ante livelihood coping strategies and consumption-based strategies should not be included. Ex-ante risk management strategies involve actions taken prior to the occurrence of the shock to avoid, shift, or mitigate risks, such as changing income source or livelihood in anticipation of extreme weather conditions, or saving more money or crops more than usual. The Ex-ante strategies are not considered under LCS.
  + Be sure to clarify and probe to understand if the suggested coping strategy is an actual coping strategy to shock or part of normal customs in the community. For example, purchasing on credit should not be considered a coping strategy if it is part of the local customs (purchasing behaviour).
* **Severity rating:** If the FGD moderators observe that participant have difficulties in rating strategies by severity, it is possible to take the process of rating severities in a different direction. The FGD participants can be asked to order the relevant coping strategies - in discussion - in a form of a timeline since the main or the most recent shock that affected the community. Participants should indicate which strategies were applied first, after, and last. This can give a clear indication of the severity level perceived by households. In conclusion, the adoption of stress, crisis and emergency livelihood coping strategies occurs in a sequence form, rather than simultaneously. Thus, to validate the discussion and agreement on severity, relevant strategies being discussed can be presented in a timeline by the FGD participants.
* Refer to the [**LCS-FS guidance**](https://resources.vam.wfp.org/data-analysis/quantitative/food-security/livelihood-coping-strategies-food-security) for more information on how to aggregate data across FGDs and reach a consensus.

**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION INFORMATION**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Code for FGD Session:* |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Name & Gender of Facilitator:* |  | *Position & Agency of Facilitator:* |  |
| *Name & Gender of Note-Taker* |  | *Position & Agency of Note-Taker* |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Type of FGD Group Profile (Gender, Age, & Other Diversity Disaggregation):* |  | *Date & Time/Duration of FGD:* |  |
| *Number of Persons in FGD:* |  | *Location of FGD:*  *Region, department, commune, village* |  |
| *Any Notes Regarding Facilitation/Group Dynamics (e.g., if less time than anticipated):* |  | | |

**INTRODUCTION**

Good morning/afternoon everyone. Thank you very much for speaking to us today. We appreciate you taking the time to be with us. Before we begin, I would like to introduce myself.

My name is \_\_\_\_\_\_. We work on behalf of/or with the World Food Programme. Today we are going to talk about how households deal or cope with a lack of food or money to buy food. We are going to ask you some questions about how people in your community cope when they are faced with a shortage of food or money to buy food, and what you think the future consequences will be for the involved households.

The discussion will take around two hours. My colleague [*Note-taker Name*] will be taking notes to accurately capture what is discussed. However, no names or identifying information will be shared and we will not discuss your individual responses with anyone (this discussion is confidential). We will analyse the information and share the main points from our discussions to help our teams strengthen their approaches to support your communities.

Your participation is voluntary, and you can stop at any time or not answer questions if you do not feel comfortable. This discussion will not affect your access to assistance in anyway. There is no payment or additional benefits for your participation today, however, your feedback will help us improve our work to assist communities.

Do you have any questions? Are you willing to participate? [*Recommended for consent forms to be signed in advance of the session date or if not, before the discussions starts. Verbal informed consent can be supported for those with lower levels of literacy.*

We very much appreciate your participation and look forward to discussing together and hearing your feedback and ideas. [*As relevant/possible*] We will take a break for refreshments at the [middle/end] and can be available to share service information at that time.

Before we go further, I want to appoint some rules for the discussion which will make our conversation effective and productive:

1. There are no wrong answers but please try to be specific
2. Listening to each other; not talking when others are speaking; giving others time to participate
3. Respecting everyone’s opinion; being kind
4. Turning cell phones on silent or walking outside if there is an urgent call

**RESEARCH QUESTION:** What do people do when they don’t have enough food to eat or money to buy food?

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| *Questions to be asked during FGDs:*   1. *How do households in your community cope with this specific shock (e.g., flood, drought, economic crisis, etc.)?* 2. *How do households in your community cope to increase their households’ resources to access food?* 3. *How do households in your community cope to reduce the demand for food needs?* 4. *How do households in your community cope to distribute food resources within their households?* |

***Question 1****: Tell me about what has happened since the [recent shock e.g., flood, drought, economic crisis, etc] had occurred.*

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| *PROBE: how has [recent shock e.g., flood, drought, economic crisis, etc] affected your daily life compared to the past?* |

***Question 2:*** *How do households in your community cope with this specific shock (e.g., flood, drought, economic crisis, conflict etc.)?*

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| *Probe to get all the relevant livelihood coping strategies, at the end use the below principles to exclude the strategies that are not relevant to the LCS-FS module (ex-ante, short-term food-based, or part of cultural norms).*  *While there are many kinds of coping behaviours, only certain kinds of livelihood-related behaviours belong to the LCS. Ask each of the following questions about each identified behaviour:*   1. *Is this behaviour used to cope with existing shock (ex-post)?* 2. *Does the strategy involve changing short-term food consumption behaviours?* 3. *Does it influence households in the medium or long-term in terms of livelihood, human capital, or dignity?* 4. *Is the strategy adopted as a coping mechanism to shocks and it is not part of the usual culture in the community?* | |
| *#* | *List of strategies reported in the FGD* |
| *Strategy 1* |  |
| *Strategy 2* |  |
| *Strategy 3* |  |
| *…..* |  |

***Question 3:*** *How do households in your community cope to increase their resources to access food?*

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| *#* | *List of strategies reported in the FGD* |
| *Strategy 1* |  |
| *Strategy 2* |  |
| *Strategy 3* |  |
| *…..* |  |

***Question 4:*** *How do households in your community cope to reduce their household members’ demand for food needs?*

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| *#* | *List of strategies reported in the FGD* |
| *Strategy 1* |  |
| *Strategy 2* |  |
| *Strategy 3* |  |
| *…..* |  |

***Question 4:*** *How do households in your community cope to distribute food resources within their households?*

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| --- | --- |
| *Probe to get all the relevant livelihood coping strategies, at the end use the below principles to exclude the strategies that are not relevant to the LCS-FS module (ex-ante, short-term food-based, or part of cultural norms).*  *While there are many kinds of coping behaviours, only certain kinds of livelihood-related behaviours belong to the LCS. Ask each of the following questions about each identified behaviour:*   1. *Is this behaviour used to cope with existing shock (ex-post)?* 2. *Does the strategy involve changing short-term food consumption behaviours?* 3. *Does it influence households in the medium or long-term in terms of livelihood, human capital, or dignity?* 4. *Is the strategy adopted as a coping mechanism to shocks and it is not part of the usual culture in the community?* | |
| *#* | *List of strategies reported in the FGD* |
| *Strategy 1* |  |
| *Strategy 2* |  |
| *Strategy 3* |  |
| *…..* |  |

**SEVERITY RATING**

After finishing the discussion on all possible coping strategies applied by the community (the first 4 tables above), take a break then ask participants to agree on the severity of each strategy (the fifth column of the table), using the probing questions (column 2, 3 and 4). Start classifying and agreeing on the most severe, then the less severe, and then the moderate category will come naturally.

*Probing to guide the severity discussion during the focus group discussion:*

1. Is it reversible, can be reversed when it is no longer needed?
2. Is it dramatic in nature, or includes protection risk (e.g., illegal, high risk, exploitive activities)?
3. Can the behaviour be used continuously or is it a one-off strategy?

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| No. | List of coping strategies  [What do people do when they do not have enough food to eat or money to buy food?] | Strategies that would influence a household’s capacity to manage future shocks. | Strategies that would influence a household’s future productivity, including human capital formation. | Strategies that would influence a household’s future productivity, with the unlikelihood of reversing the situation and the dramatic nature of this activity. | **Focus group participants agree on the severity of each strategy. Severity scale: 1-3 (Three being most severe)**  ***Note: this agreement could be done after individual rating or collectively in the group*** | Example of the rating rationale |
| 1 | [Strategy 1] | **x** |  |  | **1** |
| *2* | [Strategy 2] | **x** | **x** |  | **2** |
| 3 | [Strategy 3] |  | **x** |  | **2** |
| 4 | [Strategy 4] |  | **x** | **x** | **3** |
| 5 | …… | **x** | **x** | **x** | **3** |
| 6 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 7 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12 |  |  |  |  |  |

Group the strategies with similar severity and discuss them with each of the discussion groups, one at a time.

**Step x:** Start with severity 1 and 3, then severity 2.

**Step x:** Discuss with the group whether it makes sense that the strategies under each category have the same level of severity. Apply changes if there is an agreement to move strategies between different severity groups

* Is it reversible, can be reversed when it is no longer needed?
* Is it dramatic in nature, or includes protection risk (e.g., illegal, high risk, exploitive activities)?
* Can the behaviour be used continuously or is it a one-off strategy?

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| --- | --- |
| **Severity groups** | **Livelihood coping strategies reported by FGD participants** |
| Severity 1 | 1. [Strategy statement] 2. [Strategy statement] 3. [Strategy statement] 4. [Strategy statement] 5. [Strategy statement] |
| Severity 3 | 1. [Strategy statement] 2. [Strategy statement] 3. [Strategy statement] |
| Severity 2 | 1. [Strategy statement] 2. [Strategy statement] 3. [Strategy statement] 4. [Strategy statement] 5. [Strategy statement] 6. [Strategy statement] 7. [Strategy statement] |

**Closing**

Thank you for sharing your experiences and opinions with us. You have been very helpful, and we appreciate you taking the time to speak with us. We hope you have found the discussion interesting.