



DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document n° 1

Humanitarian Food Assistance

From Food Aid
to Food Assistance

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Humanitarian
Aid and Civil
Protection

DG ECHO Thematic Policy Documents

- N°1:** Food Assistance: From Food Aid to Food Assistance
- N°2:** Water, Sanitation and Hygiene: Meeting the challenge of rapidly increasing humanitarian needs in WASH
- N°3:** Cash and Vouchers: Increasing efficiency and effectiveness across all sectors
- N°4:** Nutrition: Addressing Undernutrition in Emergencies
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1. Policy

1.1 Introduction

In accordance with the orientation of the Humanitarian Aid Consensus,¹ and more generally to promote best practice in the provision of humanitarian food assistance by the EU and its Member States, the principal aims of this Communication² are to:

- 1) maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of EU food assistance, in accordance with the Commission's humanitarian mandate defined by the humanitarian legal framework, and in accordance with the Financial Regulation;³
- 2) improve policy coherence, coordination, and complementarity between the Commission, Member States and other donors, in the provision of food assistance;
- 3) inform partners and stakeholders of the Commission's objectives, priorities and standards in the delivery of humanitarian food assistance.

This Communication therefore sets out the policy framework for EU humanitarian food assistance. It explains the issues and trends to be taken into account; the concepts, definitions and objectives that should drive humanitarian food assistance; the principles that should underscore this work; and the scope of activities undertaken.

The accompanying Staff Working Document explains, from a more detailed operational perspective, how the Commission programmes, implements and coordinates its humanitarian food assistance.

This Communication should be read in conjunction with the Commission's Communication on food security («An EU policy framework to assist developing countries in addressing food security challenges»). Two separate Communications on these interrelated topics are deemed necessary in order to respect the distinction between their policy focus i.e. food assistance linked to humanitarian objectives for populations affected by crises in emergency contexts and food security linked to development objectives. The two policy frameworks have been designed in such a way as to ensure coherence and safeguard against uncoordinated overlap.

1.2 Background

There is an increasing incidence of natural disasters, often exacerbated by the impact of climate change, affecting more people than in the past. Conflict and repression continue to undermine people's ability to pursue their day-to-day livelihoods, and often generate large numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons. Rapid population growth

1 - In December 2007, the Council of the European Union adopted the Humanitarian Aid Consensus (European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid: 2008/C 25/01). In the accompanying Action Plan, adopted as a Staff Working Paper in 2008 (European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid – Action Plan: SEC(2008)1991), the European Commission implicitly acknowledges the fast-evolving field of best practice in the food sector, and articulates a specific commitment to elaborate diversified approaches to food assistance and adjust policy accordingly.

2 - This policy document presents as chapter 1 the 'Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament - Humanitarian Food Assistance', COM(2010) 126 final, adopted in March 2010 and as chapter 2 the 'Commission Staff Working Document', COM(2010)126, that accompanies it.

3 - COUNCIL REGULATION (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities (OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p. 1)

increases existing pressures on natural resources. In many parts of the developing world, these factors force vulnerable populations to further compete for natural resources and potentially lead to increasing incidences of conflict.

The impact of these trends deepens the vulnerability of the world's poorest, most notably their food and nutritional vulnerability. Chronic food insecurity, where insufficient food production or an inability to purchase enough nutritious food leads to sustained and persistent inadequacies in the quantity or quality of food consumed, is a driver of chronic malnutrition. This in turn has irreversible and damaging consequences for child development and long-term productivity, which further exacerbates poverty and vulnerability. The poorest, with least resilience, also carry the greatest exposure to the consequences of disasters. These can prompt more temporary but dramatic interruptions in food consumption (transient food insecurity), leading to acute malnutrition and heightened risks of morbidity and mortality.⁴

Indeed, the number of undernourished people affected by both chronic and transient food insecurity has increased by 172 million, from 848 million in 2006 to 1.02 billion in 2009.⁵ 95% of those undernourished live in developing countries and a growing proportion of these live in urban settings, thus especially exposed to the impact of volatile food prices and the economic/financial crises. The prevalence of acute malnutrition has risen, affecting 8% of the world's under-five children in the period 1995–2003, increasing to 11% in the period 2000–2006.⁶

Approximately 10% of those who are undernourished are food insecure as a consequence of a disaster or emergency situation, and it is anticipated that related humanitarian and development food needs will continue to increase. It is therefore essential that the available humanitarian resources are used in the most efficient and effective way, adapting to this more complex and pressured environment, and that decisions are informed by fast-evolving best-practice.

1.3 Definitions and Objectives

Humanitarian food assistance aims to ensure the consumption of sufficient, safe and nutritious food in anticipation of, during, and in the aftermath of a humanitarian crisis, when food consumption would otherwise be insufficient or inadequate to avert excessive mortality,⁷ emergency rates of acute malnutrition,⁸ or detrimental coping mechanisms. This includes ensuring food availability, access to nutritious food, proper nutrition awareness, and appropriate feeding practices. Food assistance may involve the direct provision of food, but may utilize a wider range of tools, including the transfer or provision of relevant services, inputs or commodities, cash or vouchers, skills or knowledge.



Food Assistance
beneficiary in Ivory Coast
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Delafortrie

“ Humanitarian food assistance aims to ensure the consumption of sufficient, safe and nutritious food in anticipation of, during, and in the aftermath of a humanitarian crisis, when food consumption would otherwise be insufficient or inadequate to avert excessive mortality. ”

4 - See Glossary in Annex 3.1 of accompanying Staff Working Document.

5 - The U.N.'s Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), 19 June 2009.

6 - The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) «State of the World's Children» Statistics 2005 and 2008.

7 - «Excessive» is considered to combine absolute measures in relation to established emergency thresholds (as defined by the Sphere handbook, UNICEF and the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN)), and relative measures in relation to context-specific baselines.

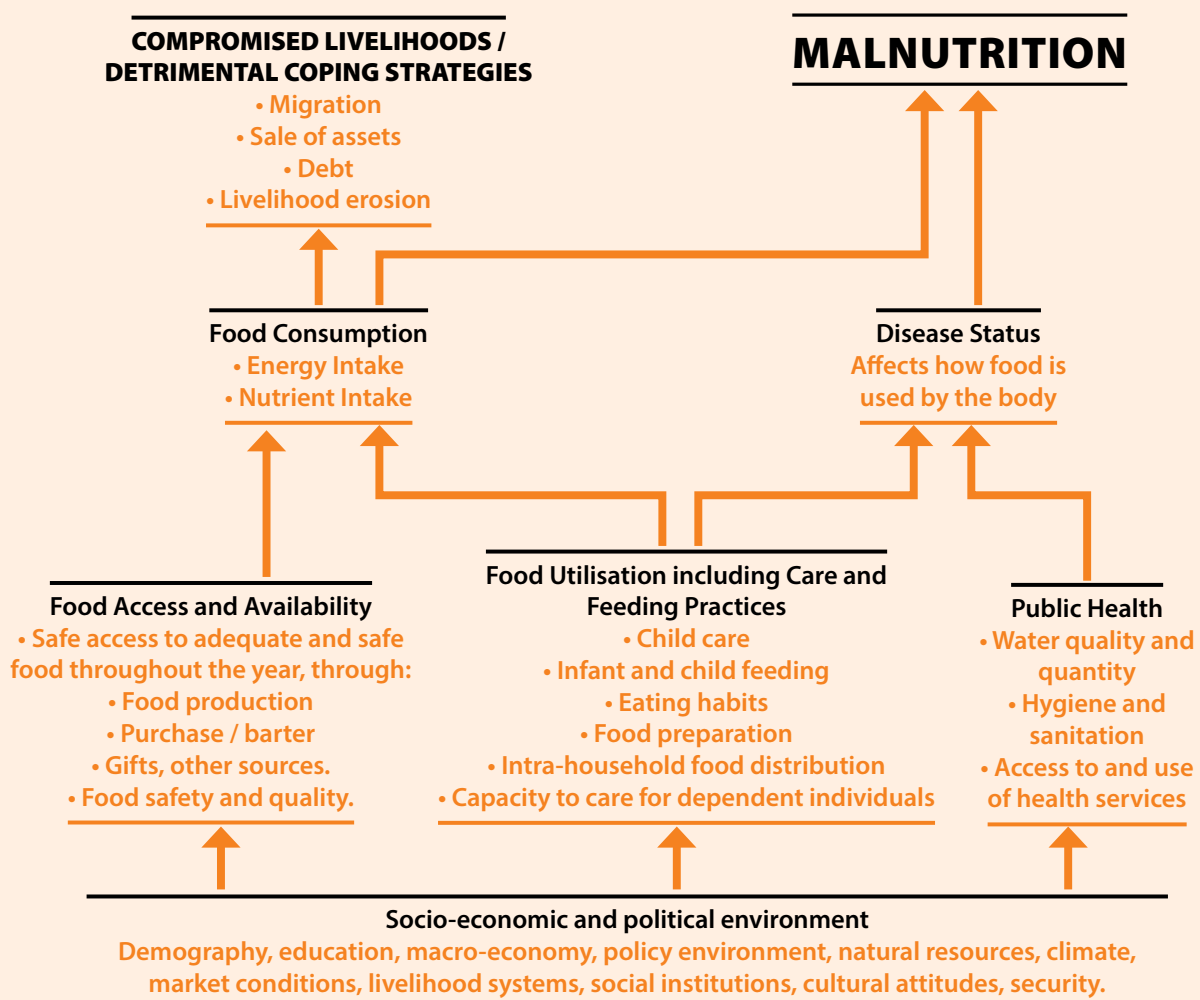
8 - As defined by the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN) and the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Humanitarian food assistance can also be used to protect and strengthen the livelihoods of a crisis-affected population, to prevent or reverse negative coping mechanisms (such as the sale of productive assets, or the accumulation of debts) that could engender either short-term or longer-term harmful consequences for their livelihood base, their food-security status or their nutritional status.

Adequate food consumption may not in itself ensure adequate nutrition. Poor health may inhibit the digestion and utilisation of nutrients leading to malnutrition. Therefore, complementary interventions, including those that ensure safe food preparation (e.g. provision of cooking fuel), or access to potable water, hygiene and health services, may also be required, alongside direct food assistance, to prevent or treat malnutrition.

At the conceptual level there has been an important shift over the last 15 years from the use of in-kind commodity food aid as a default response to emergency food needs, towards consideration of a broader set of humanitarian food assistance tools tailored to tackling the diverse causes and symptoms of transient food insecurity.

The following conceptual framework captures the various root causes, exacerbators, symptoms and consequences of food insecurity, which in turn underscore the definitions and objectives for humanitarian food assistance adopted by the Commission:



In line with the main objectives of EU humanitarian aid as laid out in Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning Humanitarian Aid, the principal objective of humanitarian food assistance is to save and preserve life, to protect livelihoods, and to increase resilience, for populations facing on-going or firmly forecasted⁹ food crises, or recovering from them.

This is to be achieved through the specific objectives of humanitarian food assistance, as follows;

- 1) to safeguard the availability of, access to, and consumption of adequate, safe and nutritious food for populations affected by ongoing, firmly forecasted, or recent humanitarian crises so as to avoid excessive mortality,¹⁰ acute malnutrition, or other life-threatening effects and consequences;
- 2) to protect livelihoods threatened by recent, ongoing, or imminent crises, minimise damage to food production and marketing systems, and establish conditions to promote the rehabilitation and restoration of self reliance; and
- 3) to strengthen the capacities of the international humanitarian aid system, to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of food assistance.

Food Distribution
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ECHO/Stacey Winston

1.4 Principles

In pursuit of these objectives, the following principles should underscore the delivery of humanitarian food assistance. These are consistent with the general principles governing the delivery of EU humanitarian aid, as laid down in the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid:

The modalities of food assistance must respect the fundamental humanitarian principles of *humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence*. Decisions on the allocation of humanitarian food assistance will be strictly needs based. Funding will be allocated in an objective manner, according to these principles, to improve the food consumption of those in greatest need, without bias or prejudice.

To this end, the EU and its Member States will ensure that their Humanitarian Food Assistance responses are preceded by, and based on, detailed needs assessments and causal analyses that are as accurate and up to date as possible.

Financing of humanitarian food assistance interventions will be prioritised according to (i) the severity of the crisis and the scale of the unmet needs (ii) the immediacy



Guatemala - Training to women in the Dry Corridor
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Francisco Fión

⁹ - Such "forecasting" should be based on early warning indicators, and should show a critical inadequacy or deterioration in food consumption which, unless prompting an early response, will become life-threatening within a timeframe consistent with the EC's humanitarian remit.

¹⁰ - See footnotes 7 and 8.

of the crisis, and (iii) the expected impact of the response. However, the EU is also committed to demonstrating solidarity on a global basis, to sharing the burden of urgent unmet humanitarian food needs and to responding to forgotten crises.

The EU and its Member States will support humanitarian food assistance operations with flexible resources so as to deliver the most appropriate and effective response in a specific context. The design of any response should compare alternative activities and tools on the basis of their cost-effectiveness for meeting the defined needs.

When food aid is deemed to be the most appropriate tool, local purchase (i.e. purchase in the country of operation) or, secondarily, regional food purchases (i.e. procuring from neighbouring countries) are favoured, so as to maximise acceptability of food products, protect or support local markets, and reduce transportation costs and delivery timeframes.

EU humanitarian food assistance should be results-based, measuring outcomes and impact across its operations (as well as from the practice of other players, and from relevant research) and using it to inform the design of subsequent humanitarian food assistance interventions.

The EU and its Member States will therefore endeavour to ensure that all humanitarian food assistance operations that are financed can be monitored, without hindrance.

The EU and its Member States will strive to do no harm in the process of providing humanitarian food assistance. For instance, they will ensure that, as far as possible, humanitarian food needs are met in ways that do not create undue dependency on the relief system, nor disrupt the functioning of markets, nor expose beneficiaries to undue risk in receiving assistance, while minimising negative environmental impacts and ensuring that conflicts over natural resources are not ignited or antagonised. The EU and its Member States will ensure that, especially in conflicts, protection risks and protection opportunities are properly evaluated in considering the consequences of both intervention and non-intervention.¹¹

The EU and its Member States will incorporate nutritional perspectives into all food assistance needs assessments and responses, and will pay particular attention to the specific nutritional needs of defined vulnerable groups (including children under-two and pregnant and lactating women).

The EU and its Member States will ensure that human dignity is respected in the provision of humanitarian food assistance. They will seek the involvement of beneficiary communities in identifying needs, and designing and implementing responses. They will ensure that the special needs of vulnerable groups within their beneficiary caseloads (e.g. disabled, elderly, chronically ill) be factored into the design of humanitarian food assistance responses.

Recognising the different needs, capacities and roles of women, girls, boys and men, the EU and its Member States will systematically seek to mainstream gender considerations within humanitarian food-needs assessments, in the design of humanitarian food assistance responses, and in analysing their impact.

¹¹ - See DG ECHO's *Funding Guidelines for Humanitarian Protection*; 21 April 2009.

Humanitarian food assistance operations and food security development interventions should be designed and implemented in such a way that together they ensure an optimal coverage of emergency and development needs, whether they succeed each other in a continuum or coexist in a contiguum, as in many fragile states. They should be coordinated and eventually dovetailed with each other so as to maximise opportunities for sustainable and durable impact, pursuing the ultimate objective of self-reliance for victims of food crises.

“ Humanitarian food assistance operations and food security development interventions should be coordinated (...) pursuing the ultimate objective of self-reliance for victims of food crises. ”

EU humanitarian food assistance will therefore uphold Linking Relief Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) principles and facilitate LRRD objectives, in accordance with the 2001 Commission Communication on LRRD,¹² with the 2007 EU Humanitarian Aid Consensus,¹³ and within the stipulations of the Framework Partnership Agreement.¹⁴

1.5 Scope of Humanitarian Food Assistance Actions

In order to achieve the objectives outlined above, the core role of humanitarian food assistance work is defined as saving lives, through delivering assistance to meet basic humanitarian food and nutrition needs. However, it also aims to fulfil supportive functions, specifically contributing to reducing risk and vulnerability, and improving the appropriateness and effectiveness of humanitarian food assistance through capacity-strengthening and advocacy.

1.5.1 The operational scope of the Commission's Humanitarian Food Assistance

The Commission can trigger a humanitarian food assistance response where:

- 1) due to inadequate food consumption, emergency¹⁵ rates of mortality or acute malnutrition have been reached or exceeded, or are anticipated, on the basis of firm forecasts¹⁶; or
- 2) compromised livelihoods or extreme coping strategies (including sale of productive assets, stress migration, resorting to unsafe or insecure survival practices) pose, or are firmly anticipated to pose, a severe threat to life, or a risk of extreme suffering, whether arising from, or leading to, inadequate food consumption.

Recognising that a food crisis sometimes begins, and should be reacted to, before nutritional status deteriorates, the Commission will not necessarily wait for rising rates of acute malnutrition before providing humanitarian food assistance, but will also respond to well defined humanitarian risks that pose

¹² - EC Communication on LRRD, 2001: Conclusions.

¹³ - EU Humanitarian Consensus, 2007: Section 2.4, Article 22; Section 3.4, Article 53; Section 5; Annex.

¹⁴ - DG ECHO Framework Partnership Agreement 2008: Article 8.

¹⁵ - The EC defines an emergency based on a combination of absolute thresholds (eg Sphere, WHO etc) and relative indicators set against a contextual norm.

¹⁶ - Such "anticipation" should be based on early warning indicators that show a critical inadequacy or deterioration in food consumption which, unless prompting an early response, will become life-threatening within a timeframe consistent with the EC's humanitarian remit.



Cash distribution to women in Pakistan. © European Union - photo by EC/ECHO/Timothy Allen/Oxfam

a threat to life. Nor does the Commission require a formal disaster declaration in order to respond.

In considering whether and how to respond to a given food crisis, the Commission will pay close attention to the comparative advantages and disadvantages of its humanitarian instruments. This will be founded on a careful analysis of the needs and causes; on consideration of the type of response that will best tackle those needs in the most appropriate way without doing harm; and on a close review of the alternative funding sources available.

The Commission recognises that its humanitarian instruments do not have a comparative advantage in addressing chronic food insecurity. In principle, it will not use humanitarian food assistance to address chronic food insecurity, except: where non-intervention poses immediate or imminent humanitarian risk¹⁷ of significant scale and severity; where other more appropriate actors, including its own development instruments, are either unable or unwilling to act, and cannot be persuaded to act; and where, in spite of its comparative disadvantages, positive impact can be expected within the time limitations of its intervention. In such cases, the Commission will only engage humanitarian food assistance on the basis of dialogue, coordination and advocacy with potential development players, where they exist, and with a clear and realistic exit-strategy defined, ensuring coordinated transition and thus avoiding uncoordinated overlap.

¹⁷ - See Glossary in Annex 3.1 of accompanying Commission Staff Working Document.

The Commission will consider phasing out its humanitarian food assistance interventions when indicators of acute malnutrition, mortality and extreme coping (linked to inadequate food consumption or poor food utilisation), are stable below emergency levels,¹⁸ or are expected to stabilise below such levels independently of the Commission's humanitarian support. This should result from the majority of the crisis-affected population achieving, for a sustained period and for the foreseeable future, improvements in food consumption and food utilisation, without resorting to detrimental coping strategies.

The Commission will also consider phasing out its humanitarian support where non-humanitarian players (e.g. state or development actors) are able to cover the population's food gap or where the humanitarian needs of the population are fully covered by other humanitarian donors and actors.

The Commission will at all times evaluate its humanitarian exit strategies on the basis of its comparative advantages relative to other available actors, and will avoid creating disincentives to the engagement of other more appropriate actors arising from its own delayed exit. It will advocate for the engagement of the most appropriate actors across the relief and development spectrum, according to the context and needs.

The Commission will also consider exiting from humanitarian food assistance operations where the core principles of humanitarian food assistance cannot be respected, and particularly when the risk of doing harm outweighs the potential benefits of remaining engaged.

1.5.2 Meeting Basic Food and Nutrition Needs of Crisis Affected Populations

The EU and its Member States will respond to the diverse symptoms and underlying causes of transient food insecurity and acute malnutrition with a variety of activities and tools to directly address problems of food availability, food access and food use. They will facilitate complementary, multi-sectoral and integrated programming to ensure that humanitarian food needs are addressed holistically and effectively.

The choice of the most appropriate intervention and transfer instrument (e.g. cash-based or in-kind) must be context-specific and evidence-based, and be regularly reviewed. The relevance and comparative advantage of the proposed option –or the combination of tools to be used – must be demonstrated, based on needs assessments and causal analyses that are as accurate and up to date as possible.

Humanitarian food assistance will pay particular attention to providing beneficiaries with timely access to safe and well balanced food, of sufficient quantity and quality¹⁹



Cash distribution using mobile phones in Indonesia. © European Union - photo by EC/ECHO/Tom Greenwood/Oxfam GB

¹⁸ - See footnote 15.

¹⁹ - Quantity, as measured in energy composition, and quality, as measured in food safety and its protein, macro-nutrient and micro-nutrient composition. SPHERE / WHO standard for food quantity / energy requirement is 2100 Kcal per person per day, averaged across all age groups. WHO/UNICEF/World Food Programme (WFP)/United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) have agreed standards for food quality / micronutrient composition (see *Food and Nutrition Needs in Emergencies*, Nov 2002) although these are currently under review.

to meet their dietary requirements. Where possible, food assistance should also conform to local dietary preferences and be acceptable to beneficiaries.

The reinforcement or protection of agricultural and non-agricultural livelihoods (e.g. providing veterinary services for vulnerable livestock herds, or improving agricultural crop storage) is a legitimate and appropriate emergency response in some humanitarian contexts, so long as it is prompted by emergency needs and meets humanitarian objectives within an appropriate and finite timeframe.



Clean water access improves food utilization in Somalia, Garowe Puntland IDP camp. © European Union, 2013 - photo by EC/ECHO

Alongside food assistance measures that directly address food consumption requirements, complementary measures (e.g. public health measures) are considered vital, even though they do not impact directly on food availability, access or use. They have a critical influence on how the human body is able to utilize food and thus influence nutritional outcomes. The EU and its Member States recognise the special food and nutritional needs of specific groups within their overall beneficiary caseloads (e.g. young children, particularly children under two²⁰, pregnant / lactating women, the elderly, people living with HIV/AIDS²¹). Where these groups are included in humanitarian food assistance operations on the basis of their food or nutrition needs, the response should take into consideration their particular requirements by providing sufficiently nutritious and adapted foods.

1.5.3 Supportive Actions

EU humanitarian food assistance interventions must consider opportunities for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction (DRR), preparedness, mitigation and prevention, within the limits of the humanitarian mandates, regulations and food-assistance objectives. The Commission's humanitarian food assistance strategy should be informed by the strategy contained within the Commission Communication on an EU Strategy for DRR in developing countries.²²

The Commission recognises that Disaster Risk Reduction initiatives (such as Early Warning Systems and Strategic Food Stocks) often demand long-term support, national or regional ownership, and careful consideration of economic and political perspectives. Therefore routine support for them is deemed to be beyond the comparative advantage of humanitarian actors. However the Commission's humanitarian action may pursue simultaneous risk reduction outcomes whilst delivering food assistance, and may also participate in short-term reinforcement, piloting and scaling-up of DRR initiatives, in collaboration with development actors. Respecting the "do no harm" principle, actions should avoid increasing beneficiaries' vulnerability and risk-exposure to other crises.

²⁰ - Children under-2 being those that are most at risk of illness and malnutrition, and for whom a window of opportunity exists to ensure long-term health and cognitive benefits through adequate nutrient intake.

²¹ - Please see DG ECHO's *HIV Guidelines*, adopted October 2008.

²² - See *CQM(2009)84*.

The limited experience and skill-set of humanitarian actors often constrains the use of the most appropriate food assistance interventions. Therefore the EU and its Member States recognise the need to invest in strengthening the capacity of the humanitarian system to deliver more varied and more appropriate forms of food assistance.

Increasing levels of chronic food insecurity equate to an increasing number of people vulnerable to future crises. If unchecked, this will multiply the demands on limited humanitarian resources. Coordination and advocacy are therefore needed to influence the public-policy debates and the resource-allocation decisions of national governments and development actors towards meeting food-security objectives. Advocacy must be directed at state actors to fulfil their fundamental responsibility in safe-guarding the food-security of their people. Advocacy must also be directed at development actors (including governments) in relation to the developmental needs of populations in crisis contexts.

Effective integration of humanitarian and development assistance must be promoted through LRRD, ensuring that the international aid system operates consistently, coherently and transparently to address hunger and vulnerability. Advocacy should ensure that collective efforts span emergency, transitional and developmental needs simultaneously, and promote enabling conditions linked to good governance and conducive national and international policies (e.g. for trade and migration).

The EU and its Member States support the idea of inclusive coordination of Humanitarian Food Assistance under strong and capacitated governance and leadership. This includes close coordination with relevant and viable national humanitarian actors. Within the framework of UN and Humanitarian Reform, the Commission endorses the cluster approach to coordination, and supports all efforts to make it work effectively for the food and nutrition sectors, ensuring that it also links with the global architecture for governance of agriculture, food security and nutrition.

2. Programming food assistance in humanitarian action

This Staff Working Document accompanies the Commission Communication on Humanitarian Food Assistance and elaborates how the Commission programmes, implements and coordinates humanitarian food assistance in pursuit of the objectives and principles defined in the Communication.

This operationally-focused paper will be subject to regular review, and potential revision, as the Commission's experience and lesson-learning in the sector evolves, and as theories of best-practice advance.

2.1 The Comparative Advantage of the EU's Humanitarian Food Assistance Instrument

“ Within the Commission services, humanitarian food assistance needs are now dealt with by DG ECHO. ”

The European Commission is responding to the global challenges of food insecurity and malnutrition. It has a range of budgetary instruments at its disposal to tackle the symptoms and causes of both transient and chronic food insecurity. Within the

Commission services, humanitarian food assistance needs are now dealt with by DG ECHO, using its humanitarian instruments (the humanitarian and food-aid budget lines). In addition to using its own humanitarian budgets, DG ECHO can draw on dedicated contingency funds under country allocations of the European Development Fund (EDF) to respond to food and non-food needs in humanitarian crises.

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Martin Karimi



In immediate post-crisis situations, other EU instruments can contribute to restoring national food security, including the Instrument for Stability (IfS). Longer term food-security support can be implemented as part of a broader strategy for poverty alleviation, and is financed by the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) and the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument (ENPI), drawn from the EU budget, as well as by the European Development Fund (EDF) for African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. Any such food security strategies must be framed within five-year Country Strategy Papers (CSPs), and three-year rolling National Indicative Programmes (NIPs) and Regional Indicative Programmes (RIPs), mutually agreed with beneficiary countries.

In addition, notably in fragile contexts or in countries where these geographically-oriented instruments cannot be used, certain food security objectives can be pursued through the Food Security Thematic Programme (FSTP). Additional temporary ad hoc financial instruments can also be established, such as the Water Facility (2004 – 2007), which can support water interventions in favour of agriculture and livelihoods, and the Food Facility, designed to address both causes and consequences of high food prices, in the short-to-medium term, from 2009 to 2011. For more information on these instruments, see Annex 3.3.

All these instruments for promoting food security in development will henceforth be oriented under the policy framework set out in the Commission's Communication on food security («An EU policy framework to assist developing countries addressing food security challenges»). That Communication has been developed in close coordination with the Communication on Humanitarian Food Assistance, recognising the distinct objectives of the humanitarian and development agendas, but also the considerable overlapping interest between them, particularly on subjects such as Linking Relief with Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD), disaster management, livelihoods and nutrition.

“ The EU's humanitarian instruments are particularly effective in dealing with short-term, rapidly evolving, large-scale and finite needs. ”

The scope of work covered by the EU's humanitarian food assistance instruments is determined by the humanitarian mandate and Regulation. However, within this legal framework the comparative advantages and disadvantages of humanitarian assistance in responding effectively to any given context must also be considered.

The EU's humanitarian instruments are particularly effective in dealing with short-term, rapidly evolving, large-scale and finite needs. Its mandate, regulation, instruments, partner-base, orientation, versatility, flexibility, skill-set and time-horizon all render it best equipped to handle such situations. However, the protracted nature of many crises also requires humanitarian actors to engage in longer-term humanitarian food assistance.

Conversely, chronic food insecurity²³ and its structural causes are best tackled through predictable social safety-nets, social transfers, social-protection or sustainable livelihood development programmes, which in turn are best implemented over a long-term horizon, with strong national and local ownership. Such interventions are clearly best suited to development actors working with multi-annual budgets, and not to humanitarian actors with short planning horizons and limited ability to engage with governments.

As stated in the Humanitarian Food Assistance Communication,²⁴ «the Commission will not use humanitarian food assistance to address chronic food insecurity, except: where non-intervention poses immediate or imminent humanitarian risk²⁵ of significant scale and severity; where other more appropriate actors are either unable or unwilling to act, and cannot be persuaded to act; and where, in spite of its comparative disadvantages, positive impact can be expected within the time

²³ - See glossary in Annex 3.1.

²⁴ - See the Commission's Communication on Humanitarian Food Assistance, section 1.5.1, para 4.

²⁵ - See Glossary, Annex 3.1.

limitations of its intervention. In such cases, the Commission will only engage humanitarian food assistance on the basis of dialogue, coordination and advocacy with potential development players, where they exist, and with a clear and realistic exit-strategy defined».

2.2 Programming

2.2.1 Prioritisation

With limited resources and a broad potential scope of work, the Commission prioritises EU humanitarian food assistance activities and responses first and foremost to immediate life saving during emergencies and their aftermaths.

“ *Humanitarian food assistance interventions will be prioritised according to (i) the severity of the crisis and the scale of the unmet needs (ii) the immediacy of the crisis, and (iii) the expected impact considering, inter alia, the comparative advantage.* ”

As stated in the Communication on Humanitarian Food Assistance,²⁶ Commission financing of EU humanitarian food assistance interventions (immediate life-saving and beyond) will be prioritised according to (i) the severity of the crisis and the scale of the unmet needs (ii) the immediacy of the crisis, and (iii) the expected impact considering, inter alia,

the comparative advantage²⁷ of the EU's humanitarian instruments for responding, the risk of doing harm, and the comparative cost-effectiveness of the response compared to other response options.

However, resource allocation must also be influenced by the expectation that the EU demonstrate solidarity on a global basis, share the burden of urgent unmet humanitarian needs in most crises, and particularly respond to forgotten crises.

2.2.2 Needs Assessments

Except in the most exceptional circumstances (ie when they result in severe operational delays that would cost lives) the Commission expects all humanitarian food assistance interventions to be preceded by a detailed needs assessment / causal analysis, and designed accordingly.

Needs assessments should focus on (a) the situational context, including socio-political and operational dimensions that both affect the level of need and determine the feasibility of response;²⁸ (b) routine information on food security derived from systematic monitoring

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²⁶ - See the Commission's Communication on Humanitarian Food Assistance, section 1.4, para 4.

²⁷ - See Glossary in Annex 3.1.

²⁸ - Assessments should particularly consider factors influencing humanitarian access and humanitarian space, as well as technical / absorption capacity of available partners (local and international).

and early-warning systems, set against established baselines;²⁹ and (c) ad hoc perspectives on the immediate emergency situation based on specific humanitarian food and nutrition data collected through, emergency needs assessments and, by way of follow-up, through project monitoring and reporting. A framework for a humanitarian information system that covers these main components is presented below:

Components of a humanitarian information system

Component	Main purpose	Type of information/question addressed
1. Baseline vulnerability and poverty analysis/assessments	<i>Define/describe characteristics of the population to understand underlying causes of poverty and vulnerability</i>	<i>What is the nature and extent of poverty?</i> <i>What are the basic livelihood systems?</i> <i>What hazards may impact on these systems and what is the likelihood of their occurrence? – especially natural hazards, but social, economic and environmental as well</i> <i>Who are the most vulnerable groups, and why?</i> <i>What capacities and coping/risk reduction strategies exist to mitigate their vulnerability status?</i>
2. Early warning	<i>Monitor and identify unusual deviations from normal situations providing timely warning of potential problems</i>	<i>Monitoring (usually seasonal)</i> <i>Indicator and trend analysis; identification of unusual trends</i> <i>Where and how quickly is problem developing?</i> <i>What are the geographic dimensions of the problem?</i> <i>Where should in-dept assessments be conducted?</i>
3. Emergency needs assessments	<i>If early warning identifies existing or developing problem, then refine and focus information</i>	<i>More specific targeting of most vulnerable groups</i> <i>More specific definition of nature and dimensions of the problem</i> <i>What and how much is needed where? What is the most appropriate response?</i>
4. Programme monitoring and evaluation	<i>Is the intervention or programme achieving the desired results?</i>	<i>Tracking inputs and outputs</i> <i>What adjustments are necessary</i> <i>What strategies exist for exit or transition into longer-term (e.g. linkage with development programmes/policies)</i> <i>How to improve overall programme – information, preparedness, response – feedback process</i>

29 – The Commission acknowledges that in many emergency contexts, baselines on demography or livelihood profiles can be elusive, and that paucity of baseline information must be factored in when appraising the relevance, design and validity of needs assessments.

Internally, the Commission's decisions on the allocation of humanitarian funds will take full account of internal analyses (including field assessments carried out by its own staff, and the DG ECHO Global Needs Assessment) and assessments carried out by partners and other relevant response agencies. An annual Food-Insecurity Needs Assessment exercise will be conducted by the Commission in all priority countries suffering, or at risk of, significant food crises, and will contribute to strategic planning, programming and resource allocation.

The Commission and its partners will specifically prioritise the integration of nutritional perspectives, and livelihoods perspectives, into their emergency food needs analyses and into the design of their humanitarian food assistance responses.

2.2.3 Entry and Exit Criteria

As articulated in its Humanitarian Food Assistance Communication, the Commission «can trigger a humanitarian food assistance response when:

- due to inadequate food consumption, emergency³⁰ rates of mortality or acute malnutrition have been reached or exceeded, or are anticipated, on the basis of firm forecasts;³¹ or
- compromised livelihoods or extreme coping strategies (including sale of productive assets, stress migration, resorting to unsafe or insecure survival practices) pose, or are firmly anticipated to pose, a severe threat to life, or a risk of extreme suffering, whether arising from, or leading to, inadequate food consumption.»³²

30 - The Commission defines an emergency based on a combination of absolute thresholds (eg Sphere, WHO etc) and relative indicators set against a contextual norm.

31 - Such "anticipation" should be based on early warning indicators that show a critical inadequacy or deterioration in food consumption which, unless prompting an early response, will become life-threatening within a timeframe consistent with the EC's humanitarian remit.

32 - See the Commission's Communication on Humanitarian Food Assistance, section 1.5.1, para 1.

Operational Case-Study 1: «Responding Early and Effectively on the Basis of Evidence»

East Nusa Tenggara in Indonesia, is one the most vulnerable provinces where a high risk of acute food and livelihood crises aggravates chronic food insecurity, resulting in high levels of acute malnutrition in children under the age of 5, and their mothers. Evidence of baseline vulnerability is captured in a national Food Insecurity Atlas, whose information the Commission has sought to verify and update through the promotion of ad-hoc multiagency assessments in the region. Anthropometric surveys recently identified pockets of critical nutritional, food and livelihood-insecurity resulting from intertwined acute and chronic factors (drought, locust infestations, high food and fuel prices), and the resultant detrimental coping mechanisms (sale of assets and accumulation of debt) adopted by the most vulnerable. The prognosis predicted a deteriorating trend of malnutrition rising above the seasonal norm.

Evidence further showed that this critical situation would not be sufficiently mitigated by ongoing or planned interventions (including the government's rice-based «raskin» social transfer mechanism). The Commission included this evidence, with a view to supporting analysis and decision-making, within its Food Insecurity Needs Assessment Template (FINAT), which is completed for

every country undergoing, or at risk of a humanitarian food crisis. The need for a gap-filling intervention was identified in order to protect livelihoods and prevent further deterioration of the nutritional status of those most vulnerable. €2 million was then mobilised to support 5 one-year projects that aimed at reinforcing livelihood assets (short-term support to irrigation and water-supply systems, land rehabilitation, training, provision of agricultural inputs) to increase immediate food and water access, promoting good nutrition, and strengthening resilience to future stresses (through community preparedness).

One of the projects (implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), and reinforced by funding from the «Response Analysis Framework» project financed from the Commission's capacity-building budget) simultaneously undertook a comprehensive provincial food and nutritional assessment, providing further evidence upon which district food security action plans were developed. These multi-stakeholder initiatives served as the basis on which the developmental needs of the populations in crisis were articulated, and contributed to increased allocations to food security within the 2010 district budgets.

The decision to fund interventions will be based on criteria that include:

- the relative severity and scale³³ of the crisis, and the unmet food needs within it, based on indicators of food consumption, availability of and access to nutritious food, coping strategies, and malnutrition rates;
- the trend and anticipated future severity, based on similar indicators within a timeframe appropriate to the Commission's humanitarian's remit ;
- the presence of other donors and/or partners and their respective comparative advantages;
- the commitment and response capacity of local authorities; and
- the extent to which the core principles of humanitarian food assistance are respected, including humanitarian access, and the ability to monitor the delivery of food assistance.

The extensive information required to appraise an intervention should derive from detailed and reliable needs assessment and situation analysis. Any decision to launch such needs assessments can obviously be made on the basis of less exhaustive information, and based on the Commission's own informed judgement and knowledge of the context.

The Commission recognises that, in protracted crises, its humanitarian entry criteria may legitimise a sustained humanitarian engagement over several years. In such circumstances, the limitations of the Commission's necessarily short-cycle humanitarian planning and programming cycles³⁴ are acknowledged, and should be factored into any analysis of its comparative advantage, for the context, compared to other instruments or sources of funding. Even where its instruments prohibit the provision of multi-annual funding predictability, the Commission will encourage and accommodate partners' multi-annual strategies and planning horizons in protracted crises.

It is strongly advisable for the Commission and its partners to have a defined and realistic exit-strategy in place wherever possible, before delivering humanitarian food assistance.

As stated within its Humanitarian Food Assistance Communication, the Commission will consider exiting or phasing out its humanitarian food assistance interventions «when indicators of acute malnutrition, mortality and extreme coping (linked to inadequate food consumption or poor food

Operational Case-Study 2: «Operating in Protracted Crises»

Approximately 140,000 **Burmese refugees** live in nine camps in **Thailand** along the border with Myanmar. Since 1995, the Commission has been supporting humanitarian organisations in the provision of food and cooking fuel to these refugees. After 25 years there is still no obvious end in sight to this situation, and, under the Thai government's «containment» policy, refugees are restricted in their ability to establish livelihoods outside the camps, remaining fully dependent on humanitarian aid.

With a view to identifying durable solutions for this caseload, donors set up a working group in 2007 to explore longer-term options, and advocating for them with the government. By the end of 2009, implementing NGOs and UNHCR had prepared a challenging new five year strategy, shifting away from short-term "care and maintenance" and promoting increased refugee self-reliance.

In this context, and to facilitate this strategy, the Commission launched a Livelihoods Vulnerability Analysis study to gain a better understanding of the different livelihood strategies adopted by the refugees, the actual levels of self-reliance that they have, and the options to reinforce this self-reliance from within the humanitarian operation. This is expected to lead to more evidence-based and needs-based programming, over a more gradual timeframe, particularly in pursuit of alternative food assistance strategies to the current distribution of general food aid rations. Options to be explored include the scaling up of livelihood support within and around the camps, stimulating agricultural production and increasing labour market opportunities.

³³ - Scale is measured, in absolute terms, as the number of people affected. Severity is measured as a factor of both absolute measures (in relation to established indicator thresholds that globally define alert and emergency situations) and relative measures (in relation to local contextual norms and baselines).

³⁴ - Necessary to allow flexibility and capacity for ad-hoc emergency response and short-term reprioritisation on a global basis.

utilisation), are stable below emergency levels, or are expected to stabilise below such levels. This should result from the majority of the crisis-affected population achieving, for a sustained period and for the foreseeable future, improvements in food consumption and food utilisation, without resorting to detrimental coping strategies», and independent of any Commission humanitarian support. This could imply that persisting needs are met either by other humanitarian donors, or by development or state actors.³⁵

For situations deemed to be fragile with persistent humanitarian risk, the Commission will ensure that it can monitor the humanitarian situation after its exit, and will keep all options open for re-engagement as necessary.

2.2.4 Partnerships

The Commission will maintain and work with a diversity of partners in the delivery of humanitarian food assistance, according to their various competences and comparative advantages in the given context. This includes Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) on the basis of Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA), and International Organisations (the United Nations and its agencies, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies) based, respectively, on the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA) for UN agencies, and on a separate FPA for other international organisations.

While the existing Humanitarian Regulation does not permit direct financial engagement with state actors or national civil society organisations, such entities can be supported indirectly on the basis of sub-contracted arrangements. Where such entities have credible and viable capacities as humanitarian actors, and where humanitarian principles would not be compromised, the Commission encourages its direct partners to support and strengthen them in the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Planting seeds provided to a beneficiary to recover agriculture productivity © European Union, 2009 - photo by EC/ECHO

2.2.5 Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting



In pursuit of transparency, accountability and effectiveness, the Commission will strive to ensure that all humanitarian food assistance actions that the EU finances are designed around targets and outcome indicators that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.³⁶ Such indicators will be routinely monitored and should form the basis of systematic reporting by the partner, as well as any internal or external evaluation of the operation.

Where available, nutritional information and data should be monitored and reviewed within all food assistance operations. Where

³⁵ - See the Commission's Communication on Humanitarian Food Assistance, section 1.5.1, paras 5 and 6.

³⁶ - SMART indicators.

Operational Case-Study 3: «Indicators to measure results»

The Commission is committed to a results based approach, requiring the measurement of project outcomes and impact. In practice this demands that the traditional emphasis on monitoring project activities is complemented by measuring the attainment of results or objectives.

For example, a typical food assistance project may involve the delivery of food aid. Activity level monitoring usually measures and reports on the number of metric tonnes (MT) of food distributed, or number of beneficiaries assisted. However, the expected result is typically to ensure adequate food consumption at the household level. Quantities of food distributed may be poorly correlated with levels of actual consumption, if for example food is sold to meet other pressing needs or shared with other households.

In the past few years there have been important developments in developing and testing **indicators of food consumption**. As direct measurement is clearly impractical, simple and easy to collect proxy measures are available. Rigorous testing has demonstrated a strong

correlation with actual food consumption levels. Such techniques include:

- **Household Dietary Diversity Score** (the simple count on the number of food groups that a household has consumed over the reference period)
- **Food Consumption Score** (Composite score based on dietary diversity, food frequency and relative nutritional importance of different food groups)
- **Coping Strategies Index** (A sum of the frequencies of the coping strategies adopted to ensure individual food consumption, weighted according to their severity)

Anthropometric indicators (e.g. rates of acute malnutrition) can also provide important evidence on impact. However, malnutrition data may not reflect food assistance outcomes alone. In some cases a project may meet its purpose in improving food consumption, but malnutrition may persist as a consequence of disease. Well selected indicators, at various levels, can help clarify casual relationships and improve implementation and future project design.



Philippines. © European Union, 2013 - photo by EC/ECHO/ Samuel Marie-Fanon

operations specifically seek to address malnutrition, nutritional outcome-indicators will be fully incorporated into the project cycle and log-frame.

Result-oriented monitoring, evaluation and reporting exercises will be analysed by the Commission and its partners, alongside more qualitative narrative reporting,³⁷ not only to appraise the performance and outcome of a given intervention, but also to learn lessons which will be fed into the design, programming decisions and implementation of future operations.

³⁷ - Particularly in contexts where capacity constraints, access problems, or data deficiencies render quantitative reporting incomplete or unreliable.

2.3 The Commission's Humanitarian Food Assistance Toolbox

2.3.1 Supporting Food Availability, Food Access, Food Utilization and Nutrition in Crises

“ The responses suggested may often need to be interchanged or combined, according to the context and the needs. ”

In line with the Commission's humanitarian mandate and the Humanitarian Regulation, this Staff Working Document considers the use of food assistance in crisis contexts where food consumption is insufficient or inadequate to avert extreme negative manifestations of transient food-insecurity including; excessive³⁸ mortality, emergency rates³⁹ of acute malnutrition, detrimental coping mechanisms (e.g. stress displacement or livelihood erosion). This assistance is provided for the time needed to meet the humanitarian requirements, including in support of operations that prepare for identified humanitarian risks, that prevent or mitigate disasters, or that facilitate short-term recovery post-emergency.

The Commission will respond to the diverse symptoms and underlying causes of transient food insecurity and acute malnutrition with a variety of activities and tools. Whilst problems of food availability, access and utilisation are considered distinctly for simplicity's sake, they are in fact often interrelated and overlaid, hence the responses suggested may often need to be interchanged or combined, according to the context and the needs.

Where the core problem to be addressed is a lack of **food availability**, for instance linked to disrupted agricultural production, response options include:

- the distribution of free food commodities on a blanket⁴⁰ basis (general food distributions);
- the distribution of free food on a targeted⁴¹ basis (targeted food distributions);
- the distribution of food on a targeted and/or self-targeted⁴² basis, in exchange for a beneficiary's time or labour (e.g. food for work, food for training, food for assets);⁴³
- the provision of livelihood support to ensure that self-production capacities affected by crises are protected or boosted (e.g. distribution of agricultural inputs, training, income-generation, veterinary care, water and fodder for livestock, emergency destocking or restocking).

38 - «Excessive» is considered to combine absolute measures in relation to established emergency thresholds (as defined by the Sphere handbook, UNICEF and the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN)), and relative measures in relation to context-specific baselines. Nb established emergency thresholds for the prevalence of moderate and severe acute malnutrition in under-5s will be subject to adjustment in light of the revised WHO growth standards from 2009.

39 - As defined by the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN) and WHO.

40 - Distribution to everyone, or to all individuals fulfilling an easily-defined criteria, such as a specific age-group (see section 2.3.3 of this document).

41 - Distribution of specific commodities to specific individuals or sub-groups of a population group, differentiated according to need (see section 2.3.3 of this document).

42 - When only those within a needy target beneficiary group choose, voluntarily, to participate in assistance scheme, usually because there is a disincentive in the form of the opportunity cost of labour exchange for less needy, non-target groups to get involved.

43 - Such activities should be planned on the basis of a good understanding of the availability, or lack of availability, of time and labour amongst specific vulnerable groups (eg child-headed households, elderly etc). Furthermore, work tasks undertaken should, wherever possible, be seasonally appropriate and should contribute to the benefit of vulnerable communities, fulfilling either response, recovery or resilience-building objectives.

Operational Case-Study 4: «Alternatives and Complements to Food Aid»

Cash and voucher transfers are becoming increasingly recognised as an appropriate response to address food access problems where markets are functional, food availability is good and vulnerable households have access to markets. However, vouchers can also be used as a complementary transfer when food availability is not assured. An example comes from milling voucher initiatives in **Darfur** internally displaced persons (IDP) camps, **Sudan**, where the vouchers are increasingly being used as a complement to General Food Distributions.

Before vouchers were distributed, it was found that IDPs were trading a proportion of their food ration to pay for milling of the whole grains distributed, or paying for milling from other scarce income resources. From the IDP point of view, this impacts both on the net amount of food available in the household due to the sale of part of the ration, and less available income for use on other essential services. From the programme efficiency perspective, low local retail food prices compared to higher international prices and high costs for transportation and distribution, means that the cost to donors is much more than the value of

cash that ends up in the beneficiary's pocket. In Darfur, it was calculated that wherever onward selling of rations was happening, the loss of value was extremely high (estimated value loss of 92% for oil and 60% for cereals, factoring all costs to final distribution). Milling vouchers were thus conceived, to protect the value of the food assistance distributed and to safeguard beneficiaries' adequate food consumption, whilst ensuring that a necessary service was maintained.

Milling vouchers are given to beneficiaries along with in-kind food rations, and can be used for that distribution only. Experience in pilots suggests that vouchers that specify the quantity of grain to be milled are less tradable than those that have a monetary value. The immediate impact on beneficiaries has been an increase in the availability of grain in the household, and reduced pressure on income sources that can be used for basic services (health, education etc).

Challenges include ensuring sufficient availability of participating grain millers; the potential for vouchers to become a secondary 'currency' and be traded; and the risk of forgeries demanding fairly sophisticated, and expensive, printing of vouchers.

Where the core problem to be addressed is a lack of **access to food**, for instance when available food on the local markets is not affordable due to either high prices or interrupted incomes, response options include:

- the provision of free cash or vouchers (commodity-based or value-based), targeted or distributed on a blanket basis (e.g. unconditional cash or voucher transfers);⁴⁴
- the provision of cash or vouchers, on a blanket, targeted or self-targeted⁴⁵ basis, in exchange for a beneficiary's time or labour⁴⁶ (e.g. cash for work);
- the provision of livelihood support to ensure that incomes affected by crises are protected or boosted (e.g. distribution of agricultural inputs, training, income-generation, veterinary care, water and fodder for livestock, emergency destocking or restocking);
- projects to improve access to, and functioning of, markets in crisis affected areas for disaster-affected populations (e.g. emergency road / bridge rehabilitation, market-information support).

Food assistance should also aim to protect and reinforce livelihoods, since these are the primary means by which households secure their food consumption. In

44 - Please see DG ECHO's *Funding Guidelines for «The Use of Cash and Vouchers in Humanitarian Crises»*, adopted April 2009.

45 - As per footnote 42.

46 - Such activities should be planned on the basis of a good understanding of the availability, or lack of availability, of time and labour amongst specific vulnerable groups (eg child-headed households, elderly etc). Furthermore, work tasks undertaken should, wherever possible, be seasonally appropriate, and should contribute to the benefit of vulnerable communities, fulfilling either response, recovery or resilience-building objectives.

order to feed themselves, food insecure households often resort to negative coping mechanisms (e.g. sell their productive assets, abandon livelihood pursuits in favour of migration, or undertake transactional sex), all of which can further compromise their health and longer-term food-security. A household's adequate food consumption in the short-term should, where possible, be achieved without it having to resort to negative, detrimental coping mechanisms that compromise its longer-term food security.

Therefore, as stated in the Communication on Humanitarian Food Assistance (section 1.5.2, para 4) "the reinforcement or protection of agricultural and non-agricultural livelihoods (e.g. providing veterinary services for vulnerable livestock herds, or improving agricultural crop storage) is a legitimate and appropriate emergency response in some humanitarian contexts", to boost food access or food availability, "so long as it is prompted by emergency needs and meets humanitarian objectives within an appropriate and finite timeframe".

Food assistance can be used to protect and strengthen the livelihoods of a crisis-affected population in order to prevent or reverse negative coping mechanisms (such as the sale of productive assets, or the accumulation of debts) that could engender either short-term or longer-term harmful consequences for their livelihood base, their food-security status and/or their nutritional status.

Given the seasonal nature and duration of agricultural and livestock production cycles, the Commission will pay close attention to the duration and sequencing of its emergency livelihood work. While the objectives and targets must still be

Operational Case-Study 5: «Restoring disaster-affected livelihoods, and building back better»

SIDR On 15 November 2007 **Cyclone SIDR** and its accompanying tidal surge, hit coastal communities in **Southern Bangladesh** hard. In addition to a death toll estimated to be as high as 10,000, tens of thousands more people lost homes, livestock and property – and with it precious livelihoods. One such group were fishing communities whose means of livelihood – fishing craft and nets – were lost to the storm.

Following on from immediate food assistance, it was clear that restoring fishing livelihoods was an important step to restoring food security. However, while fishing had an important role to play, it was apparent that the structures of ownership for fishing craft, were essentially exploitative. Since assets and profits had previously remained in the hands of the local elite and money lenders, the majority of those affected had been living in a state of chronic poverty and food insecurity even before Cyclone SIDR struck.

As part of the recovery process supported by EU humanitarian assistance, partners such as Concern

commissioned the construction of fishing craft and, through dialogue with communities, established fishing cooperatives which guaranteed joint ownership of boats and equipment by fisher-folk themselves.

To ensure sustainability, cooperatives were formed from groups of local women, and trained to hold regular meetings to discuss operational issues, resolve disputes and to plan on how to acquire further assets. In order to meet the challenge of ambitious objectives with the restricted timeframe of emergency response, emphasis was placed on securing effective linkages with long-term development programmes in the area.

The impact of the operation has therefore not only been to restore, as a humanitarian objective, an important livelihood activity – it has simultaneously established a powerful working example of alternative structures of ownership whereby greater control of assets and profits is placed in the hands of poor people, thereby simultaneously addressing an underlying cause of chronic food-insecurity.

achievable within limited and finite timeframes which are compatible with its regulation and instruments, the Commission will ensure that (a) emergency livelihood-support and livelihood-recovery interventions are afforded sufficient and realistic timescales, and (b) that they are started in good-time, as an integral part of a humanitarian response and not just at its final phase.

Where the core problem to be addressed is poor **food utilisation**, response options include:

- the provision of food preparation and food storage materials (e.g. safe-water, cooking sets, fuel);
- training and awareness building on nutrition and feeding practices.

EU humanitarian food assistance interventions implemented by the Commission will seek opportunities to uphold and promote favourable infant and child-feeding practices. Specifically, EU-funded humanitarian food assistance interventions will avoid discouraging or disrupting the breastfeeding of infants.

Where the problem to be addressed is a high prevalence of **acute malnutrition** or **micro-nutrient deficiencies**, response options include:

- facility-based therapeutic feeding for severely acutely malnourished individuals (e.g. Therapeutic Feeding Centres (TFCs) and Stabilisation Centres);
- community-based therapeutic feeding for severely acutely malnourished individuals without medical complications (e.g. Community Management of Acute Malnutrition – CMAM);
- supplementary or complementary feeding, either targeted to moderately acutely malnourished individuals, or provided on a blanket basis to all at-risk individuals (e.g. Blanket Supplementary Feeding Programmes –BSFPs – for all under-5s);
- provision of micronutrient supplementation (e.g. distribution of Vitamin A or folic acid, or micronutrient fortification of general foods);
- promotion of nutritional awareness and dietary diversity.

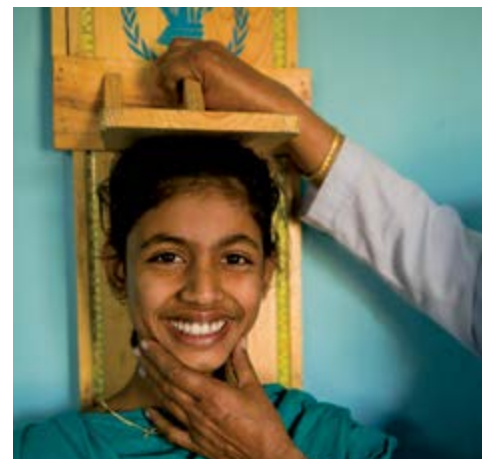
On operations that seek to address acute malnutrition, the Commission will promote existing nutritional best practices (e.g. Community Management of Acute Malnutrition). Where safe, appropriate and feasible, the Commission will support innovative approaches and/or the use of new nutritional commodities⁴⁷ in order to strengthen the evidence base for a broader range of effective interventions. In most cases, the Commission will only support the use of specific nutritional products as part of an integrated strategy for the prevention and management of acute malnutrition that simultaneously addresses other causal and exacerbating factors. Rarely are such products justified as a stand-alone solution.

As stated within the Communication on Humanitarian Food Assistance (section 1.5.2, para 1), the Commission will facilitate complementary and integrated programming to ensure that humanitarian needs are

Chad - Young refugee cooks the evening meal using an improved oven that consumes less wood. © European Union, 2011 - photo by UNHCR/F. Noy



Jordan, Za'atari camp - Syrian refugees. © European Union, 2013 - photo by EC/ECHO/UNICEF Jordan/Noorani



Bangladesh. © European Union, 2012 - photo by EC/ECHO/WFP/Rein Skullerud

⁴⁷ - Such as Ready-to-Use therapeutic Food (RUF) for the treatment of Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM).

addressed holistically and effectively.⁴⁸ Alongside food assistance measures that directly address food consumption requirements, complementary or supporting measures (e.g. Public Health measures) are considered vital, even though they do not impact directly on food availability, access or use. They have a critical influence on the outcome of food intake, particularly affecting how the human body is able to utilize food to determine nutritional outcomes.

48 - Nb conceptual framework in the Commission's Communication on Humanitarian Food Assistance, section 1.3, para 5.

Operational Case-Study 6: «Integrated Programming»

In **Mandera District** of **Kenya**, the Commission supported a programme that concentrated on direct nutrition and food security support to vulnerable populations, whilst addressing at the same time some of the public-health dimensions of malnutrition.

This integrated nutrition, health, food security and livelihoods programme was based on a range of assessments that informed the design of the various activities and components. Focused assessments and investigations included milk market surveys; a household economy assessment; a causal analysis of malnutrition; a market assessment; an economic evaluation of restocking; nutritional anthropometric and mortality surveys; and a nutrition and health services assessment. The malnutrition causal analysis assessment showed that malnutrition in the area was attributed to poor household food security, poor social and care practices, a poor public health environment and marginalisation of the most vulnerable.

Hence, the following programme components were supported, aimed at addressing access, availability and utilisation of food, and the other indirect factors aggravating malnutrition:

- Nutritional support was provided to the acutely malnourished through Supplementary Feeding Programmes and Outreach Therapeutic Programmes, while simultaneously improving access to health services through supporting the Ministry of Health to provide extended health outreach.
- Communities were supported to detect, prevent, treat and refer sick and malnourished children and pregnant women at risk, in the most remote rural communities. Health and nutrition education was also provided on good feeding and caring practices aimed at improving dietary practices of young children and mothers. Community case- management of diarrhoea in communities was also promoted.
- Access to food was improved through distribution of food vouchers to vulnerable households to obtain milk, meat and beans.
- Targeted households were supported to restore, protect and improve their livelihoods through better livestock production. This included (i) training on best husbandry practices, fodder production at household level and milk quality management (ii) distribution of fodder to peri-urban destitute households during the dry spell, (iii) support and capacity building for households involved in the trade of safe milk and (iv) animal health service delivery carried out by existing Community Animal Health Workers.

While the above mentioned programme components were funded by EU humanitarian assistance, another donor financed a complementary programme to support the Ministry of Health in the provision of basic preventative and curative health care services, through existing health facilities and through the community.



Kenya - Vaccination of livestock © European Union, 2013 - photo by EC/ECHO/Martin Karimi

Complementary response options include:

- direct provision, to populations affected by food or nutrition crises, of health services, safe water, sanitation and other public health measures, to reduce the burden of diseases strongly linked to acute malnutrition (e.g. diarrhoeal diseases, malaria, and measles).
- provision of cash transfers to ensure that a household's diverse multi-sectoral needs are covered (eg for health care, household items, sanitation, education) so as to prevent displacement of household food expenditure.
- support to «responsive» and «remedial» humanitarian protection actions,⁴⁹ where protection concerns may trigger, or arise from, acute food insecurity (for instance, ensuring safe passage to agricultural fields outside refugee camps, or safeguarding against abuse and exploitation at distribution points).

For a full overview of humanitarian food assistance response options for contexts and populations that fulfil the «entry criteria» for humanitarian food assistance as elaborated in section 2.2.3 in this document, see Annex 3.4 below.

All humanitarian food assistance and complementary activities must be linked to a food-intake intervention logic,⁵⁰ and should strive to demonstrate a cost-effective impact on the food consumption and/or nutritional status of targeted beneficiaries.

2.3.2 Resource Transfer Modalities

The Commission will strive to provide flexible resources to support the use of the most appropriate and efficient combination of emergency response tools, including cash, vouchers, in-kind food aid, and other commodities or services.

As explained in the Communication on Humanitarian Food Assistance, “the choice of the most appropriate intervention and transfer instrument (e.g. cash based or in-kind) must be a **context-specific** and **evidence-based** choice which is regularly reviewed. The relevance and comparative advantage of the proposed response option – and the combination of tools to be used – must be demonstrated for the specific situation, based on needs assessments and causal analyses that are as accurate and up to date as possible”, according to the urgency and complexity of the situation on the ground.

Operational Case-Study 7: «Context-specific needs-based interventions»

In food aid operations, a large proportion of the caloric intake comes from cereals, a basic commodity in the diet of crisis-affected populations. In many contexts, cereals are often used for bread making – elsewhere it is cooked as a staple meal. However care is often not taken to ascertain whether beneficiaries habitually bake their bread and whether they have proper cooking facilities for baking. When markets are functioning and beneficiaries can buy bread, particularly in urban areas, lack of such facilities can lead very often to the resale of the flour, often at poor terms of trade.

On the 8th of August 2008, war erupted in Georgia between Georgian and Russian military forces, as well as South Ossetian militias. By 18 August, agencies estimated that the conflict had displaced 30,000 ethnic Ossetians from their homes, almost all to Russia's North Ossetia republic. A further 128,850 ethnic Georgians were displaced from their villages and found refuge in surrounding towns. Humanitarian food assistance agencies moved quickly to respond to the crisis, using food stocks from an existing operation. On 9th of August, they provided a standard ration intended to cover 10 days and consisting of wheat flour, vegetable oil, beans and sugar. By the end of August, they had reached more than 138,000 people. However, following a rapid food security assessment in early September, it was realised that beneficiaries did not have the possibility to use the wheat flour distributed, since Georgians traditionally consumed bread, and had no means to prepare it as such. Therefore, from September, agencies instead distributed flour to the few remaining bakeries that were working, and they delivered bread directly to the collective centres where IDPs had been accommodated.

49 - See DG ECHO's *Funding Guidelines for Humanitarian Protection*, 21 April 2009.

50 - Intervention logic = the core rationale for responding.



Use of food vouchers in Lebanon by Syrian refugees © European Union, 2013 - photo by EC/ECHO/WFP/Evin Joyce



Sahel - Voucher distribution © European Union, 2013 - photo by EC/ECHO



Yemen – cash distribution. © European Union - photo by EC/ECHO/Caroline Gluck/Oxfam GB/International

When cash, or value-based vouchers, are considered as a response tool to improve populations' access to food, important pre-conditions must be fulfilled, including: thorough market analyses to ensure that sufficient food is available on the market at a reasonable price, or that markets function adequately to respond to increased demand without inflationary consequences; assessments to consider the security, protection and corruption implications of transporting, handling and distributing large quantities of cash; and adequate skills within implementing agencies to utilise this relatively novel response option.⁵¹ Equally, risks (that may affect markets, security, or protection) associated with alternative response options like the distribution of in-kind commodities, must also be carefully appraised and considered.

For in-kind food aid, as stated in the Communication on Humanitarian Food Assistance (section 1.4, para 6), the Commission is a leading advocate for local procurement, based on the need to reduce costs, limit transportation delays and prevent market distortions;⁵² and to provide economic opportunities for small farmers in countries where purchases are made. However, the operational challenges (e.g. the urgency and speed with which bulk purchases need to be made) and risks (e.g. of raising the expectation of long-term demand on the back of a short-term operation) need to be carefully managed to avoid inflationary impacts and disrupting the development of efficient local markets.

Regarding GMOs (Genetically Modified Organisms), and in support of the “do no harm” principle, humanitarian food assistance partners are expected to safeguard the interests of their beneficiaries in the selection of food commodities and agricultural inputs (concerning safety, appropriateness and effectiveness), whilst also conforming with the relevant national policies and legislation in the country of operation.

⁵¹ - Please see DG ECHO's *Funding Guidelines for «The Use of Cash and Vouchers in Humanitarian Crises»*.

⁵² - *Importation of excessive quantities of in-kind food aid can have a deflationary effect on local food prices, to the detriment of local producers.*

2.3.3 Targeting

Where needs are uniform and spread across the majority of a population group, assistance can be delivered most effectively and most efficiently, on a blanket basis (i.e. to everyone, or to all individuals fulfilling an easily-defined criteria, such as age). However, more often than not, crises affect different people in different ways, resulting in variations, within a population group, in the nature and depth of need. In these circumstances, careful targeting of assistance is critical to ensure that resources are used with maximum effectiveness and efficiency. Limited resources require that humanitarian food assistance is well targeted so that it is used only where it is most urgently required, by those that most need it. Conversely, poor targeting to those that do not need it is associated with excessive disincentive effects such as undermining production and distorting markets.

At the project level, targeting can be done according to a variety of methodologies, which vary in practicality and effectiveness, according to the context. A balance needs to be struck between speed, ease and practicality on one side, and effectiveness in reducing inclusion and exclusion errors on the other, with targeting



Kenya © European Union, 2013 - photo by EC/ECHO/ Martin Karimi

Operational Case-Study 8: «Targeting in emergencies»

*Accurate targeting should ensure that people most in need of the assistance offered are not excluded. DG ECHO's monitoring of EU-funded food assistance projects in **Haiti** in 2009 revealed exclusion errors linked to inappropriate targeting criteria. Agricultural inputs were being targeted exclusively to households with malnourished children attending nutritional programmes. However, since malnutrition was often more directly linked to ill health, this resulted in households that were not necessarily food insecure receiving food security support, whilst food insecure households without malnourished children were excluded. This finding prompted a review and refinement of the criteria used.*

*Often, self-targeting mechanisms can be used to prevent the inclusion of beneficiaries that do not actually need assistance. Since the 2003 war, **Iraq** has faced a dire security situation characterised by sectarian violence and ongoing warfare. It resulted in significant internal displacements, while hundreds of thousands of refugees have flown to neighbouring countries. In **Syria**, humanitarian food assistance agencies have been assisting Iraqi refugees since 2006. Most of them reside in urban areas, particularly in the capital Damascus. For these groups, self-targeting has been deemed effective, since distribution centres are located in the outskirts of the*

city, and whilst agencies have made all necessary arrangements to facilitate access and to preserve the dignity of refugees, the whole process takes half a day and is cumbersome. People wait seated in a large hangar that is heated in the winter, all the logistics has been arranged for the refugees to return home with their ration and non-food items, and special arrangements have been made for handicapped and old persons. However due to time constraints, and the opportunity cost of attending distributions, wealthier refugees do not bother spending their morning at the distribution point. A 25% no-show rate to the distribution was confirmed in 2009, and more than 25,000 refugees did not come to two distributions in a row. These no-shows have been assessed to be the less needy refugees.

*Considerations of how to target also need to be balanced by considerations of when to target. In **Ethiopia**, an identified weakness in the national Targeted Supplementary Feeding programme was that anthropometric targeting was usually done in advance of the hunger gap, so that children who became malnourished as the lean season progressed could not access assistance. This was addressed by increasing the frequency of the screening and targeting exercise in highly vulnerable areas.*

criteria that are optimally sensitive, specific, and feasible.⁵³ Furthermore, the likelihood and, in some contexts, acceptable practice of assistance later being shared or redistributed, post-distribution, according to household or social norms, needs to be acknowledged and considered. This should influence the design of the operation, the setting of the levels of assistance to be provided, and the rigor of pre-distribution targeting expected. The Commission accepts that humanitarian food assistance is usually targeted on a geographical basis, and then expects it to be directed on the basis of socio-economic, physical, or anthropometric measures of food insecurity or nutritional vulnerability,⁵⁴ depending on the context and the means by which needs have been identified and analysed.

In addition to determining «who» should receive assistance, and «where», due consideration should be given to the timing of humanitarian food assistance actions («when» and «for how long») to ensure that they are implemented when they are most needed, and when they can have most impact and do least harm. Needs-based programme design should then ensure optimal appropriateness of «what» and «how much»⁵⁵ is provided, in terms of both the nature of the transfer itself (eg the ration composition, the amount of cash required,⁵⁶ or the cash-in-kind ratio), and the quantity (eg the ration size, or the cash value).

The Commission's partners should involve beneficiary communities in identifying the criteria by which food-assistance can be most effectively targeted, wherever possible.



Madagascar – A newly introduced tuber which can resist floods and be stored for the lean season is appreciated by the beneficiaries © European Union, 2013 – photo by EC/ECHO/Malini Morzaria

2.3.4 Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)

In accordance with policy lines laid down in the Communication on Humanitarian Food Assistance (section 1.5.3, para 2) where the effectiveness and impact of emergency assistance is not compromised, humanitarian food assistance should consider simultaneous opportunities to reinforce crisis-affected communities' resilience to future disasters, and to protect or strengthen their existing capacities to meet their own food needs, as well as the capacities of national systems to sustainably promote and maintain food-security. More fundamentally, EU's humanitarian food assistance will seek to avoid undermining community resilience and coping capacity.

In this regard, the EU's humanitarian food assistance should aim for:

- a) incorporation of disaster-risk analysis in all food assistance assessments (for example, assessing the risk of flooding on land to be cultivated using seeds and tools provided as humanitarian food assistance);

⁵³ - Sensitive (ensuring that those eligible are not excluded), specific (ensuring that those not eligible are excluded) and feasible (ensuring that there is a way to recognise the necessary characteristic, and that its use is politically, socially, and culturally acceptable, as well as practically manageable, in the given context): Maxwell et al, «Emergency Food Security Interventions», December 2008.

⁵⁴ - Caution needs to be exercised in the use of proxy indicators of vulnerability for targeting. For instance, old-age, women-headed households, disability, and chronic illness (including HIV/AIDS) do not necessarily correlate with high levels of food insecurity or nutritional vulnerability.

⁵⁵ - Maxwell et al, «Emergency Food Security Interventions», December, 2008.

⁵⁶ - In turn requiring close assessment of commodity prices on local markets.

- b) short-term reinforcement of early-warning systems, particularly to incorporate an appropriate range of indicators related to emergency food-insecurity and acute malnutrition, and linking these systems to rapid preparedness and mitigation (for instance, looking beyond agricultural production figures for food availability, and analysing food price trends, or changes in the wage-labour markets, as possible indicators of the poorest populations' diminishing access to food);
- c) systematic respect of the «do no harm» principle so as to make sure that a response to one crisis does not increase beneficiaries' risk-exposure and vulnerability to other crises (for instance ensuring that food distributions do not lead to overcrowded settlement around distribution points, promoting HIV awareness campaigns for food aid transporters) ;
- d) disaster-proofing emergency response interventions to minimize future risks (for instance ensuring that emergency food storage facilities are strong enough to withstand extreme climatic conditions);
- e) developing capacities for preparedness and building resilience during the response and recovery stages (for instance by promoting disaster or HIV awareness when communities are assembled at food distribution points, or «building back better», for instance by ensuring improved flood protection for previously flooded agricultural land).

The Commission will advocate for routine support to DRR initiatives to be integrated into the risk-reduction agenda of development actors, but will also ensure that its own disaster-mitigation work, and any short-term, emergency reinforcement, piloting or scaling-up of DRR initiatives that it undertakes, are coordinated carefully with them.

Operational Case-Study 9: «Risk reduction in food assistance»

*During the evolving drought between end-2008 and mid-2009 in **Kenya**, EU humanitarian assistance supported three rounds of livestock de-stocking in Turkana, to reduce the risk of further deterioration in the short-term and mid-term food security situation.*

Drought leads to less water, less pasture and heightened risk of disease in animals, which in turn has a severe negative impact on the body condition of livestock. This deterioration then impacts negatively on the food security of herders. The diminished condition of their animals (less weight, lower quality of meat) and the higher number of animals on the market (as herders try to sell them before they deteriorate further) leads to a dramatic fall in animal prices, whilst, at the same time, scarcity hikes the price of staple foods (eg cereals, rice) and water. Such poor terms of trade for pastoralists forces them to sell more and more of their livestock assets just to survive. Should the drought continue, livestock deaths deplete the herders' asset base with no short- or mid-term return. Short-term food consumption is seriously compromised, and mid-term livelihood capacity can be severely depleted, heightening herders' vulnerability to future crises.

By facilitating pre-emptive destocking, and creating a demand for animals when they are still in a condition to command a reasonable price, the impact of drought on short-term food-security and longer-term livelihoods can be mitigated. De-stocking in Turkana aimed at:

- *providing some immediate cash for the affected pastoralists, in order to cover basic household food requirements, but also to pay for water, fodder and veterinary services to maintain their remaining livestock holdings;*
- *increasing the possibility for herders to recover from their losses by themselves, using cash from de-stocking for re-stocking once the drought is over;*
- *reducing the size of herds and thus the pressure on natural resources so as to prolong the availability of remaining water and pasture.*

Furthermore, meat from slaughtered animals gathered during the emergency destocking can be targeted and redistributed to nutritionally vulnerable children, as a short-term, small but high-protein complement to rations and commodities received through other nutritional or general feeding programmes.

2.3.5 Capacity Building

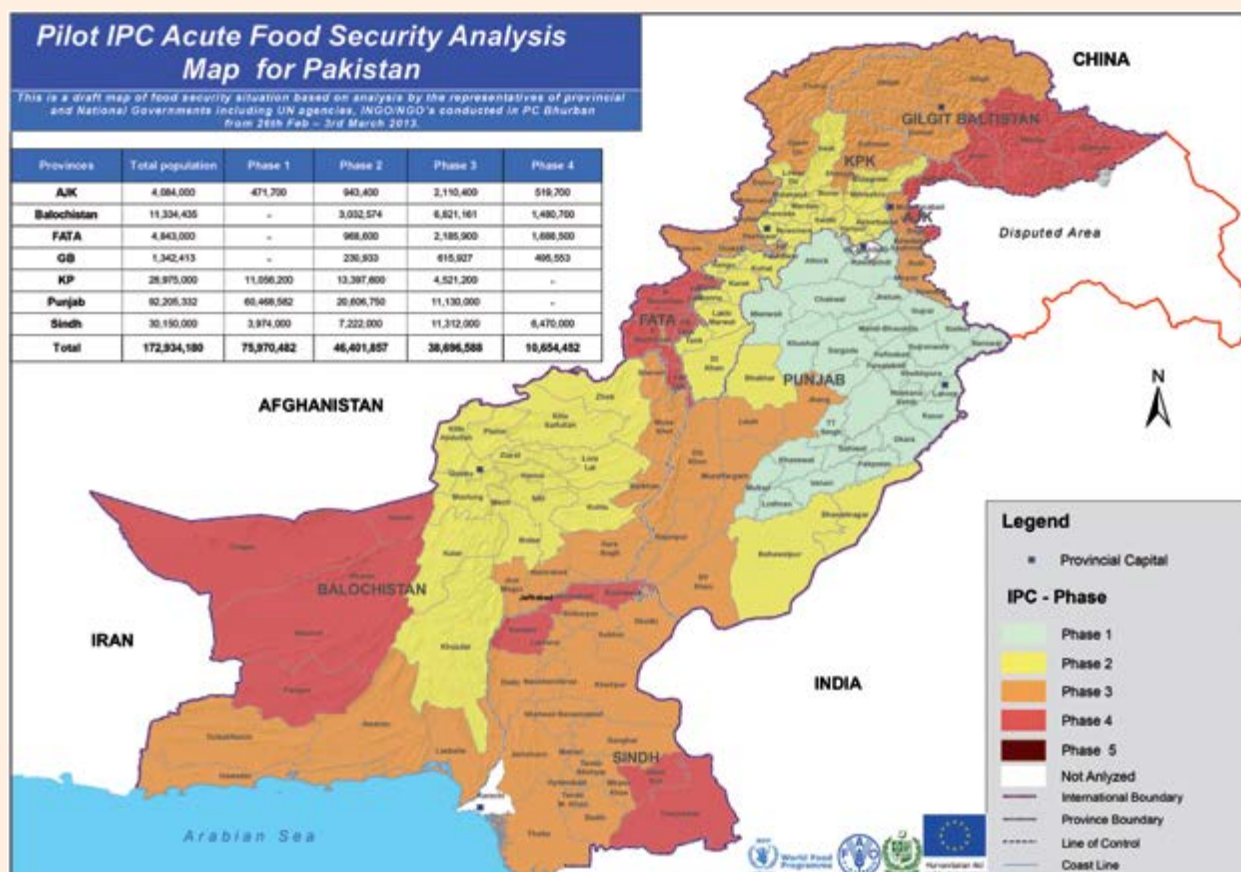
Identifying challenging capacity gaps in the humanitarian system,⁵⁷ the Commission will contribute to strengthening the capacity of its' humanitarian partners to design, deliver and coordinate more varied, effective and appropriate forms of food assistance. In this regard, the Commission's humanitarian food assistance should support:

57 - See Communication on Humanitarian Food Assistance, section 1.5.3, para 3

Operational Case-Study 10: «Capacity building for improved identification and assessment of need»

EU humanitarian funding has been used to support the development and roll-out of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) system. To effectively address food insecurity in humanitarian crises, it is crucial to clearly assess each food insecurity situation, determine its level of severity, identify causes and provide tools for decision-makers. There are many information systems and analysis tools that try to do this. But the IPC is particularly innovative. Originally developed in 2004 for use in Somalia, the IPC is a tool for classifying the severity of food security situations, using a common classification scale. It summarises a great deal of information, and triangulates it to determine the Food

Security Phase. This assists decision making by making it possible to compare across countries and periods, and makes analysts accountable for conclusions and recommendations through a transparent analysis. The IPC is evolving as it is applied in different contexts. While the IPC is so far primarily an analytical tool and a help for decision makers, it also has the potential to become a programming tool by highlighting the «red» areas where transitory food insecurity is the most severe. However, one risk associated with the IPC is that by generalizing the food security status in a geographical area, it may lead to the exclusion of food insecure groups within general food secure areas.



Example of IPC Food Security Classification map in Pakistan. © FAO

- a) the development of methodologies to assess and select the most appropriate response options in any given context;
- b) capacitating managerial staff tasked with implementing varied forms of food assistance (such as cash and vouchers);
- c) supporting sectoral coordination efforts in the food sector;
- d) strengthening monitoring and evaluation capacities (including identification of outcome indicators and establishing baselines) to ensure that actors work collectively to measure, document and disseminate best practice, and integrate lessons learnt into humanitarian operations;
- e) developing the capacities for nutritional surveillance, nutritional surveys, and cross-sectoral causality studies and assessments, and formulating assistance of an appropriate nutritional quality that is adapted to the needs of specific groups.

2.4 Coordination and Advocacy

2.4.1 Coordination, Coherence and Complementarity

With a broader range of concerns, and with responses that are more inter-related with the development agenda, the Commission's shift to a humanitarian food assistance orientation from a food aid orientation implies an even greater responsibility to coordinate its work carefully with others. To promote coordination, coherence⁵⁸ and complementarity, the Commission will ensure, as far as possible, that short-term and longer-term food security needs are addressed in an integrated and articulated way to prevent gaps in assistance, to prevent duplication, to ensure continuity, and to maximise sustainability. To do this, close coordination will be promoted with other international donors, and national actors, delivering food assistance and support for food security (in line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action).

It is increasingly understood that chronic food insecurity and emergency food or nutrition needs arising from transient food insecurity are often interlinked and over-layered. This raises significant challenges to defining entry- and exit-points, and to establishing boundaries, as well as synergies, between various response agencies and actors with different mandates. It is therefore essential to consider the means by which the various institutions working in the food assistance sector can work together most effectively, whilst respecting their mandates and avoiding either duplicating or undermining each other, or leaving unmet gaps.

“ It is increasingly understood that chronic food insecurity and emergency food or nutrition needs arising from transient food insecurity are often interlinked and over-layered. ”

As stated in the Communication on Humanitarian Food Assistance (section 1.5.3, para 5), “effective integration of humanitarian and development assistance will be promoted through Linking Relief with Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD), ensuring that the international aid system operates consistently, coherently and

58 - However, it should be recognised that DG ECHO needs to deliver assistance in a manner that is neutral, impartial and independent, and so full coherence with policies of other actors is not always possible.

transparently to address hunger and vulnerability”. This should “span emergency, transitional and developmental needs simultaneously, and should promote enabling conditions linked to good governance and conducive national and international policies (e.g. for trade and migration)”.

LRRD should be pursued to the end of ensuring optimal impact for shared beneficiaries, and not solely to provide humanitarian actors with a handover- / exit-strategy. Accordingly, LRRD should be undertaken through effective cooperation between the Commission and all development actors, including national authorities and other donors, and not just internally between Commission services.

“ The Commission encourages the full participation of its humanitarian food assistance partners in inclusive, sector-specific, operational coordination forums at field level. ”

The various EU instruments for addressing humanitarian food assistance needs and developmental food security needs in protracted crises, post crisis situations and situations of chronic food insecurity⁵⁹ will therefore be managed in a coherent and coordinated manner. Specifically, humanitarian food assistance interventions should always be designed and implemented in close coordination with the Commission’s country and regional support strategies, as

defined in the Country Strategy Papers (CSPs), National Indicative Programmes (NIPs) and Regional Indicative Programmes (RIPs). The Commission will promote joint working between humanitarian and development actors through the entire project cycle, especially through joint needs assessments, and joint programming exercises.

At policy-level, the Commission will strive to ensure full coherence and complementarity between its humanitarian food assistance policy, other EU humanitarian policies and guidelines, and related development policy frameworks, particularly those focusing on food-security, nutrition, social transfers, social protection, and disaster-risk reduction.

The Commission will continue to coordinate with EU Member States on humanitarian food assistance issues in the Council Working Group on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid (COHAFA).

Coordination and cooperation with EU Member States and other major humanitarian donors will also be maximised at all levels to ensure that financing decisions can be made on the basis of actual, unmet needs, factoring in all anticipated funding and expected assistance strategies provided by other donors and actors. In pursuit of well-coordinated strategies, as well in the spirit of good humanitarian donorship, the Commission will participate actively within joint donor fora, initiatives and exercises (including needs-assessments and evaluations).

The Commission encourages the full participation of its humanitarian food assistance partners in “inclusive, sector-specific, operational coordination forums at field level. This includes close coordination with relevant and viable national and local humanitarian actors”. As stated in the Communication on Humanitarian Food Assistance (section 1.5.3, para 6), the Commission “supports the idea of inclusive

⁵⁹ - See Annex 3.3.

Operational Case-Study 11: «LRRD in Action»

*Lessons learned from the 2005 **Niger** food crisis and in particular the need to articulate humanitarian food assistance with development food security policies lead to the Commission adopting a strategy based on the LRRD framework to fight under-nutrition across the **Sahel region** in 2007. Under-nutrition in the Sahel kills 300,000 children under-5 years of age every year (UNICEF). Increasingly erratic rains, persistently high food prices and political and security instability have combined with very low levels of economic and social development and poor governance to create a «perfect storm» of conjunctures driving high levels of acute under-nutrition and consequent extremely high levels of infant and maternal mortality.*

The response strategy is based upon 3 pillars: 1) expanding the knowledge base and improving understanding of the multi-sectoral causes of under-nutrition, 2) supporting innovative and replicable pilot actions to respond to under-nutrition and 3) undertaking constant advocacy to raise awareness about the damage done by under-nutrition, and so encourage governments and development partners to place it on the development agenda. There was close coordination between Commission humanitarian and development services in the design of the strategy.

Over €100 million has already been committed by the Commission to implement this strategy since 2007. Initially 5 Sahel states (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger) were prioritised. All had Global Acute Malnutrition rates above the alert threshold.

Working through its NGO, UN and Red Cross partners, the Commission has funded a wide range of activities from methods to improve and carry out more accurate nutritional surveys to the expanded use and development of appropriate foods to treat under-nutrition, to the promotion of subsidised access to basic health services for the most vulnerable and to advocacy to place nutritional security as a strategic objective in sector priorities on the development agenda.

*Progress has been made. Most Sahel governments have upgraded the status of the nutrition departments in the Ministries of Health and have started to commit considerable national resources to the fight against under-nutrition, and to increase access to basic health services. A major effort to engage development agencies in a dialogue on nutrition issues is showing results. The Commission has promoted a joint-working orientation between humanitarian and development actors, undertaking needs assessments together, and involving each other in programming processes. Under-nutrition, and its long-term impact, is increasingly mentioned in development strategies (the Commission's Country Strategy Papers for **Mali** and **Burkina Faso** now have «nutrition security» as a strategic objective). Considerable additional financial commitments have since been provided through the EU Food Facility and the European Development Fund, as well as from the World Bank through budget support operations with Sahel governments. These have all taken forward initiatives started under EU humanitarian funding.*

coordination under strong and capacitated leadership. Within the framework of UN and Humanitarian Reform, the Commission endorses the cluster approach to coordination, and supports all efforts to make it work effectively for the food and nutrition sectors.”

2.4.2 Advocacy

Globally, the majority of people facing food-insecurity are not affected by humanitarian crises, nor do they reside in contexts where the EU's humanitarian instruments have a comparative advantage for direct intervention. For the majority, food-insecurity, and related under-nutrition, are a consequence of structural causes, including poverty, low incomes, inadequate health and sanitation conditions, poor infrastructure, lack of education and the lack of empowerment of women. In these situations the solutions are primarily developmental.⁶⁰ Those who are already food insecure are more vulnerable to future crises and more likely to require future humanitarian assistance. Increasing levels of chronic food insecurity, if unchecked, will multiply the demands on limited humanitarian resources.

⁶⁰ - See section 1.5.1 of the Commission's Communication on Humanitarian Food Assistance.

Operational Case-Study 12: «Working with States»

Across hilly regions of **S Asia**, the bi-centennial flowering of bamboo can lead to a massive and sudden increase in the rodent population with devastating impact as rats consume crops and food stocks. In 2007, in India's northeastern state of Mizoram, around a million people were affected by acute food shortages as rats ate up the entire paddy crop, and farmers virtually stopped agricultural activity in the knowledge that all production would simply be lost.

Recognising the scale of emergency, the state government declared Mizoram a 'disaster area' and responded with a multi-sectoral response programme as well as requesting the scaling up of existing centrally sponsored schemes such as public distribution of subsidised rice (PDS), and employment creation through labour intensive public works (NREGS). However, assessments by DG ECHO's partners confirmed that due to various factors including weak governance and the challenges involved with implementation in very poor and remote areas, many households were surviving solely on available wild foods, while having no choice but to sell off productive assets and accumulate heavy debts.

In response to the prevailing crisis, with EU humanitarian support, three agencies targeted the hardest

hit districts of the State with basic food assistance in the form of cash, grain, seeds and livestock, to ensure that lives were saved and the most urgent humanitarian needs met. In recognition of the extent to which needs were determined by gaps in the government response capacity, as the response unfolded partners increasingly strove to coordinate around a basic awareness and advocacy strategy so that the government's response could be made more effective.

Building on community level data regarding the relevance and effectiveness of public assistance received, the aim was both to ensure that communities better understood their entitlements, while government stakeholders at various levels were in a better position to learn from experience and strengthen their responsiveness and accountability. Activities included community level awareness sessions, capacity building and training workshops for government staff and government / inter agency / civil society interaction at state level to facilitate policy dialogue.

This small but nevertheless significant component of the overall emergency response highlighted the valuable opportunities for awareness-building and advocacy with state actors that exist in many emergency contexts.

Given limited progress in reducing global levels of food insecurity, the Commission has an obligation and an operational requirement to advocate on behalf of the chronically poor and food insecure.

In the first instance, as iterated in the Humanitarian Food Assistance Communication (section 1.5.3, para 4) "advocacy will be directed to state actors to fulfil their fundamental responsibility in safe-guarding the food-security of their people. Advocacy will also be directed at development actors (including governments) specifically in relation to the developmental needs of populations in crisis contexts". The Communication also states that "advocacy should further argue for an effective integration of humanitarian and development assistance through LRRD, ensuring that the international aid system operates consistently, coherently and transparently to address hunger and vulnerability. This should span emergency, transitional and developmental needs simultaneously, and should promote enabling conditions linked to good governance and conducive national and international policies (e.g. for trade and migration)".

The Commission will also contribute to the EU framing a global agenda, and advocating for action against hunger and under-nutrition in collaboration with other international partners. This includes advocating for the most efficient and effective use of resources, including the use of varied food assistance response options, according to the needs. Since tied food-aid is often deemed

to compromise efficiency, appropriateness and effectiveness,⁶¹ this, in turn, implies advocacy to secure the complete untying of food aid, in line with the EU position within the Doha round of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) trade talks. It also includes advocating for chronic needs in stable contexts to be met with predictable, multi-annual resources (and not, by implication, humanitarian resources) delivered preferably through national government-led social protection and safety net programmes, through expanded rural development and poverty reduction actions, or through other long-term actions aimed at reducing chronic malnutrition.

While the EU allocates its humanitarian resources on the basis of need, and not on the basis of predetermined commitments, some of the humanitarian food assistance resources that it provides contribute to, and are reported against, the Commission's portion of the EU commitment under the Food Aid Convention (FAC). The Commission will advocate for the FAC to promote the most effective and appropriate use of resources disbursed from within FAC commitments, according to the needs of the most vulnerable, in line with humanitarian principles and best humanitarian food assistance practice, and in a way that is coherent with its own policy framework. In this regard, review and possible renegotiation and reform of the FAC from its current form (which is an extension of the 1999 Convention) is being undertaken by the Commission.

61 - For instance by delivering food commodities that are incompatible with local dietary preferences, or by incurring excessively long lead-times for international processing, transportation and delivery.

3. Annexes

3.1 Glossary

Acute malnutrition

Acute malnutrition, with its main characteristic of wasting, occurs as a result of rapid weight loss or a failure to gain weight within a relatively short period of time. Recovery from wasting is relatively quick once optimal feeding, health and care are restored. Wasting results from short-term but usually critical deficiencies in macronutrients (fat, carbohydrate and protein) and micronutrients (vitamins and minerals), and is often linked to disease. Usually divided into moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) and severe acute malnutrition (SAM), which combine as global acute malnutrition (GAM).⁶²

Adequate food consumption

An ultimate determinant of 'food-security', adequate food consumption is defined, for humanitarian purposes, as the bodily intake of sufficient food (in terms of quantity and quality) to avoid excessive (in absolute and relative terms) mortality, acute malnutrition, or other life-threatening effects and consequences (e.g. stress migration).

Chronic food insecurity

A persistent inability to access adequate food and nutritional intake, either on a constant basis or on a periodic seasonal basis. (Maxwell, D. et al. 2008, see References). Chronic hunger and malnutrition are associated with, amongst other factors, structural poverty, low incomes, inadequate health and sanitation conditions, lack of education and the lack of empowerment of women.

Chronic malnutrition

Chronic malnutrition, with its main characteristic of stunting, is a slow, cumulative process, resulting from sustained, but sometimes subtle nutrient and micro-nutrient deficiencies. Stunting is a failure to grow in stature, and occurs as a result of inadequate nutrition over a longer time period, which is why it is also referred to as chronic malnutrition. Stunting is not a good indicator of growth failure in emergencies as it does not reflect recent changes and requires a long-term response.⁶³

Comparative advantage

For the context of this paper, this refers to the relative ability of one actor to efficiently and effectively meet a defined set of needs, on the basis of their mandate and operational parameters, compared to another actor.

Food crisis

A humanitarian crisis arising from inadequate food consumption, poor food utilisation or high prevalence of acute malnutrition.

⁶² - Young H. and Jaspers S., *The Meaning and Measurement of Acute Malnutrition in Emergencies – A Primer for Decision-Makers*, November 2006.

⁶³ - *Idem*.

Food Aid

Assistance in the form of food commodities, or in the form of financing that supports the centralised procurement and distribution of food to beneficiaries.

Food access

The extent to which resources can be used to obtain adequate and appropriate foods for a nutritious diet. Depends on income available to the household, on the distribution of income within the household, and on the price of food.

Food assistance

Any intervention designed to tackle food insecurity, its immediate causes, and its various negative consequences. Food assistance may involve the direct provision of food, but may utilize a wider range of tools, including the transfer or provision of relevant services, inputs or commodities, cash or vouchers, skills or knowledge.

Food availability

The extent to which sufficient quantities of adequate and appropriate food can be secured from household production, other domestic output, commercial imports or food aid.

Food consumption

The act of transferring food commodities, and the nutrients within them, to the body.

Food security

When all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. (World Food Summit, 1996)

Food utilisation

The physical use of food by an individual prior to consumption (including storage, and processing), and the body's biological use of food, its energy and its micronutrients, after consumption. Determinants of food utilisation are as diverse as access to water and adequate sanitation, access to cooking utensils, health status and disease burden, as well as knowledge within the household of food storage, basic principles of nutrition, and proper child care and child feeding practices.

Humanitarian crisis

A humanitarian crisis is an event or series of events which represents a critical threat to the health, safety, security or wellbeing of a community or other large group of people, usually over a wide area. A humanitarian crisis can have natural or manmade causes, can have a rapid or slow onset and can be of short or protracted duration.

Humanitarian food assistance

Food Assistance provided to assist victims of humanitarian crises.

Humanitarian risk

The probability of a life-threatening humanitarian crisis developing. The specific risk of transient food-insecurity, malnutrition or compromised livelihoods may be assessed and measured by indicators reflecting food access, availability and utilisation (e.g. food prices, food consumption patterns, meal frequencies, expenditure patterns, climate forecasts, coping behaviours etc.) and related trend analysis.

Hunger

An uncomfortable or painful sensation caused by insufficient food intake, specifically to insufficient food energy consumption. Scientifically, hunger is referred to as food deprivation.

Malnutrition

Malnutrition results from deficiencies, excesses or imbalances of energy, protein and other nutrients.

The vast majority of malnourished individuals in the developing world experience **under-nutrition** (a deficiency of energy, proteins, or vitamins and minerals) as opposed to **over-nutrition** (an excess of certain food components such as saturated fats and added sugars in combination with low levels of physical activity, normally resulting in obesity).

Relief-development contiguuum

A situation where emergency, recovery and development needs co-exist simultaneously.

Relief-development continuum

A situation where there is a linear consecutive transition from emergency needs to recovery needs to development needs.

Transient food insecurity

Periods of intensified pressure caused by a specific shock including; natural disasters, economic collapse, governance failures or conflict. It implies a precipitous decline in access and consumption against baseline conditions. (Maxwell, D. et al. 2008). Such a decline can be sudden (e.g. following a natural disaster) or gradual (e.g. in protracted crises).

Vulnerability

Vulnerability comprises the characteristics of population groups that make them more or less susceptible to experiencing, stress, harm or damage when exposed to particular hazards.

Therefore those who are vulnerable to food insecurity may currently be able to maintain an acceptable food intake, but are at risk of becoming food insecure in the future if exposed to a shock.

3.2 Acronyms

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific States
BSFP	Blanket Supplementary Feeding Programme
CFW	Cash For Work
CMAM	Community-Based Management of Acute Malnutrition
COHAFA	Council Working Group on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid
CSP	Country Strategy Paper
DCI	Development Cooperation Instrument
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DG ECHO	Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid
EDF	European Development Fund
ENPI	European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
EU	European Union
FAC	Food Aid Convention
FAFA	Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FPA	Framework Partnership Agreement
FSTP	Food Security Thematic Programme
GAM	Global Acute Malnutrition
GFD	General Food Distribution
GMO	Genetically Modified Organism
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IFS	Instrument for Stability
LRRD	Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development
MAM	Moderate Acute Malnutrition
MCH	Maternal and Child Health
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NIP	National Indicative Programme
OCT	Overseas Countries and Territories
OTP	Outpatient Therapeutic Programme
RIP	Regional Indicative Programme
RUF	Ready to Use therapeutic Food
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
SC	Stabilization Centre
TFC	Therapeutic Feeding Centre
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

3.3 The EU's non-humanitarian instruments and programmes for addressing developmental food assistance and food security needs.

Instrument for Stability (IfS):

Regulation (EC) No 1717/2006 of 15 November 2006 established the IfS, implemented through DG RELEX. The purpose is to deliver an effective, immediate, and integrated response to crises and instability through a single financing instrument, until programming under one of the general instruments for cooperation and assistance can resume. The instrument is thus seen as a transitory measure before normal cooperation can resume through one of the geographic instruments. Through its emergency response component, the IfS is a rapid and flexible tool at the disposal of the Commission to prevent conflict, support post-conflict political stabilisation and to ensure early recovery after a natural disaster. Whilst the IfS does not directly provide humanitarian food assistance in emergency situations, EU-funded humanitarian food assistance strategies should be coherently aligned with activities funded under the emergency response phase of the IfS.

Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI)

The DCI (2007–2013) is the main EU budget financing instrument for development cooperation, and improves the previous development cooperation framework by merging the different geographic and thematic instruments into a single instrument. Its main objectives are poverty reduction, sustainable economic and social development and the smooth and gradual integration of developing countries into the world economy, in line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the European Consensus on Development.

The DCI is implemented through geographic programmes, which cover Latin America, Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East and South Africa, and through thematic programmes also covering these regions. In addition, African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP), eligible for geographic support under the European Development Fund (EDF), are also supported by the DCI's thematic programmes.

For the geographic programmes, the Commission draws up a Country Strategy Paper (CSP) and a multiannual indicative programme, and adopts an annual action programme for each partner country or region. For thematic programmes, it draws up thematic strategy papers and adopts annual action programmes, which focus on the 5 following areas: investment in human resources; the environment and the sustainable management of natural resources; non-state actors and local authorities; cooperation in the area of migration and asylum; and the improvement of food security through the Food Security Thematic Programme (FSTP).

Food Security Thematic Programme (FSTP):

The FSTP was established under the legal basis of the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) in 2007. The FSTP's mandate is to address food security in exceptional situations of transition, and in fragile and failed states, where other EU food security instruments may not be adequate or appropriate. A transition from humanitarian assistance to this type of thematic programme is warranted in the following circumstances:

- Where it is difficult to agree on food security measures with partner governments due to food insecurity being concentrated either in areas not under state control, or among internally displaced persons;

- If cooperation has been suspended or no cooperation framework is in place;
- «Forgotten crises» or «fragile states» in which cooperation with national governments may be difficult to establish through geographical instruments.

The main programmatic pillars of the FSTP are as follows:

- Promoting research and technology
- Strengthening information systems to improve food-security decision-making
- Supporting continental and regional programmes and approaches
- Supporting LRRD for transitional contexts
- Promoting innovative approaches to combat food-insecurity
- Advocacy for the advancement of the food-security agenda
- Promoting harmonisation and alignment.

European Development Fund (EDF)

The European Development Fund (EDF) is the main instrument for providing Community aid for development cooperation in the African, Caribbean and Pacific States (ACP) and Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT). The tenth EDF, under the (revised) Cotonou Agreement covers the period from 2008 to 2013 and provides an overall budget of € 22 682 million.

Country Allocations under the Cotonou Agreement contain two components: programmable support under the so-called A-envelope, which are resources programmed in the framework of a country's CSP and NIP, and additional support under the B-envelope, which is an allocation to cover unforeseen needs such as emergency assistance where such support cannot be financed from the EU budget. Under the 10th EDF (2008-2013), ECHO can draw down up to 25%, or more in exceptional circumstances, of the envelope to respond to humanitarian crises, which amounts to € 150 million.

European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument (ENPI):

Since 1 January 2007, EU assistance to the countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy (and the Strategic Partnership with Russia) is provided under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). This is a much more flexible, policy-driven instrument designed to target sustainable development and approximation to EU policies and standards.

Under the ENPI, as well as the ENP Governance Facility and the Neighbourhood Investment Facility, EU assistance priorities are identified, together with the countries concerned and other relevant actors, in general Country Strategy Papers (CSPs) covering 7 year periods, National and Regional Indicative Programmes (NIPs and RIPs) covering 3 years and detailed annual programmes, which can include food security responses.

Other Instruments:

The EU has also developed time-bound, ad hoc instruments to deal with specific food-related problems. Most notable at the time of drafting is the EU Food Facility, designed to address both causes and consequences of high food prices from 2009 to 2011, by improving agricultural production (for example through distribution of agricultural inputs) and mitigating the impacts of high and volatile prices through social-protection measures and safety-nets.

Another instrument with possible relevance to the food sector includes the Peace Facility established in 2003 to support African-led peace-keeping operations in cooperation with the African Union.

3.4 Typology of food assistance responses and their appropriateness to different contexts

Problem	Response option	Conditions under which response may be appropriate
Inadequate food access and/or availability	Unconditional Food Transfers (where a basket of food commodities constituting a specific calorific value is distributed for free to households, either on a blanket basis (General Food Distributions GFD), or targeted according to specific criteria / locations.	When a significant proportion of households lack access to food, and there is a lack of food available in local markets, & many target households are not able to participate in a labour-based projects, either due to their socio-economic characteristics (eg. elderly) or they are fully employed in their usual livelihood activities.
	Unconditional (or “unlinked”) cash transfers ⁶⁴ – as above, but using cash as an alternative to food commodities.	Where food is available in local markets but households lack means to purchase without depleting essential assets, and the costs of procuring and transporting food to affected area are high, and mobilising food aid would take a long time, and risk of inflation due to an injection of cash is low.
	Conditional (or “linked”) food transfers (eg. Food For Work (FFW), Food for Training (FFT), Food for Assets (FFA)):- where a certain basket of food commodities is given in exchange for a beneficiary’s time or labour, often used towards the creation of productive skills or community assets, either on a blanket basis, or targeted, or self-targeted.	Households lack access to food, and food availability in the area is limited in quantity and/ or variety, and; there is surplus labour and available time in target households, and the necessary non-food inputs (materials, equipment and technical supervision) can be assured, and assets created will be properly maintained after project completion, or following a disaster when there is need for clean-up ops and the population has capacity to work without technical supervision.
	Conditional (or “linked”) cash transfers ⁶⁵ (eg Cash for Work (CFW)):- as above, but using cash as an alternative to food commodities.	As for FFW but; food is available in the area, and the risk of inflationary pressure is low.
	Unconditional / conditional vouchers (commodity-based or value-based):- as above, but using vouchers redeemable against a specific set of commodities or services.	In a situation similar to cash transfer programmes but where; it is important to restrict the use of the resource transfer, and local retailers are willing to cooperate in the scheme and receive vouchers against subsequent reimbursement.
	Emergency livelihood support:- where agricultural/ pastoral inputs such as seeds, fertiliser, and tools, or agricultural services such as training or irrigation, or other income-generating activities, or pastoral services such as veterinary care , provision of fodder and water , or emergency destocking or restocking, are provided to boost or protect the short-term production, or productive asset base, of crisis-affected populations.	Where targeted households have access to natural resources and productive capacity, and there is a lack of availability of productive inputs of the right quality, and this is limiting production. Where there is sufficient time to accrue the benefits of production, and there are other means of ensuring adequate food consumption until such benefits accrue.

64 - Please see the DG ECHO guidance note on the use of cash and vouchers for further details on the conditions that apply.

65 - Please see the DG ECHO guidance note on the use of cash and vouchers for further details on the conditions that apply.

Problem	Response option	Conditions under which response may be appropriate
	Complementary activities , such as provision of safe water, sanitation, hygiene education, health services, or public health interventions, nutrition education, awareness campaigns for improved child-care and feeding practices, and road/market infrastructures. Also, support to emergency food-security monitoring, assessment and early warning systems.	Where beneficiaries receiving assistance to improve access and availability of food do not benefit fully from the assistance provided due to ill-health, poor food consumption and feeding habits, poor distribution of food at household level, inability to access markets to buy available food or sell production accruing from emergency assistance; Or where identification of specific individuals or groups facing transient food-insecure, and prioritisation of geographic areas, is necessary (ie for targeted as opposed to blanket feeding interventions); And where all interventions are linked to improved food consumption / food utilisation / nutritional outcomes.
Poor food utilization	Milling of cereals. Food preparation and food storage materials. Items required for preparing food, such as cooking sets, cooking fuel and water.	Where beneficiaries are displaced or refugees, or other situations where their means to prepare food is compromised.
	Training and awareness raising on nutrition, dietary management, and feeding practices.	Where malnutrition and hunger is related to poor hygiene, care practices and knowledge of nutrition;
	Complementary activities , such as provision of safe water, sanitation, hygiene education, health services, or public health interventions.	Where beneficiaries receiving assistance to improve utilisation of food do not benefit fully from the assistance provided due, for instance, to ill-health And where all interventions are linked to improved food consumption / food utilisation / nutritional outcomes.
Acute Malnutrition	Providing in-patient care for acutely malnourished children/adults with medical complications through: Facility based Therapeutic Feeding Centre (TFC)/ Stabilization Centre (SC). Services being rendered at TFC or a SC in the hospital/ paediatric wards or through a MCH, or a health post with medical supervision.	Significant numbers or an evident increase in numbers of acutely malnourished individuals (children and/or adults) with medical complications (often severely malnourished), and geographically concentrated case-loads warrant establishing TFCs or SCs, and trained health staff are available (or can be made available) to supervise TFCs / SCs
	Providing treatment with therapeutic feeding products (RUTF) and simple routine medical treatment for children/adults with severe acute malnutrition without medical complications through: Community based therapeutic programme or Outpatient Therapeutic Programme (OTP): OTP sites based in particular areas or villages with high malnutrition, or in targeted health posts. The community is empowered to facilitate identification and referral of the malnourished cases to the OTP or the SC, (if showing medical complications), for treatment with therapeutic feeding products.	Significant numbers of severely acutely malnourished individual (children and/or adults), or an evident increase in numbers of severely acutely malnourished individuals, and populations may be dispersed and/or difficult to access, and trained health staff are available (or can be made available) to for supervision of OTPs in health structures or in the community
	Providing dry take home rations and basic treatment for children/adults with moderate acute malnutrition without medical complications through: Supplementary feeding programme – moderate acute malnutrition cases identified in the community or referred from TFC/SC/OTP are managed here. Often the SFP is attached to a TFC/OTP/SC.	Significant numbers of moderately acutely malnourished individual (children and/or adults), or an evident increase in numbers of moderately acutely malnourished individuals; and it is possible to identify and target malnourished individuals, and Trained staff are available to supervise the SFP activities

Problem	Response option	Conditions under which response may be appropriate
	Blanket nutritional interventions (eg blanket Supplementary Feeding programmes (BSFP)):- where nutritional commodities are distributed to all individuals of a certain age, in a certain area deemed to be facing or at risk of a nutritional crisis. The main aim is to prevent widespread malnutrition and related mortality in nutritionally vulnerable groups.	When global acute malnutrition rates are very high and food availability and quality, through general food rations or other sources, are considered to be inadequate, and if access to an area is difficult and regular on-site supervision is not easy, and during the early stages of an acute crisis before a reliable pipeline can be established for an adequate general ration, and treatment of severe acute malnutrition through TFC/SC/OTP would still be required in addition to a blanket feeding.
	Provision of micronutrient supplementation (eg Vit A, Vit B, Vit C, Iron, Niacin) or fortification of general foods.	Where rates of micronutrient deficiency and associated diseases are very high; and access to / availability of local or relief food sources containing the requisite micronutrients is compromised; and products / approaches used are certified as safe and effective.
	Complementary activities , such as provision of safe water, sanitation, nutrition and hygiene education, health services, or other public health interventions, within nutrition facilities, and at household / community level. Provision of healthcare for malnourished children is a basic requirement for the treatment of malnutrition. Also, nutritional screening, surveillance and surveys. Also, provision of protection / take home / family rations for families of malnourished individuals.	Where beneficiaries receiving nutritional care do not benefit fully from the assistance provided due to ill-health, which severely impacts on nutritional status. Or where poor food consumption and feeding habits and poor distribution of food, or sharing of the nutrition ration, at household level; Or where identification of specific malnourished / at-risk cases, and prioritisation of geographic areas, is necessary (ie for targeted as opposed to blanket nutritional interventions) And where all interventions are linked to improved food consumption / food utilisation / nutritional outcomes.

3.5 Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid

Article 2

The principal objectives of the humanitarian aid operations referred to in Article 1 shall be:

- (a) to save and preserve life during emergencies and their immediate aftermath and natural disasters that have entailed major loss of life, physical, psychological or social suffering or material damage;
- (b) to provide the necessary assistance and relief to people affected by longer-lasting crises arising, in particular, from outbreaks of fighting or wars, producing the same effects as those described in subparagraph (a), especially where their own governments prove unable to help or there is a vacuum of power;
- (c) to help finance the transport of aid and efforts to ensure that it is accessible to those for whom it is intended, by all logistical means available, and by protecting humanitarian goods and personnel, but excluding operations with defence implications;
- (d) to carry out short-term rehabilitation and reconstruction work, especially on infrastructure and equipment, in close association with local structures, with a view to facilitating the arrival of relief, preventing the impact of the crisis from worsening and starting to help those affected regain a minimum level of self-sufficiency, taking long-term development objectives into account where possible;
- (e) to cope with the consequences of population movements (refugees, displaced people and returnees) caused by natural and man-made disasters and carry out schemes to assist repatriation to the country of origin and resettlement there when the conditions laid down in current international agreements are in place;
- (f) to ensure preparedness for risks of natural disasters or comparable exceptional circumstances and use a suitable rapid early-warning and intervention system;
- (g) to support civil operations to protect the victims of fighting or comparable emergencies, in accordance with current international agreements.

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