GROUP WORK: BUILDING A MALNUTRITION PROBLEM TREE
Objective of the group work

To use a participatory methodology to understand the principal causes of malnutrition and how these are related to people’s livelihoods, in order:

– To improve the understanding of the nutrition and food security situation

– To design a comprehensive food security and nutrition information system using the problem tree to identify relevant indicators to assess the nutrition and food security situation

– To sensitize professionals from various sectors and institutions as to their role in improving nutrition and how they can work together.
What is a problem tree?

Have you ever worked with or built a problem tree?
What is a problem?

Is it a problem if someone does not have access to land?
What is a problem?

A PROBLEM is an uncomfortable situation for somebody.
What is a problem tree?

• The “problem tree” is a tool to systematically analyze the cause and effect relationships of problems in relation to a core problem.

• A problem tree is represented visually by a ‘tree’.
A problem tree includes the main or *core problem* (trunk).

It also includes the *causes* of the core problem (roots).

It also includes the *consequences/effects* of the core problem (branches).
What is a Malnutrition problem tree?

How is it different?
Malnutrition Problem tree

• Core problem: malnutrition
MALNUTRITION PROBLEM TREE

Core problem = MALNUTRITION
Malnutrition Problem tree

• Core problem: malnutrition

• Focus on the **causes** of malnutrition
The core problem is malnutrition.

We focus on the causes of malnutrition.
MALNUTRITION PROBLEM TREE

We focus on the causes of malnutrition
Malnutrition Problem tree

• Core problem: malnutrition
• Focus on the **causes** of malnutrition
• Should be **specific to one livelihood group**
• For ease of building the problem tree, we propose to have the causes above the problem (branches)
What is a Malnutrition Problem tree

• A tool to systematically analyze the causes of malnutrition problems.
• Should be specific to one livelihood group
• The malnutrition problem tree is represented visually by a ‘tree’.
For ease of building the problem tree, we propose to have the causes above the problem (usually causes are represented by the roots of the tree).
Example of a problem tree: peri-urban farmers in Herat province, Afghanistan
Exercise step-by-step:

Before building the problem tree:

– Precisely define the features of your *Livelihood group (HHs’ assets and characteristics)*

– Try to be quick (no more than 15 min)

– Write main features on a flipchart
Building the Malnutrition Problem tree

1. Brainstorm all problems related to malnutrition for your specific livelihood group
2. Write them on cards (one problem per card). Make sure that the **problems are well defined**.
3. Cluster the cards by theme (e.g. food security, care, health issues etc)
4. Put cards into order and stick them onto the large piece of paper displayed on the wall (start with the card ‘malnutrition’ at the bottom of the tree)
5. Draw lines to show links between the different problems.
TIPS

– If one problem has several causes, place them on the same level, above the problem

– Use the magic word WHY to make sure that your problem tree is logical
Problem tree or Why-Why tree

Malnutrition

Problem
2 livelihood groups

- Smallholder farmers
- IDPs