1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Within the cross-cutting field of food security analysis there are increasingly strong calls for improved analysis. These include: the greater **comparability** of results from one place to another, increased **rigour**, greater **transparency** of evidence to support findings, increased **relevance** to strategic decision making, and stronger linkages between information and **action**. Improving analysis along these lines would enable food security and humanitarian interventions to be more **needs-based**, **strategic**, and **timely**.

Central to meeting these challenges is the development of a classification system that is **generic** enough to be utilized in a vast array of food security situations, disaster types, and livelihood systems; **simple** enough to be practical in the field and understood by multiple stakeholders; and **rigorous** enough to meet international standards.

Since February 2004, the Food Security Analysis Unit for Somalia (FSAU[1]) has been using and progressively developing a tool to meet these challenges called the **Integrated Food Security Phase Classification** (IPC[2]). Drawing from extensive literature on international humanitarian guidelines, aspects of existing classification systems, and in situ analysis of food security in Somalia, the IPC has consistently proven to improve analysis and enable more effective response.

Since the original release of the IPC manual in 2006, many countries in Africa, Asia, and Central America have introduced the IPC for improved food security analysis. Based on these field experiences, and wider technical consultations among governments, UN agencies, donors, NGOs, and academic agencies, this revised IPC Manual Version 1.1 introduces key structural changes and provides clarification on select issues. See the foreword of this Version 1.1 for a summary of these revisions and clarifications.

The IPC is a set of protocols for consolidating and summarizing **Situation Analysis**, a distinct, yet often overlooked (or assumed) stage of the food security analysis-response continuum. Situation Analysis is a foundation stage where the fundamental aspects (severity, causes, magnitude, etc.) of a situation are identified. These aspects have received an optimal broad-based consensus from key stakeholders including governments, UN agencies and NGOs, donors, the media, and target communities.

The analytical logic of the IPC is that varying phases of food security and humanitarian situations are classified based on outcomes on lives and livelihoods. Outcomes are a function of both immediate hazard events and underlying causes, as well as the specific vulnerabilities of livelihood systems (including both livelihood assets and livelihood strategies). The outcomes are referenced against internationally accepted standards, and their convergence substantiates a phase classification for any given area. Each phase is associated with a unique strategic response framework, while the outcome configuration for any given situation guides the creation of a tailored response unique to that situation. While the phase classification describes the current or imminent situation for a given area, levels of Risk for Worsening Phase are a predictive tool to communicate the likelihood and severity of a potential further deterioration of the situation beyond the Phase Classification itself.

The IPC consists of four components including the **Reference Table**, **Analysis Templates**, **Cartographic Protocols** and **Population Tables**.

The IPC **Reference Table** guides analysis for both the **Phase Classification** and Risk of Worsening Phase. The Phase Classification is divided into five **Phases** - ***Generally Food Secure (1A and 1B), Moderately/Borderline Food Insecure, Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis, Humanitarian Emergency,*** and ***Famine/Humanitarian Catastrophe***. The five phases are general enough to accommodate a wide range of causes, livelihood systems, and political/economic contexts - yet their distinction captures essential differences in implications for action (including strategic design, urgency, and ethical imperative).

Each Phase is linked to a comprehensive set of **Key Reference Outcomes** on human welfare and livelihoods which guide the classification. These include: *crude mortality rate, acute malnutrition, disease, food access/availability, dietary diversity, water access/availability, destitution and displacement, civil security, coping,* and *livelihood assets*. The breadth of outcomes enables triangulation and ensures the adaptability of the IPC to a wide variety of situations. Referencing outcomes to international standards ensures comparability and consistency of the phase classification in different countries and contexts.

Footnotes:

[1] FSAU is implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and funded by the European Commission (EC) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

[2] IPC is a short-hand acronym including the terms integrated phase classification..

Each Phase is also linked to a tailored **Strategic Response Framework** that provides strategic, non-prescriptive guidance to achieve three objectives: (1) mitigate immediate negative outcomes, (2) support livelihoods, and (3) address underlying/structural causes.

The Reference Table also includes three levels for **Risk of Worsening Phase**: (1) ***Watch***, (2) ***Moderate Risk***, (3) ***High Risk***. Each of these is associated with key information required for the effective early warning of a potential further deterioration of the situation: Probability, Severity, Reference Indicators, Implications for Action, and Timeline.

The **Analysis Templates** are tables which organize key pieces of information in a transparent manner. They facilitate analysis to substantiate a Phase Classification and guide response analysis. The **Cartographic Protocols** are a set of standardized mapping and visual communication conventions which are designed to effectively convey key information concerning situation analysis on a single map. The **Population Tables** are a means to consistently and effectively communicate population estimates by administrative boundaries, livelihood systems, and livelihood types.

The IPC is not an assessment method, per se, but a classification system and a set of protocols for Situation Analysis that integrate multiple data sources, methods, and analyses (options for specific assessment methodologies include those endorsed by WFP, ICRC, Save the Children UK, and many others). Effective use of the IPC encourages a mixed-method approach which is obligatory given the complexity of the analysis and the need for triangulation. In this manner, the IPC gives a consistent and meaningful structure to the final statement. To substantiate an IPC statement, whatever the specific methodologies used, the legitimacy of data sources and analytical methods is rigorously evaluated and reflected in the overall confidence level.

The IPC does not replace existing food security information systems or methodologies. It is a complimentary "add-on" that draws from and provides focus to existing analytical systems, enables comparability, and explicitly links analysis to action. The IPC can be adapted to a broad range of information systems with regards to data availability, methodological approach, and human capacity.

The IPC emphasizes food security analysis through a livelihoods approach, but recognizes that it is impossible to separate food insecurity from associated sectoral crises in the fields of health, water, protection, sanitation, shelter, and others. There is highly dynamic interplay between these sectors; deteriorating situations often co-exist, and stress on one most likely leads to stresses on others.

Thus, the IPC emphasizes food security analysis while integrating related humanitarian concerns. The IPC is not meant, however, to substitute for a more refined analysis of any particular sector.

The IPC draws together and seeks to integrate:

- aspects of existing classification systems
- the breadth of food security phases, not just emergency situations
- food security and nutrition
- lives and livelihoods
- process indicators and outcomes
- information and action
- relief, rehabilitation, recovery, and development
- immediate and longer term perspectives
- concepts and practice
- academic standards and field practicalities
- accountability of analysis and response

*Perhaps most importantly, the IPC provides a much needed **common currency** for food security analysis.*

Both within Somalia and the Greater Horn of Africa, the IPC has proven to be an effective means for communicating complex analysis to UN agencies, NGOs, governments, donors and media. It has been consistently demonstrated to increase technical consensus, comparability over space and time, transparency through evidence-based analysis, accountability, and the effectiveness of early warning and strategic response.

In the context of the FSAU, the IPC fits within the overall conceptual, operational, and analytic framework of the Food Security Analysis System (FSAS), as a means of conducting multi-faceted aspects of food security analysis through a livelihoods and evidence-based approach[3] (see diagram in Appendix C).

The highly dynamic and complex nature of food security analysis in the context of Somalia has provided a vibrant "developing-ground" for the IPC - with multiple livelihood systems ranging from cropping to fishing to pastoralism, and a variety of hazards ranging from floods to drought to civil insecurity to the Tsunami (FSAU 2005). Most importantly, the IPC has been developed in-situ - drawing from academic literature and international guidelines, but driven first and foremost by the realities of conducting food security analysis on a day-to-day basis and linking information to action (see Appendix D).

Overall, this technical manual has three main objectives:

(1) to provide technical guidance on the use of the IPC for food security and humanitarian analysis

(2) to contribute to global developments related to improving and standardizing food security and humanitarian analysis

(3) to solicit feedback on from the broad food security and humanitarian community to inform the development of future versions of the manual.

The manual begins with a discussion of why a common classification system is needed as well as a brief review of existing classification systems. The manual also provides technical details of the concepts and use of the IPC, and ends with a discussion on the potential for the broader applicability of the IPC to other country, regional, and global contexts and future challenges.

Footnotes:

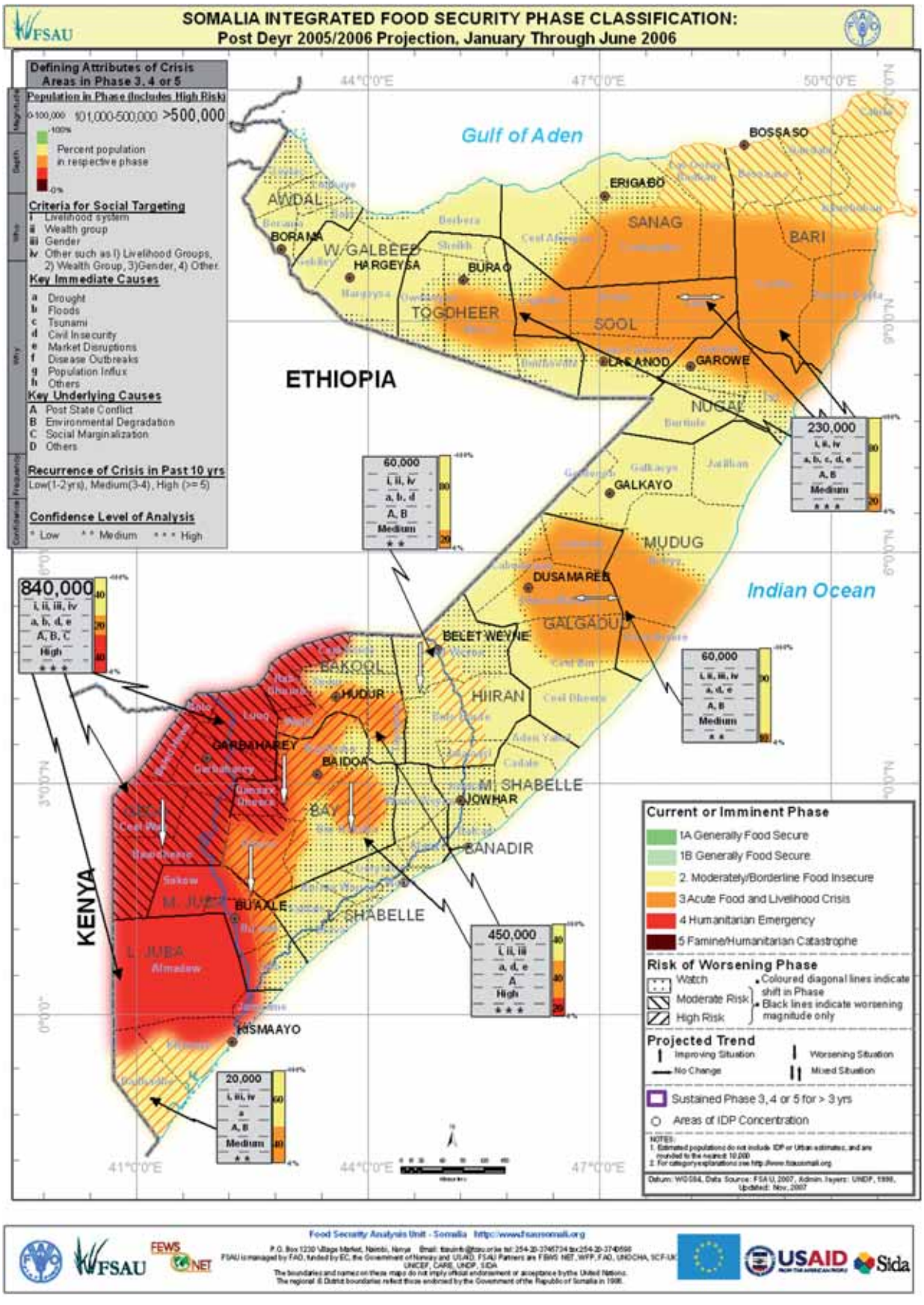
[3] FSAU's Food Security Analysis System (FSAS) is an overarching framework to integrate conceptual, analytical, and operational components of food security analysis through a livelihoods approach. Core analytical components of the FSAS include: Baseline Livelihoods Analysis, Seasonal Food Security Projections, Emergency Food Security and Nutrition Assessments, Key Indicator Monitoring, Nutrition Analysis, and Applied Research. Other core components include: Information Management System, Communication Strategy, Management, and Partner Networking. Core analytical sectors include: climate, agriculture, livestock, markets, nutrition, and civil security (FSAU 2004b). For more details visit www.fsausomali.org

Table 1: IPC Reference Table

Phase Classification		Key Reference Outcomes *Current or imminent outcomes on lives and livelihoods. Based on convergence of direct and indirect evidence rather than absolute thresholds. Not all indicators must be present for classification..*	Strategic Response Framework *Objectives: (1) mitigate immediate outcomes, (2) support livelihoods, and (3) address underlying causes*
1A	Generally Food Secure	***Crude Mortality Rate*** < 0.5 / 10,000 / day ***Acute Malnutrition*** <3 % (w/h <-2 z-scores) ***Stunting*** <20% (h/age <-2 z-scores) ***Food Access / Availability*** usually adequate (> 2,100 kcal ppp day), stable ***Dietary Diversity*** consistent quality and quantity of diversity ***Water Access / Avail.*** usually adequate (> 15 litres ppp day), stable ***Hazards*** moderate to low probability and vulnerability ***Civil Security*** prevailing and structural peace ***Livelihood Assets*** generally sustainable utilization (of 6 capitals)	Strategic assistance to pockets of food insecure groups Investment in food and economic production systems Enable development of livelihood systems based on principles of sustainability, justice, and equity Prevent emergence of structural hindrances to food security Advocacy
1B	Generally Food Secur		
2	Moderately / Borderline Food Insecure	***Crude Mortality Rate*** <0.5 / 10,000 / day; U5MR<1 / 10,000 / day ***Acute Malnutrition*** >3% but <10 % (w/h <-2 z-score), usual range, stable ***Stunting*** >20% (h/age <-2 z-scores) ***Food Access / Availability*** borderline adequate (2,100 kcal ppp day); unstable ***Dietary Diversity*** chronic dietary diversity deficit ***Water Access / Avail.*** borderline adequate (15 litres ppp day); unstable ***Hazards*** recurrent, with high livelihood vulnerability ***Civil Security*** Unstable; disruptive tension ***Coping*** "insurance strategies" ***Livelihood Assets*** stressed and unsustainable utilization (of 6 capitals) **Structural** Pronounced underlying hindrances to food security	Design & implement strategies to increase stability, resistance and resilience of livelihood systems, thus reducing risk Provision of "safety nets" to high risk groups Interventions for optimal and sustainable use of livelihood assets Create contingency plan Redress structural hindrances to food security Close monitoring of relevant outcome and process indicators Advocacy
3	Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis	***Crude Mortality Rate*** 0.5-1 / 10,000 / day, U5MR 1-2 / 10,000 / dy **Acute Malnutrition** 10-15 % (w/h <-2 z-score), > than usual, increasing ***Disease*** epidemic; increasing ***Food Access / Availability*** lack of entitlement; 2,100 kcal ppp day via asset stripping ***Dietary Diversity*** acute dietary diversity deficit ***Water Access / Avail.*** 7.5-15 litres ppp day, accessed via asset stripping ***Destitution / Displacement*** emerging; diffuse ***Civil Security*** limited spread, low intensity conflict ***Coping*** "crisis strategies"; CSI > than reference; increasing ***Livelihood Assets*** accelerated and critical depletion or loss of access	Support livelihoods and protect vulnerable groups Strategic and complimentary interventions to immediately food access / availability AND support livelihoods Selected provision of complimentary sectoral support (e.g., water, shelter, sanitation, health, etc.) Strategic interventions at community to national levels to create, stabilize, rehabilitate, or protect priority livelihood assets Create or implement contingency plan Close monitoring of relevant outcome and process indicators Use "crisis as opportunity" to redress underlying structural causes Advocacy
4	Humanitarian Emergency	***Crude Mortality Rate*** 1-2 / 10,000 / day, >2x reference rate, increasing; U5MR > 2 / 10,000 / day **Acute Malnutrition** >15 % (w/h <-2 z-score), > than usual, increasing ***Disease*** Pandemic ***Food Access / Availability*** severe entitlement gap; unable to meet 2,100 kcal ppp day ***Dietary Diversity*** Regularly 3 or fewer main food groups consumed ***Water Access / Avail.*** < 7.5 litres ppp day (human usage only) ***Destitution / Displacement*** concentrated; increasing ***Civil Security*** widespread, high intensity conflict ***Coping*** "distress strategies"; CSI significantly > than reference ***Livelihood Assets*** near complete & irreversible depletion or loss of access	Urgent protection of vulnerable groups Urgently food access through complimentary interventions Selected provision of complimentary sectoral support (e.g., water, shelter, sanitation, health, etc.) Protection against complete livelihood asset loss and / or advocacy for access Close monitoring of relevant outcome and process indicators Use "crisis as opportunity" to redress underlying structural causes Advocacy
5	Famine / Humanitarian Catastrophe	***Crude Mortality Rate*** > 2 / 10,000 / day (example: 6,000 / 1,000,000 / 30 days) **Acute Malnutrition** > 30 % (w/h <-2 z-score) ***Disease*** Pandemic ***Food Access / Availability*** extreme entitlement gap; much below 2,100 kcal ppp day ***Water Access / Avail.*** < 4 litres ppp day (human usage only) ***Destitution / Displacement*** large scale, concentrated ***Civil Security*** widespread, high intensity conflict ***Livelihood Assets*** effectively complete loss; collapse	Critically urgent protection of human lives and vulnerable groups Comprehensive assistance with basic needs (e.g. food, water, shelter, sanitation, health, etc.) Immediate policy / legal revisions where necessary Negotiations with varied political-economic interests Use "crisis as opportunity" to redress underlying structural causes Advocacy

Risk of Worsening Phase	Probability / Likelihood	Severity	Reference Process Indicators	Implications for Action
Watch	As yet unclear	Not applicable	Occurrence of, or predicted *Hazard* event stressing livelihoods; with low or uncertain *Vulnerability* ***Process Indicators:*** small negative changes	Close monitoring and analysis Review current Phase interventions
Moderate Risk	Elevated probability / likelihood	Specified by predicted Phase, and indicated by color of diagonal lines on map.	Occurrence of, or predicted *Hazard* event stressing livelihoods; with moderate *Vulnerability* ***Process Indicators:*** large negative changes	Close monitoring and analysis Contingency planning Step-up current Phase interventions Preventative interventions with increased urgency for High Risk populations Advocacy
High Risk	High probability; "more likely than not"		Occurrence of, or strongly predicted major *Hazard* event stressing livelihoods; with high *Vulnerability* and low *Capacity* ***Process Indicators:*** large and compounding negative changes	

Map 1: Somalia Situation Analysis, Post Deyr 2005/06 Projection, January 2006 through June 2006



2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Need for a Food Security Phase Classification System

Based on a global review of needs assessment practice, the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) HPG Report "According to Need? - Needs assessment and decision-making in the humanitarian sector" (Darcy and Hofmann, 2003), identifies a critical gap in food security and needs assessment practice. While there is a broadly accepted definition of food security[1], there is a lack of clarity and common definitions for classifying various situations in terms of varying severity and implications for action. This lack of clarity is operationally problematic because the way in which a situation is classified determines not only the form of response, but the source of funding and its scale, the planning timeframe and the organizational roles of different stakeholders. There is an urgent practical and operational need for a broadly accepted food security classification system.

This "gap" and resulting lack of clarity is well recognized by analysts, donors, governments, implementing agencies, academics and the media. Projects such as the EC/WFP Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessment Capacity (SENAC) project, the EC/FAO Programme for Linking Information to Action, and the FAO/Netherlands Partnership Programme (FNPP) are all focused on improving food security assessment practices in order to elicit more effective response. NGO's, including Save the Children, Oxfam, CARE, World Vision and others are also investing in improving assessment practices. Academic institutions such as Institute of Development Studies (IDS) in Sussex, Tufts University, Tulane University, and ODI also guide and contribute to this dialogue.

There are a number of ongoing initiatives to improve and develop global food security classifications systems. Inter-agency and global initiatives include the Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions SMART (SMART 2006), the DFID sponsored Benchmarking effort (DFID 2005), and the WHO led Humanitarian Tracking System. Coming to an agreement on a means of classifying humanitarian situations is also identified as a priority activity in the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee as part of the ongoing humanitarian reform efforts (OCHA 2006). In practice, the food security and humanitarian communities are working towards a consensus on classifying food security situations with increasing attention to humanitarian principles and accountability.

Lessons learned from the last decade of food security crisis assessment and response highlight several key challenges that can help inform the development of a global food security classification system. In summary, a classification system needs to enable:

- ***Technical Consensus***: Food security crises always involve multiple stakeholders, and response is much more effective (whether for leveraging resources or coordination) if there is technical consensus on the situation analysis. Without common terminology and criteria, such consensus is very difficult to build, and can be undermined by non-technical agendas.

- ***Comparability Over Space***: In order to ensure the best use of limited resources, decision makers need to know how the severity of crisis situations compares from one place to another. Only when such a comparison can be made, using commonly adopted criteria, can humanitarian assistance be best directed to the people most in need.

- ***Comparability over Time***: Decision makers need to be able to understand the evolution of a crisis as it worsens or improves in order to increase, decrease, or change the strategic focus of the response as well as identify exit criteria.

- ***Transparency through Evidence-Based Analysis***: Analysts should be fully transparent in how conclusions are made, and decision makers should demand evidence to support findings. Without reference criteria the requirements for an adequate evidence base remain ambiguous.

- ***Accountability****:* Without consensual standards in reference characteristics, "analytical" accountability is not possible. There is a strong need for reference characteristics to avoid errors of commission (i.e., exaggerating a crisis which can lead to over-response) or errors of omission (i.e., "missing" or understating a crisis which can lead to lack of response). The former can waste resources and undermine livelihoods, while the latter can lead to loss of human lives and chronic poverty. With reference criteria and evidence standards, it is possible to enforce accountability from those responsible for analysis through peer review and public challenges to questionable findings.

Footnotes:

[1] "Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food for a healthy and active life", World Food Summit Plan of Action, 1996. The four pillars of food security analysis include: access, availability, utilization, and stability.

- ***Effective Early Warning***: Decision makers need to know the potential severity, likelihood and timing of a pending crisis. Without a common technical understanding for describing crises, early warning messages can be ambiguous and go unheeded.

- ***More Strategic Response***: Depending on the specific severity level of a given food security or humanitarian situation, there is a need for fundamentally different emphases in strategic response. Furthermore, the menu of options for mitigating a crisis needs to be fully evaluated, rather than resorting to a "supply-side" driven response.

2.2 Review of Existing Food Security Classifications Systems

Classification systems are not new, as means of classifying famines date back to the 1880's Indian Famine Codes (Brennan 1984, Howe and Devereux 2004). In practice, classification of some type is necessary in order to make sense of situation analyses and communicate this to decision makers. Currently there are numerous ways in which food security situations are defined and classified. Agencies such as Oxfam, WFP, FAO GIEWS, MSF, FEWS NET, and many others have developed different systems for classifying food security crisis situations. Depending on the country, institutions involved, and persons doing the analysis, classification systems differ. Current operational systems can be roughly divided into four broad types: "relative terms", "guiding definitions", "specific aspect" and "referenced threshold" classifications. A comprehensive review of the different systems is not presented here. Instead, a brief review that identifies aspects of selected systems and illustrates their differences and weaknesses is given (see and Darcy and Hoffman 2003 for a comprehensive comparative review).

Classification Systems Based on "Specific Aspects"

Specific aspect classification systems are designed to distinguish meaningful categories of specific variables such as malnutrition, conflict, and coping strategies. One example is the MSF nutrition guidelines (2000), where stages of food insecurity are referenced against stages of coping strategies including *Insurance Strategies*, *Crisis Strategies*, and *Distress Strategies*. Other examples of a specific classification system are the conflict typologies developed by Samarasinghe, et al. (1999) for USAID and the Swiss Peace FAST conflict early warning system developed by Krummenacher et al (2001).

These systems are effective for providing a more detailed and nuanced understanding of particular variables. Bringing these specific-aspect classification systems together in an integrated system reveals complex inter-relationships between variables and allows for a more comprehensive and robust analysis.

Classification Systems Based on "Relative Terms"

The most often used classification system utilizes adjective variations on terms such as "vulnerable", "food insecure", "hotspot", etc. to describe or classify different food insecurity situations. While striving to capture the overall essence of a crisis, this type of classification system is based on relative terms whose meaning is open to interpretation (even if the analysts themselves are clear about their meanings). This classification approach can have internal integrity when used within a particular country or context, enabling people or geographic areas to be identified and prioritized. Thus, they can be effective in drawing attention to priority areas within a given system, and imply a degree of severity.

These "relative terms" are generally not accompanied, however, by uniform reference characteristics - thus opening their use to bias and leading to ambiguous or subjective categorizations. As such, systems based on relative terms typically do not enable technical consensus and are not comparable over space and time. The ambiguity inherent in relative terms and the lack of clear reference characteristics often means that transparency and accountability are not achieved.

Classification Systems Based on "Guiding Definitions"

Other classification systems utilize consistent "guiding definitions" to arrive at a classification. An example of guiding definitions are the current FEWS NET alert levels (FEWSNET, 2005), whereby geographic areas and countries are divided into levels of Emergency, Warning, Watch, Concern, or No Alert[3]. Associated with each of these terms is a definition that guides its consistent usage (Appendix E). Furthermore, the choice of classification terms is meant to evoke different actions, and the guiding definition has broad implications for decision making.

Another example of a system using guiding definitions is the Kenya Arid Lands Resource Management Project (AL-RMP), where stages of Normal, Alert, Alarm, and Emergency are associated with guiding definitions (Appendix E). Additional examples of systems using guiding definitions are Oxfam's severity typology that uses Type 1, Type 2,

Footnotes:

[3] FEWS NET is currently developing a revised version of this alert system..

and Type 3, which describes varying levels of food and nutrition crisis, and FAO's Global Information Early Warning System (GIEWS) which categorizes countries based on shortfalls of food supply and access.

While intended to provide guidance on their usage, the "guiding definitions" are generally descriptive and open to interpretation, limiting the comparability over space and time. For example, some places may be classified as an "emergency" but are actually less severe than a different place being analyzed by different analysts, and vice-versa. The lack of clear reference characteristics associated with the guiding definitions limits the degree of comparability of analysis over space and time and does not explicitly set targets for evidence-based analysis.

Classification Systems Based on "Referenced Thresholds"

"Referenced Threshold" classification systems identify measurable indicators of food insecurity and set cut-off limits for determining various stages. Typically, these "measurable" indicators are outcome oriented and based on anthropometry, including malnutrition and mortality. Examples of this approach are the Famine Magnitude Scale developed by Howe and Devereux (2004) and the Food Insecurity Classification developed by Darcy and Hoffman (2003).

The Famine Magnitude Scale of Howe and Devereux includes six levels of famine intensity including: Food Security Conditions, Food Insecurity Conditions, Food Crisis Conditions, Famine Conditions, Severe Famine Conditions, and Extreme Famine Conditions. Each level is referenced against specific malnutrition and mortality thresholds as well as general descriptors of livelihoods. This scale of intensity is further complimented with a magnitude scale that identifies various categories of magnitude according to mortality figures resulting from a crisis (Appendix F).

Darcy and Hoffman's classification of food insecurity includes four levels: Chronic Food Insecurity, Acute Food Crisis, Long-term Food Crisis, and Famine. Each of these levels is associated with specific malnutrition and mortality rates, as well as general food security indicators. This classification also associates each level with general responses.

Both of these initiatives explicitly strive to make the classification comparable over space and time by referencing the classification to internationally accepted, quantifiable criteria. The IPC builds on this approach of linking categories to measurable indicators and integrates a more comprehensive set of outcomes on lives and livelihoods. It also links these to response, early warning, analysis procedures, mapping conventions and population table conventions.

3. OVERVIEW OF THE IPC AND "SITUATION ANALYSIS"

Revision
The name of the IPC has been revised to omit the term "humanitarian". See Appendix H for explanation.

To address the key challenges noted previously the FSAU has developed the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) which builds on the strengths of the main types of classification systems and makes some unique contributions.

The IPC enables a composite analytical statement on food security situations, drawing together multiple indicators of human welfare and livelihoods to guide consistent and meaningful analysis. Use of the IPC builds upon, but is a separate process from, specific methodologies used to collect and analyze specific data sets. In this way, the IPC enables **meta-analysis** of existing data and information from a variety of sources to summarize **Situation Analysis**.
The IPC helps meet the goals of the Humanitarian Charter (Sphere 2004), as well as numerous international conventions asserting human rights such as the World Food Summit Plan of Action (FAO 1996). The IPC is designed around broad conceptual frameworks for food security analysis including the four pillars of access, availability, utilization, and stability; the UNICEF model of nutrition analysis (UNICEF 1996); and Sen's entitlement analysis (1981). Analytically, the IPC draws from a broad interpretation of a livelihoods approach (FSAU 2004) which includes both livelihood strategies, drawn from the Household Economy Approach (SCF-UK 2000), and livelihood assets, drawn from the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (Frankenburger 1992, DFID 2001).

3.1 Focus of the IPC

The IPC is a set of tools for guiding and communicating food security Situation Analysis. The name change described in the previous section should further clarify the focus on food security analysis as opposed to multi-sectoral humanitarian analysis. The IPC includes a Reference Table to serve as a base for classifications using common standards. Its supporting tools include Analysis Templates, Cartographic Protocols, and Population Tables. While the IPC fills a critical component in overall food security analysis and response, it is not a panacea for the multiple challenges of conducting food security analysis.

While the IPC can contribute to improving data collection, monitoring, and information systems, methodologies, capacity building of analysts, and other important prerequisites for food security analysis, it is not a tool that directly meets these challenges. Moreover, while the IPC can support improved response analysis, planning, response implementation, and project monitoring, it can only be considered a strong and consistent input into these processes.

The Situation Analysis of the IPC has strong linkages to, but is not, Response Analysis. Indeed, Response Analysis is considered a separate, but linked, step from the IPC. This distinction better ensures that IPC analysis is done in an unbiased manner - i.e., insulated as much as possible from the institutional, financial, and political pressures that can influence humanitarian interventions. Keeping Situation and Response Analysis separate better ensures that there will be a strong commonly accepted foundation upon which to plan and implement interventions.

The IPC links to Response Analysis in four main ways: (1) the Strategic Response Framework, which provides generic guidance for what to do in each Phase, (2) the Analysis Templates, which both document unique characteristics of a projected Phase and Risk of Worsening Phase as well as identify opportunities for short and long-term interventions, (3) the Cartographic Protocols, which graphically present core aspects of Situation Analysis, and (4) IPC analysis reporting, which provides more depth and detail to complement the standard outputs of IPC analysis. Note that the Analysis Templates identify "opportunities for interventions" without making actual planning recommendations - the latter requires subsequent Response Analysis that considers technical as well as operational issues. Building on the notion of creating standards, there is also scope for the future development of common protocols for Response Analysis.

3.2 Analytical Logic of the IPC

The IPC is a means for classifying various stages of food security situations based on outcomes on lives and livelihoods. Outcomes are a function of both immediate hazard events and underlying causes, as well as the specific vulnerabilities of livelihood systems (including both livelihood assets and livelihood strategies). Outcomes are referenced against internationally accepted standards, and their convergence substantiates a phase classification for any given area. Each phase is associated with a unique strategic response framework, while the outcome configuration for any given situation guides the development of the most appropriate responses within that framework. While the phase classification describes the current or imminent situation for a given area, levels of **Risk of Worsening Phase** are a predictive tool to communicate the potential for further deterioration of the situation.

3.3 Components of the IPC

The IPC integrates a suite of tools including the **Reference Table**, **Analysis Templates**, **Cartographic Protocols,** and **Population Tables**.

The IPC **Reference Table** guides analysis for both the **Phase Classification** and **Risk of Worsening Phase**. The Phase Classification classifies geographic areas and social groups into one of five **Phases** - *Generally Food Secure (1A and 1B), Moderately/ Borderline Food Insecure, Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis, Humanitarian Emergency* and *Famine/Humanitarian Catastrophe*. A set of **Key Reference Outcomes** are associated with each Phase to guide the analytical statement. These are drawn from internationally accepted standards, and represent a breadth of outcomes on human welfare and livelihoods that enable triangulation and ensure the adaptability of the IPC to a wide variety of situations.

To facilitate linking information to action, each Phase is associated with a **Strategic Response Framework** that provides strategic, yet generic, guidance for achieving three objectives:

(1) Mitigate immediate negative outcomes

(2) Support livelihoods

(3) Address underlying/structural causes

The Reference Table also includes protocols for providing the **Risk of Worsening Phase**, which are divided into three levels: (1) *Watch*, (2) *Moderate Risk*, and (3) *High Risk*. Each of these levels is associated with key information required for effective early warning: *Probability, Severity, Changes in Process Indicators, and Implications for Action* (the expected duration of the Situation Analysis is included in the cartographic protocols).

Revision
The terminology of "Early Warning Levels" has been revised to "Risk of Worsening Phase". See Appendix H for explanation.

Revision
The Phase "Generally Food Secure" has been provisionally revised to give users the option of two different levels: 1A and 1B. Based on field trials, Version 2 of the IPC Manual will most likely introduce a new Phase between the current 1 and 2. See Appendix H for an explanation and Appendix I for a sample map from Kenya.

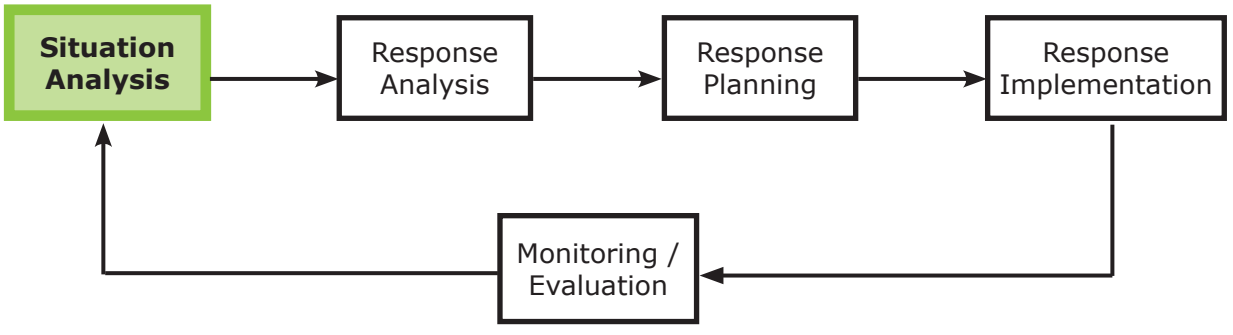
Revision
The Phase name of "Chronically Food Insecure" has been revised to "Moderately/ Borderline Food Insecure". See Appendix H for explanation.

The **Analysis Templates** are tables which organize key pieces of information in a transparent manner to substantiate a Phase Classification statement. They include additional important information to guide effective response. The **Cartographic Protocols** are a set of standardized mapping and visual communication conventions that effectively convey key information concerning situation analysis on a single map. The **Population Tables** are a means to consistently and effectively communicate population estimates by administrative boundaries, livelihood systems, and livelihood types.

3.4 Situation Analysis

The IPC enables consistent analysis and communication of **Situation Analysis** -a distinct yet often overlooked, or assumed, stage in the "analysis-response continuum". The diagram below illustrates its relationship with other broad stages, which include: Response Analysis, Response Planning, Response Implementation and Monitoring/ Evaluation.

Figure 1: "Situation Analysis" within broad stages of the "Analysis-Response Continuum"



The overall **objectives** of each stage are shown below:

- **Situation Analysis**: To identify foundational aspects of a given situation (e.g., severity, magnitude, causes, and others) which are most relevant and essential for an effective and efficient response and for which there should be broad technical consensus.
- **Response Analysis**: To identify the range of potential strategic responses that would be most effective and efficient in mitigating immediate outcomes, supporting livelihoods, and addressing underlying causes.
- **Response Planning**: To identify and put in place operational requirements and systems to enable an effective and efficient response. These include logistics, financing, institutional partnerships, advocacy, training and others.
- **Response Implementation**: To implement multiple operational modalities towards an effective and efficient response.
- **Monitoring / Evaluation:** To detect changes in Response Implementation and Situation Analysis; to determine degrees of desired impact from project output and overall impact perspectives; and inform adjustments in the response as necessary.

Each of these stages involves unique expertise, institutions, timing and outputs. Therefore, they warrant distinct protocols specifically designed to facilitate that stage and ensure minimal standards of information provision, rigour and consistency.

The IPC provides key protocols for Situation Analysis and provides the platform for subsequent Response Analysis, Response Planning, Response Implementation, and Monitoring/Evaluation. Although these latter aspects of the analysis-response continuum are not covered in this manual, they also warrant basic protocols and standards. The Needs Analysis Framework (NAF 2005) is an example of a global effort to provide protocols for multi-sectoral and inter-agency Response Analysis (IASC 2005).

Situation Analysis is the foundation for planning and implementing subsequent interventions. Optimally, there should be broad consensus from all stakeholders (UN agencies, NGOs, governments, donors, media, and affected populations) on Situation Analysis. Strong consensus on Situation Analysis leads to effective coordination, more leverage for resources, and more efficient response.

Key aspects of Situation Analysis include:

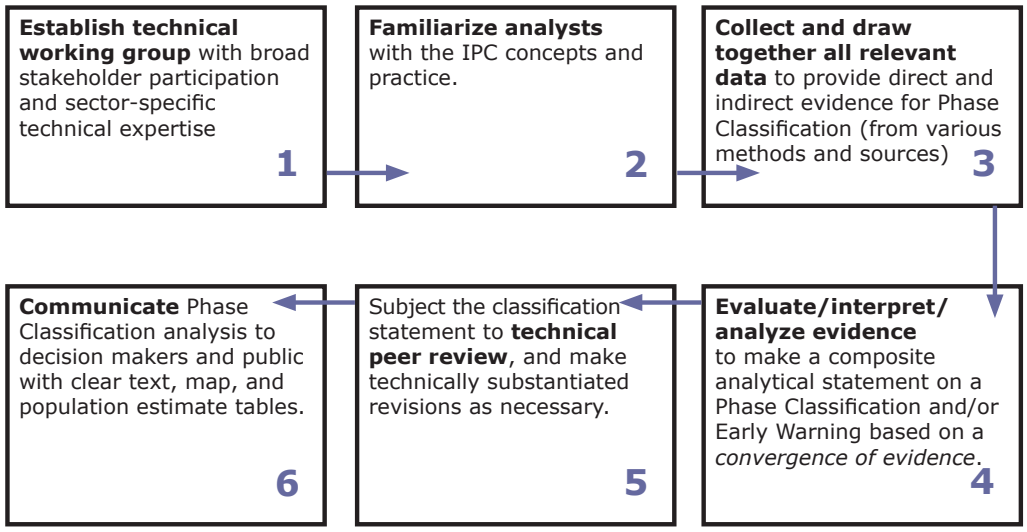
- ***Severity of the situation*** - How severe is the situation with regards to impacts on human lives and livelihoods?
- ***Geographic extent*** - What is the approximate geographic area in crisis? This should be defined according to actual spatial analysis, but can be guided by livelihood zones, administrative boundaries, agro-ecological zones, and other spatial markers.
- ***Magnitude (# people)*** - What is the estimated number of people experiencing various severity levels of crisis?
- ***Immediate causes*** - What are the direct, or proximate, causes of the crisis?
- ***Underlying causes*** - What are the underlying, distal, or structural causes of the crisis?
- ***Identification of general needs*** - What basic human needs and aspects of livelihood systems require support?
- ***Recurrence of Crisis*** - How often has a particular area experienced crisis in the past 10 years?
- ***Criteria for social targeting*** - What are the key criteria for targeting interventions to the most appropriate social groups?
- ***Projected trend*** - Is the future projected trend for the crisis area expected to improve, worsen or stay the same for the foreseeable future?
- ***Confidence level of analysis*** - What is the overall confidence level of the analysis as estimated by analysts based on a heuristic critique of the available evidence?

The IPC integrates all of these aspects of Situation Analysis in the Analysis Templates and communicates them with the Cartographic Protocols.

3.5 Steps in Using the IPC and its Adaptability to Diverse Information Systems

The general process of using the IPC involves six main steps (Figure 2). Adherence to these steps will enable evidence-based analysis, technical consensus, and linking information to action - all of which underpin the technical integrity of the IPC.

Figure 2: Main steps for using the IPC



The IPC is designed to be adaptable to a wide variety of information systems and analytical approaches. In most countries that experience chronic food insecurity or recurrent humanitarian crises, an information system of some type typically exists. This may range from a very rigorous and comprehensive system to a minimal or informal system. The IPC is designed to build on existing information systems in any given country (much like an "add-on" component), and help make the most rigorous, consistent, and meaningful use of that data and analysis. As such, the IPC can be equally applied in "data rich" and "data poor" settings.

3.6 IPC Analysis Process

The IPC is a set of tools for evidence-based meta-analysis of food security situations based on well-accepted conceptual frameworks, including: (1) the "food security pillars" of access, availability, utilization, and stability; (2) livelihoods analysis that incorporates livelihood strategies (i.e., the way people live and their behaviors) and livelihood assets (i.e. the range of resources people can build on and draw from along with policies, institutions, and processes); (3) the basic risk equation that shows that Risk is a function of Hazards and Vulnerability; and (4) the twin-track approach to interventions which addresses immediate problems while simultaneously addressing underlying causes and promoting sustainable development. Effective use of the IPC requires analysts to have a strong working knowledge of these concepts.

As previously noted, the IPC is not a methodology. Instead, it draws together multiple methods and data sources into an overarching meta-analysis of the situation. The classification is based on the documentation of any and all available direct and indirect evidence of the IPC reference outcomes, followed by determining appropriate Phase and Risk Levels based on convergence of evidence. This poses two main challenges to the analysts: (1) the need to reconcile potentially contradictory evidence, and (2) in the absence of any direct measures (which require interpretation in their own right), the need to interpret the likely related outcome of process and/or proxy indicators.

The first challenge requires analysts to consider all the evidence available, including their indications, long-term trends, reliability, and likely importance in a given situation. Given the massive complexity of trying to operationally model these dynamics, the IPC uses the approach of working with technical peers to evaluate the available evidence and make an evidence and consensus-based expert judgment on what Phase and Risk Level best describes a food security situation.

In technical terms, this type of decision making process is akin to a Delphic Process whereby holistic and iterative examination of the available evidence among diverse technical peers informs the ultimate decision[1]. That said, not all IPC conclusions are equally supported by a solid evidence base (due to data limitations, time, and other factors),

[1] Note that in a pure Delphic process, experts are kept anonymous from each other to avoid inter-personal biases in the analysis.

and the IPC allows this variation in rigor to be communicated through the Confidence Levels of the analysis which show low, medium, and high confidence for each IPC statement.

The second challenge - interpreting indirect evidence such as process or proxy indicators - requires analysts to put into practice the livelihoods approach and the risk, hazard, vulnerability equation. Proxy or process indicators by definition do not directly measure an outcome, and need to be interpreted according to their livelihood and historical context. The IPC Reference Table provides a common reference for outcomes that they should be compared to, and it is up to the analysts to make the appropriate association between specific indirect evidence and the IPC reference outcomes.

The IPC does not provide thresholds for interpreting indirect evidence (e.g., market prices, crop production, rainfall, etc.) because these will entirely be dependent on local environmental and livelihood contexts, and are thus not comparable from place to place. That said, it would be possible to develop reference thresholds for indirect evidence for specific livelihood zones in a given country, and to use those thresholds to internally guide a phase classification for that area. Having baseline information of the livelihood system and benchmark values of key indicators is very useful for interpreting indirect evidence.

3.7 Data Adequacy and Reliability

While the ideal is to have adequate and reliable data to inform IPC analysis, the practical reality is that data is not fully available and reliable. The IPC approach is to recognize that with or without optimal data, decisions are made and would be better informed through the systematic analysis of that data which does exist. Initial attempts at documenting data can be further improved upon as the body of evidence grows. Thus, IPC analysis can be done with scanty or very comprehensive data, and that difference should be clearly indicated through the Confidence Levels of the analysis. The confidence level of the analysis is informed through overall evaluation of a completed Analysis Template with consideration for the comprehensiveness of the evidence, its strength in indicating a reference outcome, and its reliability (note that each piece of evidence is assigned a reliability score). Future IPC revisions will aim towards making this process more quantifiable and systematic, but for now the overall confidence level is an assessment made by technical consensus among analysts.

3.8 When and How Often to Do IPC Analysis

IPC analysis can be initiated at any time, but subsequently should be updated whenever evidence indicates the food security situation has changed or may change in the future. Thus, the IPC is a "living analysis" that is constantly and dynamically updated as the food security situation changes or new potential hazard/shock data becomes evident. The historical record of previous IPC Analysis Templates and Cartographic maps provides an invaluable resource towards informing IPC analysis and understanding the evolution of food security over time.

At a minimum, the IPC should be updated whenever new evidence indicates that the food security situation has or may change in the future. If the IPC analysis is conducted according to seasons, the situation can change in between analysis due to new hazard events or further deterioration, and the IPC statement should be updated accordingly.

3.9 Time Horizon for IPC Analysis

The IPC Phase Classification is a projection of the most likely Phase for a given area within the stated time period of the analysis. It is up to analysts to determine an appropriate time horizon for the projection, and this should be influenced primarily by the needs of decision makers. Thus, the analysis can project the most likely situation up until the next known event that will most likely change the food security situation (e.g. a rainy season), or it can project beyond that event.

IPC analysis can be conducted for numerous different time periods, including short term projections, longer term projections, and even retrospectively. Analysts should clearly define the time period their analysis covers. In some situations distinct IPC analyses can be conducted for multiple consecutive periods. For example, an IPC analysis could be undertaken projecting anticipated food security conditions for the next 6 months, and a separate complementary analysis for the 3 months following that period could be undertaken to provide longer range early warning.

3.10 Early Warning

In the most basic sense, early warning occurs anytime analysis projects into the future. It is a function of the amount of time between the date the analysis is conducted and the end date of the projection. The IPC Phase classification itself, in as much as it is projecting into the future, is an early warning statement. The "Risk of Worsening Phase" is also an early warning statement that the situation could further deteriorate in the stated time period of the projection.

3.11 Inclusion of "Imminent" in the Phase Classification

The Phase Classification is referenced against the outcome indicators in the IPC Reference Table and is based on the **currently** evident presence of those indicators and/or their **imminent** presence within the time period of the analysis. The inclusion of imminent in the projection is critical to ensuring that appropriate actions are taken in a timely manner. By including imminent in a Phase classification, analysts are communicating that if the outcomes are not yet present they are likely to be so in the time period specified (meaning very high probability with very high confidence), and thus the area should be treated as being in that Phase with regards to programming and planning urgency.

3.12 Spatial Scale of Analysis

IPC analysis can be conducted at any scale - from country-wide to individual villages - depending on the geographic dimensions of a crisis, the needs of decision makers, and the practicalities of conducting analysis. Typically, however, IPC analysis is conducted at a meso-scale of analysis that is informed by the geographic features of a hazard event and the underlying bio-social conditions (e.g., agro-ecological zones, livelihood zones, crop production zones, topography, etc.).

3.13 Institutional Ownership and Processes

Key to the IPC's technical integrity is the process in which it is conducted, which requires diverse technical experts from a range of stakeholder agencies to reach technical consensus based on a convergence of evidence. Consistent with the Rights Based approach, whereby national governments have first and foremost responsibility for ensuring food security, the IPC emphasizes a role for national governments to lead IPC analysis, with the support of international technical experts as necessary. This ensures understanding and ownership of the IPC results.
In developing and implementing the IPC, the Global IPC Partner agencies have agreed to adhere to a set of guiding/working principles for operating the IPC within a country. The guiding principles elaborate on how the IPC could be applied outside of the original development context in Somalia, particularly taking into account the imperatives of national ownership and underlying processes. These are listed below:

Guiding principles for IPC implementation with a Common interagency Approach

1. The implementation of the IPC should be a consensual process facilitated by a broad interagency working group, including government and key constituencies.
2. All efforts should be made to engage and build government capacity and promote ownership and strengthen the institutional process.
3. Collaborating IPC agencies should strive to maintain internationally agreed-upon standards for IPC analysis, even during the development stage, so as not to lose the potential for regional and global comparison of results.
4. The timing of analysis should be linked to events/critical seasons that affect food security situations. The entry point might be a multi-agency planning event.
5. There should be commitment by members of inter-agency working group to multi-year process.
6. The implementation of IPC processes should be demand driven by government where possible.
7. The IPC can be started regardless of data availability. The initial situation analysis will be useful and improved as the process proceeds and will highlight key information gaps to be filled.
8. Any data used should contain confidence rankings.
9. The IPC process should comprise a mechanism for building an institutional commitment from government.
10. To promote transparency, the results of IPC analysis should be made available to the public in a timely manner.
11. IPC analysis should be done with technical neutrality by having broad membership in the interagency group and through a transparent process of consensus building and ensuring that group members participate according to their technical capacity.
12. IPC results should be subject to an external peer review process to check quality and maintain standards.
13. The IPC should be developed as an iterative learning process, in which collaborating agencies commit to document practice and lessons learned.
14. The leadership of IPC processes in countries should be decided by the interagency group in-country based on both comparative advantages and responsibilities (e.g. Government leadership).
15. The IPC should be used to engage/advocate with donors to make decisions according to need.

3.14 Core Technical Elements of IPC Analysis

Given the multiple components and level of detailed guidance within the IPC, it is often asked, "What makes an IPC analysis?" Indeed, IPC analysis can be thought of at various levels, ranging from the very core or essential elements that, if not done, mean that it is not IPC analysis; to the optimal elements which will require more effort. The table below distinguishes three levels of IPC usage and provides associated criteria.

Level of IPC Usage	Minimal Criteria
Level 1 (essential/core elements)	• Use IPC Phases and terminology when describing the severity of a food security situation • Associate Phases with IPC reference outcomes in the Reference Table • Document evidence in support of a Phase Classification using Part 1 of the IPC Analysis Templates and make available for public scrutiny • Conduct analysis with technical working group and subject analysis to technical peer review • Production of an IPC Map that minimally illustrates the results using the protocols of the main key
Level 2 (preferred elements)	• Identify other elements of Situation Analysis (in addition to severity) as specified in the Cartographic Protocols • Produce a map of the results using the IPC Cartographic Protocols in both the main and sub-key • Communicate the estimated population using IPC Population Tables
Level 3 (optimal elements)	• Complete IPC Analysis Templates Parts 2 and 3 in full for more detailed and comprehensive analysis of the situation and to better inform implications for action

3.15 Unique Contributions of the IPC

The IPC incorporates many elements of the classification systems described previously, and makes new contributions including:

- Enabling the strategic goal of saving livelihoods by including the phase of Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis, and including the analysis of livelihood assets in the Key Reference Outcomes, Strategic Response Framework and Analysis Templates.
- Integrating a number of different reference outcomes (in addition to nutrition indicators) to allow for greater adaptability to different situations, practicality given data limitations, and increased opportunities for triangulation.
- The explicit inclusion of additional key aspects of Situation Analysis such as causes, magnitude, projected trends, social group identification, underlying conditions, and confidence level of analysis.
- Putting in practice the concept of convergence of evidence to support a phase classification statement. This is practical due to the highly complex and dynamic nature of classifying food security situations as well as widely varying data availability.
- The inclusion of a comprehensive, yet generic and widely-applicable Strategic Response Framework associated with each phase.
- The inclusion of multi-sectoral aspects of humanitarian issues as both Key Reference Outcomes and in the Strategic Response Framework.
- Providing protocols for Early Warning and linking the various risk levels to the Phase classification system.
- Enabling increased rigour and transparency by supporting the classification with an evidence based approach using standardized Analysis Templates.
- The development of Cartographic Protocols to enable standardized and clear communication of complex analysis.
- The development of standard Population Tables that identify the number of people in crisis by administrative boundaries and livelihood systems.