

4. DEFINING ANALYTICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL AGENDAS

IN THIS CHAPTER WE COVER:

- An analytical agenda.
- A methodological agenda, both part of implementing monitoring of the right to adequate food.

These agendas are derived from the various meanings of rights based monitoring, as explained in chapter 2.

The various meanings of rights-focused monitoring introduce additional analytical and methodological dimensions into conventional monitoring.¹⁵ A first element that right focused monitoring introduces relates to the way that outcomes and impacts of policy measures and programmes are analysed. The human rights concern is with the distributional effects and the question of who benefits and who does not. Equity requires that the neediest are targeted with the highest priority. This in turn means that the neediest are identified, are located and that the reasons why they are poor, food insecure and/or vulnerable are clearly understood.

The universal and permanent fulfilment of the right to adequate food is a long-term goal that needs to be achieved in stages. By establishing benchmarks and short-term goals, it is possible to introduce remedial actions when the trend towards the long-term goal is off. The monitoring question then becomes whether a certain benchmark has been achieved.

Rights-focused monitoring also involves assessment over time to see whether the implementation processes of pro-right-to-food measures and the provision of public services conform to human rights principles. This was called process monitoring in chapter 2, where it was indicated what needs to be monitored from a human rights perspective. To capture human rights dimensions of implementation processes requires the development of rights-focused indicators.

Development and testing of rights-focused indicators should thus become part of a methodological agenda. To ensure that the monitoring process itself is rights-

¹⁵ *The Right to Food Guidelines* also introduce analytical and methodological agendas. See, for example, *Guidelines* 3.2, 13.2 and 17.2 – 17.4.

based, i.e. participatory, inclusive and empowering creates a need to develop and adapt methodologies for use by different groups, including rights holder groups with little technical knowledge or experience.

Lastly, the Right to Food Guidelines themselves also introduce an analytical and methodological agenda. For example, Guideline 3.2 (assessment of national legislation, policy and administrative measures, and programmes), Guideline 13.2 (disaggregated analysis of food insecurity, vulnerability and nutritional status of specific population groups) and Guidelines 17.2–17.4 (right to food impact assessments, development of process, impact and outcome indicators).

TOWARDS AN ANALYTICAL AGENDA

An analytical agenda

- ✓ IDENTIFICATION AND CHARACTERISATION OF FOOD INSECURE AND VULNERABLE POPULATION GROUPS
- ✓ TARGETS AND BENCHMARKS TO MONITOR ACHIEVEMENTS IN REALISING THE RIGHT TO FOOD
- ✓ POLICY AND PROGRAMME IMPACT ANALYSIS FOR THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD
- ✓ ANALYSIS OF PRO-RIGHT TO FOOD BUDGETARY ALLOCATIONS AND EXPENDITURES

Several lines of analyses can be prioritised when reviewing the relevant Right to Food Guidelines. Assessing the legal, institutional and policy environment of implementing right to adequate food measures is another line of analysis. We deal with this topic in greater detail in the next chapter. A methodological guide for this analysis is available in the form of a compendium volume in this Methodological Toolkit¹⁶. We have selected the following analysis for a brief discussion here:

- Food security and vulnerability situation analyses¹⁷ that include the identification and characterisation of food insecure and vulnerable population groups. These analyses provide baseline information that allows planners and other decision makers to establish targets and benchmarks, against which to monitor progress over time.
- Establishment of an inventory of policies, programmes and projects relevant to the realisation of the right to adequate food, and an analysis of their impacts and distributional effects, particularly on food insecure and vulnerable groups.

¹⁶ FAO. **Guide to Conducting a Right to Food Assessment**. (draft, 2008).

¹⁷ Volume II, chapter 5.

Analysis of budgetary allocations and expenditures to assess and monitor the extent to which political commitments towards the realisation of the right to adequate food are backed by public resource allocations and actual expenditures.

Who are the food insecure and vulnerable?

This is a critical question for rights-focused monitoring. In spite of poverty reduction strategies and policies in many countries, the food-insecure and vulnerable are often poorly identified and the reasons for their being food insecure are not reflected in policy and programme designs. Pro-poor policies and strategies often lack well-defined target groups mainly because the development paradigms that are used to shape such policies are not people-centred. The rights-focused monitoring approach stresses the clear identification and characterisation of food-insecure and vulnerable groups. This in turn may contribute to improved and more effective designs and better targeting of pro-poor policies and programmes.

Food security and vulnerability situation analysis, targets and benchmarks

Information is needed with which duty bearers can be held accountable for lack of progress in national goals and targets, and through which ways can be identified to improve and accelerate progress in the future. Central to this process is establishing targets and benchmarks. Often countries have adopted international targets, such as halving the number of hungry by the year 2015, reducing the number of underweight under-five children by 50 percent or halving the percent of children and women suffering from iron-deficiency anaemia. Food security, nutrition and vulnerability situation analyses can help adjust these international targets within a specific national context, so that they become national targets.

Policy and programme inventories and impacts¹⁸

Policy and programme formulation and implementation processes are part of rights-focused analysis. These should also be directly linked to appropriate corrective measures to:

- Improve policy and programme targeting of the most needy.
- Reduce or mitigate negative effects on achieving the right to adequate food.
- Strengthen positive effects.
- Provide inputs for the formulation of new policies, programmes and projects that are human rights based in their intended impact.

¹⁸ *Volume II, chapter 5.*

Analysing the implementation of political commitments through budget analysis¹⁹

Political commitments to the right to adequate food are expressed in domestic policies, laws and regulations, and should be reflected in public budgets. A high level of commitment should translate into a significant portion of public resources being allocated to, and expended on, measures that aim to further the right to adequate food. When the results of a public budget analysis are appropriately and widely disseminated, it provides information that rights holders and others can use to hold policy decision makers, planners and public budget managers accountable when budgetary allocations and expenditures, and trends therein, are not in line with the expressed political commitments. Public budget analysis can be a good monitoring tool of implementation processes. It generates process indicators that can be useful to:

- Assess the implementation of specific policy instruments.
- Detect in particular discriminatory implementation procedures.
- Analyse whether allocations and expenditures are consistent with the progressive realisation of ESCR.

TOWARDS A METHODOLOGICAL AGENDA

A methodological agenda

- DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING OF RIGHTS-BASED INDICATORS
- IDENTIFICATION OF MONITORING INFORMATION USERS AND USES, AND OF INFORMATION PROVIDERS
- DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PARTICIPATORY MONITORING APPROACHES

Three cross-cutting methodological issues related to rights-focused monitoring and rights-based monitoring have been singled out here, and these are: identification, development and testing of appropriate indicators, identification of users and uses of monitoring information, and participatory monitoring approaches.

These cross-cutting issues are directly linked to the question: How to monitor from a human rights' perspective? As before, separate chapters are included in Volume II that elaborate further on these methodological issues.

¹⁹ Volume II, chapter 4.

Identification and development of indicators for rights-focused monitoring²⁰

Many of the technical discussions related to monitoring of economic, social and cultural rights centre on indicators. It is useful to bear in mind, however, that the identification of indicators, and the development of indicator lists, are necessary, but not sufficient conditions for the implementation of an effective monitoring system. Indicator sets relevant to food insecurity, vulnerability and poverty can be found internationally and in many countries, and should be drawn upon for rights-focused monitoring when appropriate. Such indicators are often more likely to cover the impacts or outcomes of right to adequate food measures, rather than the processes by which such measures are implemented. As a first step, available indicators and their actual use should be assessed. Many outcome indicators generated by conventional food security monitoring systems are applicable for monitoring the actual progress in realising the right to adequate food. They may not all be suitable for assessing, for example – the enjoyment or denial of the right to adequate food at the household or individual level. Yet, this is precisely what rights-focused monitoring is concerned with: to understand the distributional effects of policy measures and programmes, and thus outcomes: whose right to adequate food is not being respected, protected or fulfilled?

Identifying and developing indicators to monitor the right to adequate food requires several specific inputs. These are:

- A conceptual-analytical framework that specifies what is to be monitored.
- A set of guiding human rights principles and methodological considerations that help in the selection of indicators.
- An inventory of candidate indicators that are already being produced as part of ongoing monitoring activities.
- An assessment of these indicators as to their relevance in relation to the monitoring framework and the possibility of consistently being constructed and analysed in accordance with human rights principles.
- Other normative principles or standards, internationally agreed to and relevant to what is to be monitored (some of which may already be used in ongoing monitoring activities).²¹
- A gap analysis to assess what is needed to close the gap(s) between desirable outputs and outcomes (norms) and actual outputs and outcomes.
- Additional indicators that need to be identified or constructed in order to complete the monitoring framework.

The identification and application of indicators should start from what already exists. This should normally be the approach in rights-focused monitoring: building upon what is already in place, but looked at through a ‘human rights lens’. The

²⁰ Volume II, chapter 3.

²¹ For example, the set of norms agreed to as to what constitute good breastfeeding practices (see the so-called Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative launched by WHO and UNICEF in 1990).

modification of indicators already in use or in construction, and the development of additional indicators should be done incrementally so as not to overburden ongoing monitoring activities. The identification of appropriate indicators should directly involve all stakeholders including programme managers, legislators, as well as representatives of food-insecure and vulnerable groups. The indicators should correspond to the monitoring questions of different user groups who participate in the monitoring process.

Identification of users and uses of rights-focused monitoring information²²

In the effort to contribute to “evidence-based decision making”, it is necessary to identify:

- *Who* the end users of rights-focused monitoring information are, and *for what purposes* they need rights-focused monitoring information.
- What can be done to assist the different stakeholder groups to *transform* rights-focused monitoring information into better and more effective decisions and actions?

Communication and transparency are critical between both duty bearers and rights holders. Structured and continuous dialogue between information users and providers can contribute to ensuring that rights-focused monitoring information is:

- Timely.
- Relevant to duty-bearers’ responsibilities and their information needs.
- Technically and socially accessible to targeted information users.
- Is appropriately disseminated to different users groups.

Right holders and their representatives constitute an important rights-focused monitoring information user group. The right to information is essential to claim all other rights. Access to information empowers and gives real meaning to ‘participation’. If appropriately disseminated, ways in which right holders may use rights-focused monitoring information include:

- Reaffirmation and claiming of their rights.
- Participation in public policy debates and consultations.
- Participation in social control mechanisms to hold duty bearers accountable.
- Planning self-reliant actions to address their prioritised problems.
- Political and social mobilisation efforts.
- Acquisition of greater awareness and understanding of their human rights.

A monitoring system is rights-compliant when information outputs are directed at specific right holder groups, and when the content and dissemination methods fully take into account the constraints to information access that these groups face (such as literacy constraints or language differences). An interesting example from Uganda is presented in the following box.

²² Volume II, chapter 7

BOX 4.1 - The Importance of Public Information A 'Communications Lesson' from Uganda

*In Uganda each year the national budget preparation phase ends with so called Budget Day in June. On that day, the national budget is officially launched. Two days later, a newspaper insert comes out in two prominent newspapers (**The Monitor** and **New Vision**), called **Budget Highlights**, which attempts to explain in lay terms what is contained in the year's budget. The insert is also translated in four local languages (paid for by the newspapers), and appropriately inserted on a regional basis. A second publication called **The Uganda Budget 200x/200x – A Citizen's Guide** comes out annually and targets citizens at national, local and community levels. The publication is prepared in English and eight local languages. The content and translations are tested and validated as being appropriate for community level before dissemination. The publication is distributed through local government. The Office of Information and Communication of the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in Kampala prepare both publications.*

Participatory monitoring approaches²³

The Right to Food Guidelines suggest that the monitoring process itself be participatory and inclusive, i.e. that it be rights-based. Often, both participation in the monitoring process and access to the monitoring information, are limited to small technical groups. Participation can be directly by individual rights-holders, or indirectly through organisations that represent rights-holders' interests, such as consumer protection and advocacy agencies, ombudsmen, human rights commissions and community-based organisations. The meaning of participation can range from people being asked to provide information, to being consulted on certain issues, all the way to people initiating and undertaking the monitoring process, and directly benefiting from the monitoring results linking these to follow-up actions decided on by them. In the last case, people become empowered through learning, their capacity for self-determination is respected, and their capacity to claim rights and hold government officials accountable is enhanced. Participatory monitoring (and evaluation) has been around for some time now. There is considerable documentation both on participatory monitoring techniques and tools, as well as on experiences with their application. The techniques and tools are further described in Volume II. A few examples are listed below²⁴.

Much can be learned from documented approaches and tools in designing participatory monitoring systems. If truly participatory, it may be difficult to talk

²³ Volume II, chapter 8.

²⁴ Institute of Development Studies. "Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation : Learning from Change". IDS Policy Briefing No. 12, November 1998. "Brief Notes on the Essence and Use of Participatory Service Delivery Assessment (PDSA) in Zanzibar". Zanzibar Economic Bulletin, Vol. 3, No.1, January-March 2005. Institute of Development Studies. "The Power of Participation: PRA and Policy". IDS Policy Briefing No. 7, August 1996.

of “designing a system”, as methodologies are adapted by those engaging in monitoring. It is also possible that some organisations in the country are already applying participatory monitoring methods, and if so, this should be capitalised on.

BOX 4.2 - Examples of participatory monitoring tools

Example 1: Zambia

CARE/Zambia wanted to implement community projects that responded to communities’ needs, while at the same time learning more from project implementation. Applying wellbeing ranking and other participatory methods, a baseline was established in scores of villages. Changes in the worst and best-off families were being monitored to assess project impacts and plan new initiatives. Joint analysis by villagers and project staff encouraged communities to take actions on their own.

Example 2: Zanzibar

A participatory service delivery assessment was recently piloted in Zanzibar, as part of monitoring and evaluating the Zanzibar Poverty Reduction Plan (now called Zanzibar Strategy for Growth and Poverty Reduction or Mkuza). The main instrument was the citizen’s report card that was first introduced in 1993 in India. This instrument collects user feedback information on the provision of public services. It becomes a monitoring instrument when periodically applied. In the Zanzibar pilot the focus was on public education and water delivery among poor population groups. Even the results of the pilot prompted the Department of Water to revive wells for use in the dry season, thus addressing water scarcity, and the Ministry of Education to start installing toilet facilities in schools.

Example 3: Indonesia

Maps as an instrument of participatory rural assessments have reportedly been used by farmers in Indonesia to monitor pest infestations and plan appropriate actions as part of integrated pest management programmes.