

ANNEX 2.

WHAT CAN BE LEARNED SO FAR FROM COUNTRY EXPERIENCES?

The systematic rights-based monitoring of the right to adequate food is still not yet commonly implemented in many countries. So for this reason, there is still little in the way of empirical evidence and practical experience from which to learn. Fortunately, a few lessons have been learned with respect to operationalising the right to adequate food at country level, and these can be applied to the implementation of rights-based monitoring. Five country studies, conducted in Uganda, Brazil, South Africa, India and Canada, have allowed us to distil some critical lessons and experiences. These case studies were conducted specifically to examine the degree to which the right to adequate food has been realised in each country, but were not specifically conducted to examine the food security and vulnerability monitoring systems in those countries in detail.

Five distinct over-arching ‘lessons’ were gleaned from these case experiences and specifically identify the need for:

- Awareness building.
- Identifying the food insecure and vulnerable.
- Developing rights-based monitoring indicators.
- Capacity strengthening.
- Promoting a strong role of civil society in monitoring the right to adequate food.

NEED FOR AWARENESS BUILDING

Awareness building among rights-holders and duty-bearers is essential in order to operationalise the right to adequate food at country level. People can only participate meaningfully if they have appropriate and credible information and if they are aware of the issues that affect the human right to adequate food. This conclusion also extends to the implementation of rights-based monitoring. Information providers

(duty bearers) should clearly understand how to incorporate rights-based approaches in their monitoring activities. Right holders, and duty bearers as end-users of rights-focused monitoring information, should also understand how monitoring information can be used and interpreted to help them in their own sphere of action and respective responsibility.

National human rights institutions, such as the South African Human Rights Commission and the Uganda Human Rights Commission, as well as non governmental organisation right-to-food networks, which exist in India, Brazil and Uganda, undertake awareness-building activities targeted at both right holders and duty bearers. Human rights education can be promoted through the formal school system, and through professional and in-service training, as well as at community level in poor areas. The challenge is to find ways to de-technify and de-mystify the monitoring information field and to ensure that it is user friendly for all stakeholders involved.

THE NEED TO IDENTIFY THE FOOD INSECURE AND VULNERABLE

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 food insecurity 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. Thus, with a rights-focused monitoring approach, the identification and characterisation of food-insecure and vulnerable groups needs to take centre stage, and so contribute to improved design and better targeting of pro-poor policies and programmes.

RIGHTS-FOCUSED MONITORING INDICATORS

Particular rights-related process indicators still need to be identified. Process indicators to monitor the appropriateness and effectiveness of policy, legal and administrative institutional frameworks that correspond to and reflect the realisation of the right to adequate food still need to be developed and agreed upon. Other process indicators that can be used to monitor budgetary practices, public participation, public service delivery and the implementation of food security, nutrition and poverty reduction programmes are also needed. The identification of appropriate indicators should directly involve all stakeholders including programme managers, legislators, as well as representatives of food-insecure and vulnerable groups. Again, the latter must be involved through ways in which these vulnerable groups, or their representatives, really feel that their participation is meaningful and their voices have been truly listened to, rather than for duty bearers to just check off that 'participatory approaches' have been used and these groups 'consulted'.

CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

There is a very critical need for capacity strengthening so that policies are well implemented and programmes are well targeted in line with policy priorities to address food and nutrition problems in food insecure and vulnerable groups. Within a human rights framework, capacity strengthening should target both right holders and duty bearers in both public and private sectors. This directly involves strengthening capacity for rights-based monitoring and joins both technical and human rights expertise, creating capacity at grass-roots levels for meaningful participation in subsequent monitoring processes.

ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN MONITORING THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD

Partnerships between government and civil society are increasingly recognized as important in the development and implementation of food and nutrition programmes. Community-based and non-governmental organisations, operating effectively at sub-national and community levels, are often more successful in reaching the poor than government agencies. In some countries, civil society organisations play a significant role in monitoring the realisation of the right to adequate food, particularly among the food insecure and vulnerable, such as in Brazil. These organisations also develop and apply assessment and monitoring methodologies that are more participatory and more adapted to measure underlying causes of food insecurity at local levels. Rights-based monitoring should take full advantage of government-civil society partnerships and appropriately incorporate relevant methodologies that are applied by non-governmental organisations, thereby taking advantage of, and leveraging, the monitoring-relevant information that these organisations may generate.



METHODOLOGICAL TOOLBOX ON THE RIGHT TO FOOD

The purpose of the Methodological Toolbox is to provide a practical aid for the implementation of the Right to Food Guidelines.

It contains a series of analytical, educational and normative tools that offer guidance and hands-on advice on the practical aspects of the right to food. It covers a wide range of topics such as assessment, legislation, education, budgeting, and monitoring. It emphasises the operational aspects of the right to food and contributes to strengthening in-country capacity to implement this right.

METHODOLOGICAL TOOLKIT ON RIGHT TO FOOD:

1. GUIDE ON LEGISLATING FOR THE RIGHT TO FOOD
2. METHODS TO MONITOR THE HUMAN RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD [VOLUME I - VOLUME II]
3. GUIDE ON CONDUCTING RIGHT TO FOOD ASSESSMENT
4. RIGHT TO FOOD CURRICULUM
5. GUIDE ON RIGHT TO FOOD BUDGET ANALYSIS



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