

9. SHARING MONITORING INFORMATION ON THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD

Sharing information is an important step in the monitoring process. Monitoring requires resources and is seen as an investment. The return depends on what use is made of the monitoring information; does it lead to better decisions and to actions that produce real and positive change? This is why it is important to know the monitoring information needs of decision makers, planners and others, and to provide them with timely and valid information. These were some of the issues dealt with in chapter 7. Rights-based monitoring requires that the monitoring information is accessible to all, including to rights holders. This means that the ways of sharing information may have to be very different depending on for whose use the information is produced. For example, policy decision makers can usually read and understand technical reports that provide an analysis of monitoring information and draw conclusions from that analysis, with some of the statistical results presented in the form of graphs and data tables. Many of the reports produced by international agencies are usually in this form. FAO's SOFI reports are an example. On the other hand, village leaders and community members may have to rely on verbal communications and perhaps even drawings in the sand to understand what changes have taken place. The way that results from monitoring are presented may be as important as the results themselves. Important is to ensure that those results can easily be accessed, interpreted, understood and made use of by the intended users.

In the remainder of this chapter we highlight one tool which can effectively tell a story about monitoring results from a human rights' perspective. Sharing monitoring information related to the right to adequate food with the world is an obligation of each country that is a signatory party to the ICESCR. One mechanism are periodic reports to the CESCR. How the different assessment and monitoring

methods discussed here can be applied to prepare specific parts of these reports to the ICESCR is shown.

MAPS AS PRESENTATIONAL TOOLS IN MONITORING THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD

Much has been written about the various dimensions of the communication of information. This section focuses on the potential of some aspects of modern electronic information technology, and how these can contribute both to effective monitoring itself and to meeting the need to present the monitoring results. This section and Annex 5 deal with the production of maps as an information dissemination tool. Annex 5 provides more detailed technical information, shows some relevant examples of maps and describes some available software to produce maps.

Maps have a special relevance to rights-based monitoring. They can tell an important and dynamic story in few words and have been shown to provide inputs in policy and programme decision making. The *Right to Food Guidelines* make specific mention of mapping as a technique to be applied in monitoring and reporting on progress with the realization of the right to adequate food. It is a tool that can present the locations of food insecure and vulnerable groups, and so aid in better geographic targeting of food security and poverty reduction interventions and social investments. Maps demonstrate the spatial distribution of wealth, poverty incidence, natural resources, access to infra-structure and basic services, and thus focus attention on spatial inequality. They can be constructed at national and sub-national levels, depending on data availability for disaggregated levels.

Advantages of maps as a monitoring tool

Maps have a number of advantages:

- Different stakeholders in general easily understand the messages contained in maps and have little difficulty interpreting maps.
- Time and space can be combined in a map by expressing location-specific changes over time, such as changes in the incidence of poverty in different locations (see Annex 5: map of Ecuador). This means that monitoring information can be expressed in a map within a spatial dimension, pointing to spatial equity (or lack thereof) in changes over time.
- Specific right to adequate food issues can be highlighted in maps, such as inequality in access to public services among different population groups in various locations (see Annex 5: map of Cambodia).

- Importantly, there is evidence from many countries that maps actually impact on policy making and in-country priority setting, geographic (re-) targeting of national programmes, public budgeting decisions, etc. For example, see Henninger and Snel (2002) in the list of reference sources below.
- Map layering (super-imposing different two-dimensional maps for the same geographic area) contributes to identifying and better understanding location-specific causes associated with food insecurity and vulnerability. This is referred to as spatial correlation analysis. An example of map layering can be seen in Annex 5 (see map of Mexico).

Maps can indicate where the food insecure and vulnerable are located, identify livelihood and location-specific characteristics that are spatially associated with vulnerable group characteristics. An example from Kenya is provided in the box below⁴⁹.

This example shows that:

- Generating a map involves a number of steps and some analysis.
- Gathering of part of the information needed at local level can involve a participatory process.
- Maps can assist with making local level decisions in planning social interventions and targeting investment projects.

The actual use of maps in policy formulation in a number of countries has been documented (see Henninger and Snel, 2002). FAO periodically releases “hunger maps”. The latest version maps for each country with both the prevalence of stunting among under-five children (using the height for age indicator), as well as the number of stunted children can be seen⁵⁰. Vulnerability maps at country levels are also generated to identify the locations of especially vulnerable population groups because of exposure to acute or structural risks as a tool in geographic targeting of food aid or other types of assistance.

The main constraints to the production of maps lie in the need for geo-referenced data bases. Mapping techniques allow the integration of datasets that cover different types of data (income levels, health and nutrition status, environmental conditions, community-based infrastructure, etc.) from different sources. This requires the geo-reference system of identifying locations to be identical in the different databases, otherwise a conversion procedure needs to be devised and applied. A second constraint may be the analytical and statistical capacity needed to apply GIS techniques, but adequate GIS capacity is becoming available in a number of countries.

49 *Kristjanson, et.al (2005).*

50 Use the link: www.povertymap.net to access these maps.

BOX 9.1 - Mapping of Livelihood Assets in Kajiado District, Kenya

Five classes of livelihood assets were defined and mapped: natural, social, human, physical, and financial capital. The analytical approach involved four steps: (1) data collection to translate assets into map-able variables within a GIS environment, (2) GIS analysis to convert GIS layers into household variables, (3) statistical analysis using spatial regression models, and (4) livelihood mapping. Steps 1, 2 and 4 heavily relied on the participation of multiple stakeholders. The analysis started out with 40 asset variables, which were eventually reduced to eight that most significantly explained the poverty incidence across sub-locations of the district. Local stakeholders provided feedback and specific examples that demonstrated the actual use of the maps and of the analytical results. The uses ranged from exploring marketing opportunities in areas where small-scale horticulture production takes place to geographic targeting of new water projects and of projects to rehabilitate non-functioning boreholes.

REPORTING TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY ON PROGRESS WITH THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD

An important feature of the international system for the promotion and protection of human rights is institutionalised monitoring of states' compliance with international conventions under international human rights law. The degree of such compliance by states that have ratified the respective human rights conventions is being monitored by special committees composed by independent experts appointed by the UN. For the right to adequate food, the relevant human rights convention is the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). States that have ratified this Covenant are obligated, in compliance with Article 16, to submit reports on the measures which they have adopted and the progress made in achieving the observance of the rights recognised in the Covenant. For the right to adequate food, the special committee is the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)⁵¹. States must initially report to the CESCR within two years of ratifying the Covenant and thereafter every five years on progress with the implementation of the Covenant. The Committee meets twice a year in Geneva to examine, discuss and comment on reports submitted (usually five-six reports per session). The role of civil society is critical, and non-governmental organisations that are actively working in fields related to economic, social and cultural rights, are invited to participate in the reporting process by submitting oral and/or written reports.

To assist the countries with the preparation of reports to the CESCR, a set of general guidelines were drawn up in 1991, and subsequently revised and re-issued in 2004. There are no differences between the 1991 and 2004 versions with

⁵¹ The CESCR is a body of independent experts established in 1985 to carry out the monitoring functions assigned to the United Nations Economic and Social Council in Part IV of the Covenant.

respect to the general part of country characteristics, or with respect to Article 11 and the right to adequate food. The CESCR reporting guidelines have been reproduced in Annex 6, where we have indicated how monitoring results generated by the various methods in this volume can contribute to the preparation of the monitoring reports.

Reference to the CESCR reporting guidelines should contribute to defining the monitoring information to be gathered when applying some of the assessment and analysis methods described here, and also how to improve this information on a continuing basis, so that answers can be provided to critical questions related to the realization of the right to adequate food.

Important sources of information for the general section of a country report will be the various assessments and analyses suggested for a relevant and effective monitoring process, some of which may already exist, but may need to be updated. The food and nutrition situation analysis, undertaken prior to or as part of food security and nutrition programme monitoring, can also contain a great deal of relevant information. The vulnerability analysis and risk analysis can contribute information about trends in demographic and socio-economic factors. An effective way to demonstrate locational differences in these may be the production of maps. Graphs are useful to demonstrate trends, provided a sufficient number of data points are available. The module requested on recourse and remedies may be drawn from an overall assessment of the legal framework for human rights protection. Additional information may be generated through a role analysis of duty bearers with respect to human rights protection. Whether efforts are under way to mainstream human rights, educate duty bearers and rights holders, and how relevant information is disseminated, may be known through an analysis of uses of monitoring information.

Preparation of the periodic reports will result in making use of existing information or generating new information in the process, hence the value of the international reporting requirements for the monitoring process in the country itself. Countries and civil society groups may in the process identify important information needs with reference to the Right to Food Guidelines that could be added to the information requested by the CESCR reporting guidelines.

REFERENCES SOURCES:

- ❖ Kristjanson, P., Radeny, M., Baltenweck, I., Ogutu, J., deWolff, T., Notenbaert, A., Ouna, T., Arunga, M., Omolo, A & Oduor, V. (2005) *Better Understanding Livelihood Strategies and Poverty through the Mapping of Livelihood Assets: A Pilot Study in Kenya*. Nairobi, International Livestock Research Institute - FIVIMS.
- ❖ Henninger, N. & Snel, M. (2002) *Where are the Poor? Experiences with the Development and Use of Poverty Maps*. Washington DC, World Resources Institute.
- ❖ UN(1991) Revised General Guidelines regarding the Form and Contents of Reports to be Submitted by States Parties under Articles 16 and 17 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (E/C.12/1991/1), 17 June 1991 [http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(Symbol\)/E.C.12.1991.1.En?Opendocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/E.C.12.1991.1.En?Opendocument)
- ❖ UN (2004) Compilation of Guidelines on the Form and Content of Reports to be Submitted by States Parties to the International Human Rights Treaties. (HRI/GEN/2/Rev.2), Chapter I paras.1-4; Chapter II para 43, New York, 7 May 2004 <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/treaty/index.htm>