



FAO SSA Training

Handout 1 - Session 4 (SSCF)

Conceptual framework – Exercise in small groups

Task S4-A

In the following 4 scenarios try to identify if insecurity is caused by one (or several) of the different components of the conceptual framework:

- **Availability,**
- **Access,**
- **Seed quality,**
- **Varietal sustainability,**
- **Resilience.**

Discuss in your group and reach shared conclusions for each one of the 4 scenarios. Work directly in the flipcharts as you, need to share your conclusions in plenary.

- Group Discussion: You have 30 minutes to discuss all four scenarios and reach conclusions
- Presentation: Group 1 will give a clear, 4-minute, visual presentation on Scenario 1 only; others will add comments. Group 2 will present for 4 minutes on Scenario 2; Group 3 on Scenario 3, and Group 4 on Scenario 4.

At the end of the handout you have the list of indicators for each of the parameters of the SSCF. The indicators may help you in your analysis

Scenarios

1. Rains arrived late in the Equatoria region. Farmers who planted maize early in the season had to replant the crops. Because of government restrictions on seed importation and the dwindling local seed supply, the price of maize seed on the local markets rose above normal. Many farm households could not afford their 'normal' vegetable seeds. Farmers also complained about high levels of seed/grain pest infestation in the market.
2. The influx of refugees into the Ironstone plateau agro-ecological zones of the country led to increased demand for beans and green grams. For the first time, seed suppliers ran out of seed stocks just one month before the planting season. However, the government has allowed seed traders to move seed from Nile and Sobat livelihood zone to support both the refugees and host community in the affected area.
3. Civil unrest in the East over the past five years led to humanitarian distributions of assorted crop seeds to affected households. Many seed stockists fled; some lost all or part of their seed stock. Many local markets became inaccessible due to insecurity. In the up-coming season, humanitarian actors plan to buy certified seed varieties from another region and distribute them to the most vulnerable households of the crisis affected population. However, some households who received maize and beans varieties two years ago complained of poor performance of these varieties though the considered germination was good.
4. Even when identified communities have no problem of seed availability and access, many of the locally preferred crops and seed varieties have disappeared over the last three years due to recurrent drought, flood, and invasion by storage pest. Although some new short-term drought-tolerant varieties are found in small quantities with agro-input dealers (due to limited resources by the formal seed sector for large seed multiplication schemes), many farmers are reluctant to buy these unknown varieties. Hit by the collapse of the cotton price - which represented the main source of income in the region - many households have reduced their share of food crop seeds bought from input dealers or seed suppliers. They are depending now on the social network and other informal seed sources; even though they are aware that this implies a reduction of yield later on.

Format for Group Discussion

1. Identify the crisis
2. What are the seed insecurity issues in relation to the SSCF
3. Characterize the seed insecurity (acute or chronic mild or severe)

Scenario	Crisis	Seed insecurity elements based of SSCF	Characteristic of seed insecurity
1			
2			
3			
4			

INDICATORS SSCF PARAMETERS

Availability indicators

- **Sufficient seed of the desired crops and varieties available** (seed for the vulnerable household from own saved seed (OSS) or social network seed (SNS) at planting time in comparison with situation before the disaster.
- **Quantity of grain of desired crops available in households and in local markets at planting time** which farmers could use as seed
- **Quantity of seed available with seed companies and local seed stockists at planting time**
- **Changes in seed availability through the different channels after the disaster** i.e. OSS, SNS, LMS, FSS
- **Previous and current programmes by NGOs and or government to provide seed (SAS)**
- **Distance to seed sources:** Are local markets, seed stockist, seed companies etc. within a reasonable distance (measured in walking hours if this is the only option for the most vulnerable cultivating families)?
- **Is the seed available at planting time?** Delays in providing seed is a serious problem.
- **Are the desired crop varieties produced by FSS producers and available at SAS?**

Access indicators

- Capacity of farmers to acquire the quantity of seed necessary to maintain their crop mix similar to the situation before the disaster through barter from SNS, purchase from LMS, purchase from seed companies FSS, access to SAS.
- Level of community cohesion and fairness of power structures as a result of the disaster (e.g. debts, obligations, shame can inhibit the household be able to source SNS)
- Household has other sources of income to purchase seed such as (farm labour, small enterprise, micro credit
- Severity of impact of the disaster on economic resources of the household and their ability to purchase seed
- % change in seed and/or grain prices compared with non-emergency period in the same period of the year in Local markets

Varietal Suitability Indicators

- Farmer satisfaction with the crop and varieties they are currently growing?
- Farmer has access to true and useful information about varietal suitability
- Problems related to current varieties (duration, pest, disease, yield)
- Farmer satisfaction with varieties from other sources i.e. LMS, SAS, and FSS.
- New varieties that may suit their needs but not available?
- Will there be a reliable source of new varieties?
- Opportunities for introducing crops or varieties that could improve HH nutrition/diversification of diet
- Information available to farmers on current crop varieties and crop diversity
- Gaps in production practices used by farmers

Yield levels as compared to national averages

Low input / high input varieties or agriculture systems

Seed quality indicators

1. Farmer satisfaction with quality of OSS, SNS, LMS, SAS and if not what are the problems?
2. Mean % area planted that could have seed quality related problems (pest, disease, poor establishment or stands)
3. Mean % germination (of samples provided by farmers)
4. Mean % physical purity (of samples provided by farmers)
5. Mean % varietal purity (when a pure variety has specific advantages e.g. for commercial use)

Resilience Indicators

- Diversity

Livelihood diversity i.e. other sources of income

Suitability of current preferred varieties for HHs to changing agro-ecological conditions

Number of seed sources used by the HHs

Number of crops and varieties of those crops grown by the HH?

Dietary/Nutritional diversity indicator? I.e. animals and crops?

- Governance

Seed Policy that recognises seed security and the informal sector

Capacity of informal seed system to provide sufficient seed after emergencies

- Equity

Equitable decision-making powers (agency), partly through access to information, technologies, training and seed for the poor and for women

- Productivity & Sustainability

Low multiplication rate and trending lower

Low yields and trending lower.

Weaknesses in the informal seed systems

- Community resilience, links to markets
- Linked to vulnerability index
- Links to formal seed systems and ways to improve

Task S4-B

Comment of the clarity of the indicators above and suggest where possible

Indicators	# Clear	Not clear	Suggestions
Availability			
Access			
Quality			
Varietal suitability			
Resilience			