Joint Thematic Evaluation of FAO and WFP

Support to Information Systems for Food Security

Final Report

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We benefited from continuous support from FAO and WFP staff at Headquarters and in country and regional offices in Africa and Asia. In addition to providing us with their own knowledge, they facilitated the organization of our often very tight schedules making sure that we met and discussed with key food security information system stakeholders. We recognize that the Evaluation was another add-on to already heavily charged working programmes and we are impressed by the hospitality and support we counted on everywhere.

Finally, we would like to thank FAO and WFP for giving us this unique opportunity to take a strategic and global look at information systems for food security and be part of the first-ever joint FAO / WFP evaluation.

Evaluation Management

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Executive Summary

Background

Context

1. After a decade-long series of droughts and famines, the 1974 World Food Conference concluded that the existing monitoring and information systems were inadequate. In response new Information Systems for Food Security (ISFS) were developed by different agencies, including FAO's Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS). After repeated needs for emergency food aid during the 80s and 90s the 1996 World Food Summit encouraged FAO to lead a United Nations (UN) inter-agency process to develop more effective information systems to track food insecurity and vulnerability. As a follow-up, the initiative for Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems (FIVIMS) was established. Thirteen years later food insecurity remains a major concern, subject to increasingly complex threats such as climate change, accelerated urbanisation, pandemics and global food price volatility. All this has created unprecedented challenges for but continued need for stronger ISFSs.

2. While specific projects and programmes have been assessed over the years, the area of information systems for food security as a major strategic theme has not been evaluated before. Thus, in the course of 2008, at the request of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Programme Committee and with the agreement of the World Food Programme (WFP) Executive Board, the two organizations launched an independent Joint Evaluation of FAO and WFP Support to ISFS.

The Evaluation

3. The objective of the Evaluation is to measure the extent to which FAO and WFP have separately and jointly contributed to improved and more effective ISFSs, and how far these information systems have, in turn, contributed to improved decision-making. The Evaluation focused on the period 2002-2008 and on a key set of representative ISFS products and initiatives of each organisation.

4. The Evaluation used a wide range of methods and information sources including: review of relevant documents, an analysis of past evaluations of ISFS work; individual and group interviews with key informants in FAO and WFP, member governments, International Non-Government Organisations (INGO) and foundations, donor agencies, UN agencies, and research institutions, as well as a questionnaire survey among a broad range of ISFS stakeholders. Country case studies and regional assessments were carried out in February-March 2009 in the following countries: Thailand, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Burkina Faso, Chad, Kenya, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Botswana and Southern Africa. Visits and interviews were also conducted in a number of capitals in Europe and North America. The case countries and regions were selected based on a predetermined set of criteria, including level of food insecurity and presence of both FAO and WFP.

5. The Evaluation team was composed of four independent international consultants working closely together with two evaluation managers from FAO and WFP. The offices of evaluation of FAO and WFP co-managed the Evaluation. In addition the Evaluation was supported by an external panel of experts[1].

[1] Ms Margie Buchanan-Smith (consultant), Mr Todd Benson (IFPRI), Mr Dramane Coulibaly (CILSS) and Mr Gary Eilerts (USAID).[2] Key Definitions used for the Evaluation are presented in Annex 5.

Performance Highlights

Relevance of FAO / WFP support

6. The continuation of unacceptably high levels of food insecurity throughout the world makes the requirements for well-functioning ISFSs indisputable. The Evaluation found that FAO and WFP's leadership in developing and strengthening ISFSs at global, regional, national, and local level is relevant.

7. FAO is well recognized by all stakeholder groups for its unique position and role in providing global food security information and comparable multi-country information as a public good. Considering FAO's funding challenges the Evaluation is concerned, though, about the organization's ability to sustain this leadership.

8. WFP's Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) approach represents a corporate vision for a single ISFS. The system integrates key ISFS functions: baselines, early warning, needs assessment, and food security monitoring, in support of decision-making processes related to the organization's food assistance activities. In addition, information products generated by WFP/VAM are relevant not just for WFP: they are also used and considered highly relevant by a large number of humanitarian and development stakeholders.

9. The uneven knowledge and understanding of needs for ISFS support is evident from project and programme documents, evaluations and reviews, which provide patchy information on needs for FAO and / or WFP ISFS support. The information does not allow a comparative analysis showing need priorities. It is not easy to understand, for instance, why some countries and regions rather than others have been selected for ISFS support, or why specific ISFS functions have been supported and not others.

10. The project-based approach that FAO has applied to a large degree for ISFS support at national and regional levels has normally involved the preparation of project documents with information on existing and relevant ISFS structures and activities. There is a risk that FAO's current move from specific national and regional ISFS support projects toward HQ-led ISFS support will lead to more standardized ISFS support and reducing the flexibility to fully adapt to existing capacities, resources, and demand at national and local level. This can further strengthen a general misleading perception among many ISFS stakeholders that FAO and WFP ISFS support is supply-driven.

11. While increasingly responding to changing needs, FAO's and WFP's adaptation of their ISFS support is mainly reactive with insufficient capacity for proactive concept development to identify new or potential emerging issues and crises before they become mainstream.

12. The work of FAO and WFP has strengthened certain ISFS functions more than others, particularly baselines (e.g., WFP's Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessments - CFSVAs) and needs assessments. Of the other functions, the monitoring and evaluation of activities to promote food security and particularly responses to food insecurity appeared to have received the least attention. Like other organizations, FAO and WFP have well-established programme and project monitoring and evaluation systems for their own management. However, these systems are seldom linked to ISFSs, such that support to general monitoring of responses to food insecurity is weak. Also, support to the early warning function has been steadily decreasing over the last decade, mainly as a result of FAO's discontinuation of a number of regional and country support programmes. This has been a result of reduced funding, leading to closure of many sub-regional and national programmes and projects.

13. Although generally designed to cover both, ISFSs supported by FAO and WFP tend to concentrate on emergency/humanitarian contexts rather than long-term development situations. This focus is in large part a result of the history of ISFSs and the associated terminology, which have mainly been developed for humanitarian settings. So while corporate ISFSs initiatives such as GIEWS and VAM are relevant to both types of decision-making, they are generally perceived as humanitarian instruments, and hence needs for ISFS support tend to be addressed with typically humanitarian approaches and terminology.

Efficiency of FAO and WFP support

14. In WFP, specific ISFS activities are coordinated by one unit at headquarters, which ensures coherence of ISFS work at country, regional and headquarters' levels. SENAIP has improved efficiency in meeting internal needs and demands for ISFS products for decision-making processes related to WFP food assistance. This has mainly been obtained through improved technical guidelines, greater standardization of the information system processes and better adaptation of emergency needs assessments and baselines to WFP's programming needs.

15. In FAO, many units at Headquarters are responsible for developing and supporting different aspects of ISFSs at national, regional, and global level. While the organization also works through country and regional offices, ISFS support to national and regional counterparts is mostly developed and implemented directly by HQ technical units. The discrete nature of FAO's ISFS support with many different and often un-coordinated actors and without an overall ISFS strategy leads to unstructured and often inefficient interactions with partners who find it difficult to understand who is doing what in FAO.

16. FAO has been advocating for many years that cross-sectoral national ISFSs are better placed in overarching structures with the capacity to ensure that different line ministries, for instance, will provide relevant input to ISFS work. However, FAO's structural link with Ministries of Agriculture and historical tendency to view food security mainly in terms of calorie availability from grain production have led to frequent placing of FAO-supported national ISFSs in agricultural production divisions of these ministries. Placing these multi-sectoral platforms in a single line ministry significantly limits the ability of the ISFS to engage other key ministries and food security stakeholders, increases the potential for duplication and reduces overall efficiency.

17. Communication is a critical element for the efficiency of any information system. While some progress has been made in the recent years, the Evaluation, found that, among the various ISFS activities, communication continues to be a challenge: a decisive factor reducing the efficiency of ISFSs in informing decision-making is poor communication of ISFS products. For example, products are often widely disseminated but without adequate criteria for why, to whom and how the information should be communicated. This results in inefficient targeting of diverse users, poor timing, and mismatch between content of the products and needs and capacities of the decision-makers. There is strong demand for improved presentation of ISFS information, giving greater attention to short, targeted policy briefs for decision makers in donor agencies, NGOs or the concerned countries. Since few ISFSs systematically monitor the use of their products, they are not able to adjust to evolving needs.

18. The credibility of assessments can be undermined or questioned by inappropriate choices of words in press releases and other media-oriented communications. There is a need to strike a careful balance between the more

evidence based but overly technical ISFS products and the more emotion based media advocacy communication for the wider public.

19. The Evaluation found little evidence of consideration of cost-effectiveness as a basis for different types of ISFS support from the two organizations. Alternative solutions were generally not presented in project documents, nor was comparative analysis showing why FAO or WFP should provide the ISFS support and not other organizations.

Usefulness and accessibility of ISFS products

20. Most FAO and WFP ISFS information products are easily accessible to the public. There is increased attention to covering all key food security elements - availability, access, utilization and stability - and therefore also to including relevant data on a wide range of issues, though there are some gaps. According to the survey conducted by the Evaluation, ISFS users found that overall FAO and WFP supported ISFSs have a limited coverage of nutrition and gender, and of urban food security issues. This finding was corroborated during interviews that furthermore indicated the lack of integration of livestock and fishery data in ISFSs. While many users appreciate the increased availability of data related to access and use, some referred to poor integration of the data in many ISFS products. Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and Government decision-makers in particular seek integrated information products that do not leave it to the user to combine several datasets.

21. While in the past WFP was often perceived to have the tendency to inflate needs assessments, there is increasing recognition of the credibility of more recent WFP FS data. WFP's VAM work is well-known and appreciated among key ISFS stakeholders, including national governments, donors, INGOs, the mass media and research institutions.

22. Overall, the Evaluation found that assessments are generally done in a timely manner. For instance, emergency assessments take place quickly after being triggered by early warning from annual cropping assessments, which are also undertaken appropriately according to the agricultural calendar. Dissemination of food security information is often delayed by long analysis and editing processes and multiple layers of approval, including by governments in the concerned country or region. However, both FAO and WFP have shown efforts to overcome these challenges.

23. Food security information arrived at through country level consensual processes was found to be much more credible for decision-makers and consequently more likely to be used. Participation in consensual information generation or analysis was considered very important by both FAO and WFP, as well as by other institutions involved in generating food security information. This approach was often visible through the presence of multiple logos on food security information documents. Nonetheless, it is still far from generalized practice to produce information backed by consensus across the full range of stakeholders, including government, other national partners, donors, UN agencies and INGOs.

24. The stronger the multi-stakeholder partnerships underpinning a national ISFS, the more likely that its ISFS products will have an impact on decision-making. Positive examples of consensus-based ISFS products were observed by the Evaluation in Kenya, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Somalia, and Mozambique. All of these national ISFSs are strongly supported by FAO and WFP, and in several cases FAO in particular had had a key role in their creation.

Use of ISFS products

25. While food security frameworks used by FAO and WFP such as FIVIMS, GIEWS or VAM are valid for both humanitarian an development contexts, there is more explicit use of ISFS products for humanitarian decisions than for development ones. This seems to be the result of a general perception of the main functions of the ISFS model. ISFS terminology such as "needs assessment" or "early warning" is used typically in humanitarian contexts.

26. Although current national ISFSs are generally designed to cover a wide range of situations, the systems analysed by the Evaluation tended to concentrate on humanitarian rather than development issues. National governments most often reported using food security information for such activities as crisis mitigation, contingency planning or the management of the emergency food security reserve. Likewise, ISFSs are responsive to decision-making calendars tied to emergency response planning, such as the common appeals processes.

27. While the Evaluation was also able to observe the utilization of ISFS products to justify development programmes and policies or poverty reduction strategy documents, development actors were clearly not using information generated in humanitarian contexts to its full potential for longer term development policy and planning.

28. More recent initiatives in both agencies, such as FAO's ongoing study on the role of food security analysis in decision-making and WFP's work on its own ISFS information products through the SENAIP, have been successful in increasing understanding of decision-making processes for food security policies and programmes, including WFP's internal food assistance programming. This kind of understanding of stakeholders' decision-making processes is essential to ensure optimal utilization of food security information.

Sustainable benefits

29. The Evaluation found that overall FAO/WFP ISFS support strengthened integrated ISFS structures in many countries, including all those visited by the evaluation team. Moreover, while WFP carried out ISFS work in the 1980s and 1990s primarily for internal corporate use, the agency is now playing a key role in the functioning of national ISFSs in many countries. The more successful ISFSs are usually based on partnerships or networks between national governments, UN agencies, donors, and INGOs, where all have a say and a clear stake. FAO and WFP have been instrumental in building these partnerships.

30. However, the Evaluation did not find examples of 'sustainability' in line with the common definition of this concept, where it means take over of full funding and operation of an ISFS by national institutions following the end of external support. All ISFSs where external funding had come to an end had suffered significant setbacks, and in many cases the systems had all but ceased to function. There are examples of national ISFSs depending mainly on national government funding, but these examples were not found in low-income food deficit countries.

31. The Evaluation has great concerns regarding the project-based approach to ISFS support, which is the basis of almost all of FAO's assistance and a limited amount of that of WFP. Project-based assistance is inconsistent with longer-term sustainability of ISFSs as it is discontinuous, with projects lasting for limited periods due to dependence on external funding, and often with no follow-up or realistic exit strategies.

32. The Evaluation found that within the framework of support to national ISFSs, both FAO and WFP provided extensive training programmes to ISFSs throughout the current decade, on the assumption that this will promote institutional sustainability. However, while the training might have been effective in the short term, it did not lead to lasting ISFS institutions as it was not planned in a framework of longer-term institutional sustainability. Therefore, the Evaluation concludes that while national capacities have been strengthened, the assumption that this will lead to sustainable institutional change is not valid. Capacity development has been too focused on outputs and on individual capacity, and has lacked a strategic approach, needs assessments, enough attention to the institutional contexts or follow-up on post-training support and capacity retention.

Complementarity and cooperation

33. Documents, interviews and country case studies of the Evaluation have all shown evidence of coordination and cooperation between FAO and WFP. Cooperation around ISFS support was found to take place in the field more commonly than at HQs. It was however observed that this cooperation is mainly based on interpersonal interaction and ad hoc opportunities and arrangements, rather than a strategic vision and formal agreements. While this can work in the short term, longer-term goals require greater corporate strategic coordination.

34. The Evaluation found positive examples of collaboration for ISFSs that have been brought about by donors who played a key role in promoting constructive ISFS cooperation between the two organizations.

Conclusions

35. **Relevance**. Overall, FAO and WFP's support to ISFSs is relevant to the needs for improved systems to provide food security information to national governments, donors, FAO, WFP, other UN agencies, and INGOs, although the knowledge and understanding of these needs remains uneven. The international leadership of both FAO and WFP for conceptual development, technical guidance, and general support to ISFS development and functioning has been crucial for the form and existence of ISFSs in general, whether they are single function-systems, limited coverage structures, or global, integrated ISFSs.

36. **Efficiency.** The organizational architecture and mandates of FAO and of WFP significantly influence the efficiency of their ISFS support. WFP, with the internally focused VAM approach in support of its food assistance mandate, has developed an efficient single corporate ISFS. FAO, with its much wider mandate and dual function of both providing FS global information and building country/regional ISFS capacities, has provided far more fragmented ISFS support. Among the various ISFS activities, communication remains the greatest challenge, mainly due to lack of a strategic approach and to an inadequate understanding of the decision making processes which the ISFSs should inform.

37. **Effectiveness**. FAO and WFP ISFS products are more timely, analytically sound, accessible and cover more ISFS elements than in the past. Moreover, the systems are increasingly being built on partnerships and consensus. However, there is still some concern regarding key food security dimensions that are not being sufficiently addressed by the ISFSs, particularly nutrition, gender and urban issues.

38. **Impact**. The evaluation confirms the conclusions of many previous studies that FAO and WFP supported ISFS information products are being used

extensively in emergency and humanitarian decision-making. It is much harder to draw a causal line from ISFS information products to decisions on development policy or interventions, although various ISFS products are often cited to justify decisions taken for development investment. Overall, an inadequate understanding in most ISFSs of stakeholders' decision making processes means that ISFS products are not being used to their full potential, especially in development work.

39. **Sustainability.** The Evaluation did not find national ISFSs that continued to be fully functional following the end of external funding. It concluded that ISFSs, when designed to serve both donor and national needs, often have not been a funding priority for the national governments in low-income countries. ISFS sustainability should not be viewed as only an issue of national ownership and national budget. Rather, donors, UN agencies, and INGOs all have a vested interest in the continuation of a well functioning national ISFS.

40. **Complementarity and cooperation**. The Evaluation concludes that FAO and WFP collaborate on a number of ISFS related issues, challenging the common perception that FAO and WFP tend to compete rather than cooperate. Nonetheless, potential exists for greatly strengthening complementarity and collaboration in the area of ISFS support.

41. The Evaluation supports the conclusions of the recent joint FAO/WFP/IFAD policy paper entitled "Directions for Collaboration among the Rome-based Agencies" regarding the importance of cooperation for development of food security information and the comparative advantages of the partners. The paper indicates that WFP's comparative advantage in the support to ISFS is its extensive field presence and its production of VAM information products. FAO instead has a comparative advantage in the collection and dissemination of global information and analysis, in technical assistance and tool development, and in capacity development. The Evaluation also concludes that WFP has a comparative advantage in providing ISFS support for emergency and humanitarian contexts as well as for analysis of national data.

Recommendations

42. The Evaluation makes the following recommendations (in summarised form - see the complete recommendations in chapter 4):

Rec. 1.1 FAO and WFP should each develop corporate ISFS Strategies for the range of their ISFS work at national, regional, and global levels, based on overall goals defined jointly and including means and plans for implementation;
Rec. 1.2 FAO and WFP should develop a joint FAO/WFP ISFS strategy based on their comparative advantages;
Rec. 2 FAO and WFP should jointly maintain and strengthen their leadership in ISFSs;
Rec. 3 FAO and WFP should promote ISFSs which respond to identified needs;
Rec. 4 FAO and WFP should promote long-lasting national multi-stakeholder ISFS partnerships;
Rec. 5.1 FAO and WFP should strengthen the application of ISFS communication strategies based on a genuine understanding of food security decision-making processes;
Rec. 5.2 FAO and WFP should work together to develop a joint FAO/WFP ISFS communication and advocacy strategy.

1. Introduction

1. Reliable and timely information on food security is crucial for designing effective responses to hunger and malnutrition, promoting lasting food security, and ultimately for sustainable human development. Information on food security is generated in more or less well-established Information Systems for Food Security (ISFS) that provide key functions such as baselines, early warning, needs assessments, and monitoring and evaluation.

2. Historically, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) have allocated significant resources in support of ISFSs at global, regional, national, and sub-national levels. This work has been undertaken either jointly or separately by the two organizations and typically in cooperation with governments, regional organizations, other United Nations (UN) agencies, and International Non Governmental Organizations (INGOs). The support to ISFSs from FAO and WFP covers a wide range of activities, including generation of models, methods, and tools, capacity development and technical advice, and direct execution of ISFSs.

3. Over the years, the two organizations have assessed specific ISFS related projects and programmes. But the area of information systems for food security has never been the subject for a thematic evaluation. Considering the strategic importance of well-functioning ISFSs for both FAO and WFP, FAO's Programme Committee requested an evaluation of the organization's ISFS work in 2007. Furthermore, the Committee strongly supported the idea of a joint FAO / WFP evaluation, which was welcomed by WFP's Executive Board.

4. After initial preparatory work, the "Joint Thematic Evaluation of FAO and WFP Support to Information Systems for Food Security" was launched in 2008.

1.1 Evaluation Objective

5. The overall objective of the Evaluation is defined as:

> To measure the extent to which FAO and WFP have separately and jointly contributed to improved and more effective ISFSs, and how far these information systems have, in turn, contributed to improved decision-making.

1.2 Key Evaluation Questions

6. To achieve this objective, the Evaluation responds to a set of key questions[2]:

Relevance	Has the support of FAO / WFP to ISFSs been relevant to needs and contexts (institutional, socio-economic, capacity)?
Efficiency	How are the various FAO / WFP supported ISFSs activities performing? Are they contributing efficiently to user needs and demands?
Effectiveness	To what extent has the objective of promoting useful and accessible ISFS products been attained?
Impact	To what extent has food security information produced by FAO / WFP (directly or with other partners) been used by decision-makers, users, influencers and for what purpose?
Sustainability	Have ISFS capacities been developed / strengthened? Have there been sustainable benefits?
Complementarity / Cooperation	To what extent is the ISFS support of the two organizations complementary, aligned, and based on cooperation?

1.3 Evaluation Focus

7. The concept of ISFSs is dynamic and subject to many different interpretations and definitions. In line with the use of the concept by key international ISFS stakeholders, including FAO, WFP, INGOs, donors, and research institutions the Evaluation applies the following definition:

> An Information System for Food Security refers to a series of interrelated food security information activities: Method Development and Technical Guidance, Data Generation, Data Cleaning and Storage, Data Analysis, and Communication. These activities support one or several of the following major functions: Baselines, Early Warning, Needs Assessments, Monitoring of Food Security, and / or Monitoring and Evaluation of response activities to promote food security [3].

8. In general, the notion of national ISFSs is often used when referring to overall information systems on food security based on the following generic definition that is applied by the Evaluation:

> National ISFSs refer to national multi-stakeholder platforms established by or with the national governments to monitor food and nutritional status, identify populations at risk for food insecurity, provide early warnings when required, develop response recommendations, and coordinate, monitor, and evaluate response activities to food insecurity.

9. National ISFSs typically integrate key line ministries, representatives of local governments, various national food security stakeholder groups such as farmer and trade associations and research institutions as well as external partners. Hence, national ISFSs reflect the commitments of the 1996 World Food Summit (WFS) calling on governments to establish national information systems to monitor food insecurity in partnership with civil society.

10. The core of ISFSs is Food Security and the Evaluation applies the food security definition agreed upon at the 1996 WFS[4]. This definition consists of four key elements: access, availability, utilization, and stability[5], which imply that nutrition is critical for food security, and hence a critical part of ISFSs. Thus, contrary to some institutions that will spell out both elements in "food security and nutrition" for the Evaluation the aim of ISFSs is to enhance food security and combat malnutrition.

11. As can be seen from the ISFS definition, ISFS work is wide-ranging and an evaluation of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability, and complementarity and cooperation of all ISFS activities at all levels would be a daunting task. To prepare a strategic and relevant exercise as defined in the objective the Evaluation focuses on the usefulness of food security information for decision-making processes related to emergency and development activities, programmes, strategies, and policies, i.e. the focus is on the usefulness of the information products[6] generated by the ISFSs.

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[3] Examples of activities to promote food security: emergency food aid, agricultural development assistance, food reserve management, market interventions, social safety nets, and nutrition and health programs.

[4] 1996 WFS: "Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life".

[5] WFP does normally not refer explicitly to stability as part of the food security definition. However, in practice important part of WFP's ISFS activities clearly build on the notion that stability is part of food security. FAO, on the other hand, often include stability explicitly when defining food security. The last years' global food price crisis has clearly demonstrated the importance of stability for food security.

[6] ISFS products are defined as tangible materials that provide information on food security with the objective of supporting food security management including policies and programmes. Products

12. In principle, all decision-makers in the food chain whether producers, consumers, or support institutions have a stake in food security information. However, to ensure manageability of the time-bound exercise the Evaluation concentrates on decision-makers at national policy levels as well as decision-makers in international support agencies, including donors, UN organizations, international finance institutions, and INGOs.

13. The 1996 World Food Summit was a watershed moment for ISFS development and the Evaluation applies 1996 as an overall reference point. To allow more focus, though, special attention is given to FAO / WFP[7] ISFS support over the last 6 years; i.e. 2002 through 2008.

14. Recognizing the vast number of ISFSs supported by FAO / WFP, the Evaluation concentrates particularly on a core list of ISFSs, support initiatives, and products. The list was identified in close cooperation with key ISFS stakeholders within the two organizations. The core list is presented in the next page in table 1.

include reports, bulletins, newsletters, websites, press and web releases, conference and workshop presentations, maps, and databases.

[7] "FAO / WFP" is applied in the report to refer to both joint and separate initiative of the two organizations.

Table 1 Evaluation Core List of FAO / WFP ISFSs, Support Initiatives, and Products

Acronym	Definition	Launch	Brief Description	Primary ISFS Functions					Primary ISFS Activities				
				Baseline	Early warning	Needs Assessment	Monitoring of FS	M&E of Activities to Technical Promote FS	advice	Data Generation	Data clearing and storage	Data Analysis	Communication
Integrated ISFSs													
GIEWS	Global Information and Early Warning System	1974	FAO ISFS to monitor global food supply and demand	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√
VAM	Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping	1994	WFP's central ISFS based on a standard framework for analysis at country, sub-regional, and regional levels	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
FAO Initiatives Supporting ISFSs													
FIVIMS	Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System	1997	Initially multi-agency platform to support 1996 WFS Plan of Action. FIVIMS support activities mainly through the FAO led secretariat	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√
FSIA	Food Security Information for Action Joint EC / FAO initiative	2000	Develop capacity at all levels for increased usefulness of food security information	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√
Country Stat	Country statistical information system for food and agriculture	2005	Support data management, data import and expert and data comparison	√			√		√	√	√	√	√
FAOSTAT	FAO Statistical database system	1992	Central component in FAO's information system. Covers all aspects of FAO's mandate	√			√		√	√	√	√	√

FAO ISFS Products													
Food Outlook	Food and Feed Outlook	1973	Global market analysis with assessments and forecasts.	√	√		√			√	√	√	√
Price Impact Analysis	Price Impact Analysis	2008	Launched in response to 2008 global food price inflation with national, regional, and global analyses	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√
SOFI	State Of Food Insecurity in the World	1999	Annual global advocacy report focusing on halving the number of undernourished people in the world by 2015	√	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√
WFP ISFS Products													
CFSVA	Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis	2004	Baseline assessments ideally establishing references in a typical year. Most CFSVAs are country-level analysis	√		√				√	√	√	√
EFSA	Emergency Food Security Assessment	2003	Initial investigations and rapid assessments in response to slow and sudden-onset emergencies		√	√				√	√	√	√
FSMS	Food Security Monitoring System	2005	Country or region specific systems for continuous monitoring and if necessary trigger EFSAs		√		√	√		√	√	√	√
Market Analysis	Market Analysis		Key characteristics of food systems and markets in non-crisis situations at national and sub-regional level	√	√					√	√	√	√
Price Impact Analysis	Price Impact Analysis	2008	National and regional trends in food prices. Initiated in response to the 2007 / 2008 global food price inflation		√		√			√	√	√	√
Joint FAO / WFP ISFS Initiatives													
CFSAM	Crop and Food Supply Assessment Missions	1978	National validation of crop and food security estimates, while the crops are still standing. FAO focuses on supply and demand and WFP on vulnerability		√	√	√			√	√	√	√
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification	2005	Consensus based approach to classify food security situation in a specific region and with national and sub-regional reports	√	√	√	√	√		√		√	√

15. The different systems, support initiatives, and products are all interlinked but to various degrees. From an ISFS perspective the clearest and most developed integration is within WFP where the Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA), Emergency Food Security Assessment (EFSA), Food Security Monitoring Systems (FSMS) have been developed as part of one overall ISFS commonly known as Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM). The VAM products as well as other ISFS support initiatives and products on the core list function in close cooperation with the FAO Statistical database system (FAOSTAT) and the Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS), which play a key data managing and repository role. A mapping of the different elements in the core list would show a very complex web where all elements are connected through exchange of information, support, etc.

1.4 Evaluation Methodology

16. The Evaluation has followed the logical model presented in Figure 1. The model was discussed and agreed upon by key ISFS FAO and WFP stakeholders as well as with the Expert Panel that supported the Evaluation.

17. Given the resources and time available for the Evaluation, use of case studies through country and regional visits was identified as a necessary mechanism for the fact-finding. Seven countries and five sub-regions in Asia and Africa as well as four donor countries were visited. These case study countries and regions were identified in close dialogue with FAO and WFP staff members at headquarters and at country and regional offices. The following criteria were applied for the selection: degree of food insecurity, representativeness of ISFS activities, level of FAO / WFP ISFS support, level of FAO / WFP collaboration, level of humanitarian and development contexts, level of other harmonization initiatives such as One UN and the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness, and information available; e.g. in form of other assessments, and practical / logistical considerations.

18. Considering that much of the FAO / WFP support has been focusing on national ISFSs the case studies of the Evaluation in form of country visits concentrated particularly on these institutions. The following table recapitulates the countries visited and the main national ISFSs in which both FAO and WFP are key partners and to which they have provided crucial ISFS support for their establishment and / or functioning.

Figure 1 Logic Model of ISFS Evaluation

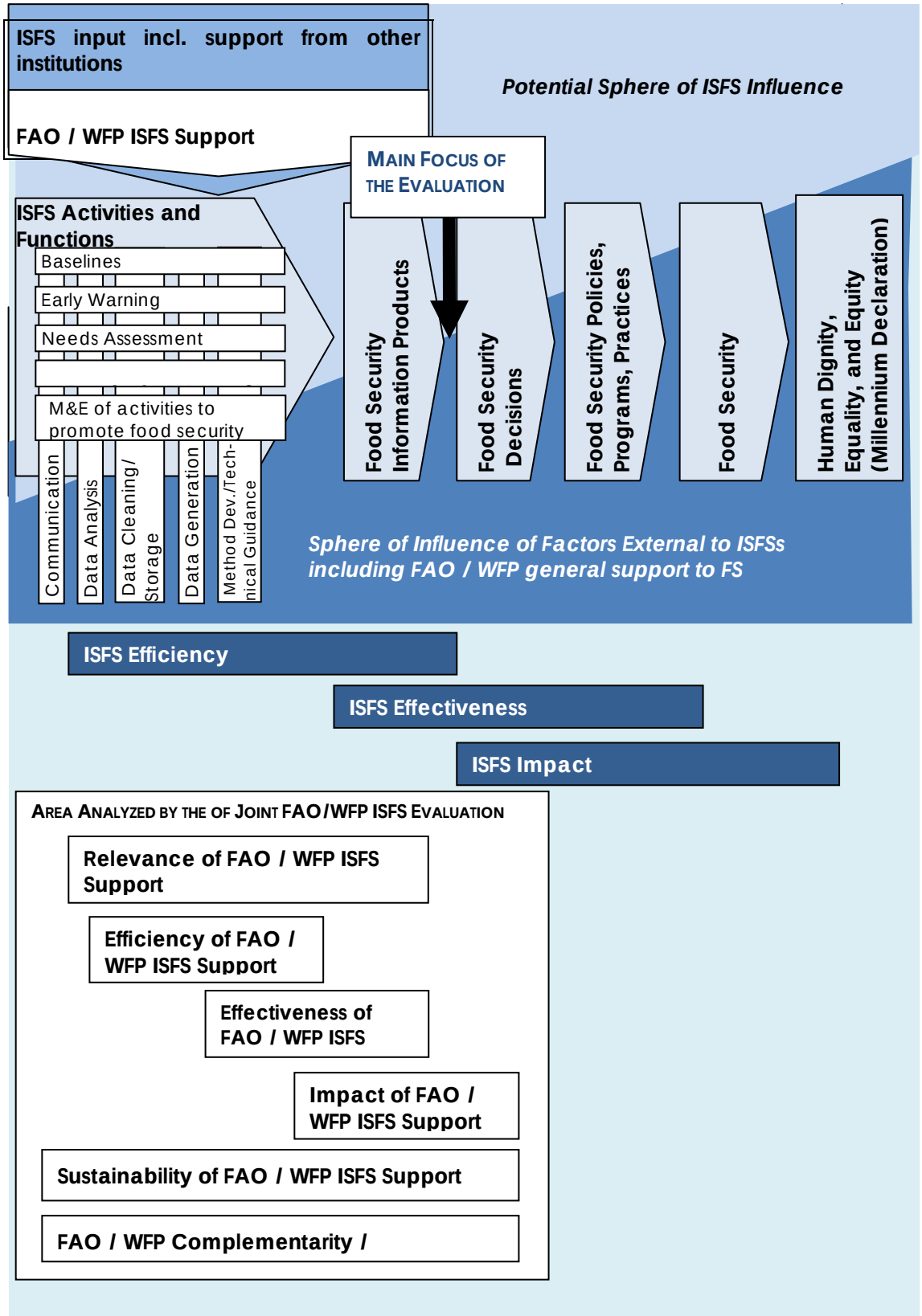

Table 2 National ISFSs in Countries Visited for the Evaluation

Country visited	National ISFS	Government Hosting Institution
Burkina Faso	Food Security Information System (SISA) CILSS "SAP" model[8]	Ministry of Agriculture
Cambodia	Food Security Forum	Council for Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD)
Chad	Food Security Early Warning System CILSS "SAP" model	Ministry of Agriculture
Ethiopia	Disaster Management and Food Security Sector	Ministry of Agriculture
Kenya	Kenya Food Security Steering Group (KFSSG)	Office of the President
Mozambique	Technical Secretariat for Food Security and Nutrition (SETSAN)	Ministry of Agriculture
Sri Lanka	FIVIMS Focal Point (currently not functioning as a national ISFS)	Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research and Training Institute (HARTI)

19. The Evaluation also looks at multi-country or regional and global ISFSs. These are multi-function structures that typically complement national ISFSs. The Evaluation focuses particularly on sub-regional and regional ISFSs established under the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

20. The case studies complemented a general analysis of background documents, interviews with FAO / WFP staff members at headquarters, and an online survey on ISFS users' appreciation of ISFS products and FAO / WFP ISFS support.

21. To guide the exercise, an Evaluation Matrix was developed during the preparatory phase around the core set of evaluation questions[9].

22. The Evaluation consisted of four phases:

1. Inception Phase: (May 2008 – January 2009): Review of background documents, Analysis of 16 key independent evaluations, reviews, and assessments of FAO / WFP supported ISFS activities[10], Discussions with FAO / WFP Head Quarters (HQ) resource persons7 Development of the Evaluation Matrix, Preparation of an Inception Report, and work with the Expert Panel for the Evaluation;

2. Main Fact Finding Phase: (January 2009 – March 2009):

   - Review of key background documents,
   - Face-to-face, focus group, and telephone Interviews with resource persons[11] in Governments, FAO / WFP, other UN agencies, INGOs,

[8] National ISFSs in CILSS countries are generally known as SAPs, the French abbreviation of Early Warning Systems. However, the SAPs include more ISFS functions than early warning. Their primary mandate is to collect, analyze, and disseminate information to public decision-makers and members of the food security commissions, which typically consist of representatives from key line ministries, UN agencies, INGOs, and the international donor community. The SAPs were originally launched in the late 70's and have been more or less functional over the years reflecting to a large degree levels of external funding.
[9] The Evaluation Matrix is in Annex 2.
[10] The list can be found in Annex 4.
[11] The list of resource persons is in Annex 7.

donors, and other ISFS stakeholders in Bangkok, Colombo, Phnom Penh, Addis Ababa, Nairobi, Maputo, Johannesburg/Pretoria, Gaborone, N'djamena, Ouagadougou; and Brussels, Paris, London, Washington,

- An on-line survey[12] regarding FAO / WFP ISFS products and services. The survey questionnaire was mailed to about 3,000 potential informants. Around 600 responded;

3. Analysis Phase (April – June 2009), including consultations with key stakeholders and work with the Expert Panel; and
4. Presentation and discussion with FAO / WFP stakeholders of the Evaluation's key findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

23. As part of FAO's regular evaluation programme other exercises relevant for the joint FAO / WFP ISFS Evaluation were carried out in 2008 / 09. Efforts were made to coordinate to the extent possible[13] and build on complementary findings, conclusions, and recommendation among the different exercises.

1.5 Evaluation Challenges

24. The major challenge for the Evaluation has been the broadness of the subject and the need for drawing general conclusions based on a limited number of more detailed country and regional analyses. The Evaluation saw firsthand that ISFS work is based on a number of ever-evolving and context-specific definitions.

25. The organization of the Evaluation did not allow for visits to all relevant regions; particularly the Evaluation did not visit Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), the Community of Independent States (CIS), the Middle East, and the Far East and Pacific. Meanwhile, the Evaluation has drawn on information from relevant evaluations, assessments, and reviews from those regions to the extent possible. Moreover, the on-line survey included ISFS practitioners from all regions. Still, the ISFS challenges in these non-visited regions cannot be adequately appreciated based on the Evaluation methodology.

26. A clear baseline situation against which to evaluate does not exist. Based on project documents and general assessments and information the Evaluation has tried to identify the point of departure for the major issues of the Evaluation.

27. To fully understand the interface between ISFS products and initiatives and food security decision-making processes, it would be necessary to analyze decision-making processes in various organizational contexts, and identify influencing factors. As shown, in the Logic Model presented in Figure 1, factors external to ISFS products constitute a major source of influence on food security decision-making. These factors include the number of decision-makers within specific organizations with food security interventions, the lines of command within the organization, the level of interactions the organization has with other institutions, etc. With limited existing analyses on food security decision-making processes to build on, it was not possible

[12] The Analysis of the online survey is presented in Annex 1.
[13] In particular, the Independent Evaluation of FAO's Role and Work in Statistics, Mid-term project review of FAO's support to the implementation of the IPC in Central and Eastern Africa, Mid-term project evaluation of the Sudan Institutional Capacity Programme: Food Security Information for Action (SIFSIA); and Final Independent Evaluation of EC / FAO's Food Security Information for Action Program.

for the Evaluation to assess the impact of information on key food security decision-making processes, to the extent envisaged in the inception report.

1.6 Who was involved

28. The Evaluation was carried out by a Team of four independent consultants with extensive experience in ISFS related work in Africa, Asia, Commonwealth Independent States, and LAC. Two evaluation managers from FAO and WFP guided the Team on FAO / WFP norms and regulations and supported and participated throughout all phases of the Evaluation.

29. The Evaluation Team was assisted by an Expert Panel composed of international ISFS specialists[14]. The Expert Panel provided input and served as a sounding board at the finalization of the Inception phase. The Expert Panel, furthermore, provided feed-back on the initial findings and participated in the Evaluation Team's definition of key recommendations.

1.7 Context

1.7.1 ISFS Development

30. After a decade-long series of droughts and famines, the 1974 World Food Conference concluded that the existing monitoring and information systems were inadequate. In response new ISFSs were developed by different agencies, including including FAO's Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS). These new initiatives were mainly based on remote sensing combined with national crop statistics. After repeated needs for emergency food aid during the 80s and 90s the 1996 World Food Summit encouraged FAO to lead a UN inter-agency process to develop more effective information systems to track food insecurity and vulnerability. As a follow-up the initiative for Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems (FIVIMS) was established to strengthen governments' commitments to reinforce their own ISFSs to identify who the food insecure are, where they are located, and why they are food insecure, nutritionally vulnerable, or at risk.

31. FIVIMS illustrates the development that ISFSs have undergone from relatively simple systems in the 1970s focusing on food production towards integrated systems covering the complex set of factors determining food security including social, political, health, economic, and environmental factors. FIVIMS also marked a critical new dimension of ISFSs to not only address food insecurity as an emergency issue but also integrate chronic food insecurity as a long-term development issue. While this development clearly reflects the increasing understanding of the complexity of food security and hence the need for still more integrated systems, some ISFS stakeholders will argue that issue-specific ISFSs, for instance market information, will suffice for many food security information needs (as well as being more manageable). Today's ISFS scene therefore also includes a broad range of systems from narrow ones targeting very specific user groups and uses to integrated systems covering all aspects of food security and addressing a very broad user group.

[14] Ms. Margie Buchanan-Smith – independent consultant, Mr. Gary Eilerts - United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Mr. Todd Benson - International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), and Mr. Dramane Coulibaly (CILSS).

32. The last decade has seen an increased effort to harmonize and align both humanitarian and development interventions and international agreements such as the UN Humanitarian Reform Process, the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative (GHD), the Delivering as One UN, the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), and the Paris Declaration. This new focus on coordination has led to a new impetus for consolidated ISFS methodologies and development of instruments building on different forms of partnerships among key ISFS stakeholders.

33. Over the same period key donors have focused more and more on alternative and complementary response mechanisms to food distribution. The European Union, for instance, adopted a new regulation on food aid and food security in 1996[15], which broadened the range of support to food security. Likewise, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) issued in 1995 a paper on the agency's food aid and food security policy[16] calling for a more integrated response to food insecurity. Donors' changing policies on food security is reflected in the decrease of total food aid since 1999[17]. With the new focus on integrated responses to food insecurity, key donors have also been putting more emphasis on support to integrated ISFSs. The European Commission (EC) adopted a new food security strategy in 2006[18] which specifically outlines food security and early warning systems as a priority area for global programmes for integrated food aid and food security support. Similarly, USAID has repeatedly issued policy statements regarding the agency's response to food insecurity highlighting priority to global famine early warning systems.

34. INGOs have taken a lead in advocating for alternative response mechanisms to food insecurity and have developed and promoted various models of social safety nets with increasing support from both donor governments and UN agencies. The development and success of these differentiated response mechanisms depend, inter alia, on the diversity of the information available related to food security including predictions.

35. The increasing complexity of food security threats puts constantly new demands on the functioning of ISFSs, the coverage, the analytical models, and the communication of food security information. Likewise, the ever-changing web of factors that determines food security calls for ISFSs to constantly being on the forefront for identifying future potential threats.

[15] Council Regulation (EC) No 1292/96 of 27 June 1996 on food-aid policy and food-aid management and special operations in support of food security – www.ec.europa.eu/development

16 Food Aid and Food Security Policy Paper - USAID/General Notice POLICY PPC 03/17/95 – www.usaid.gov

[17] See for instance WFP's Food Aid Information System – Interfais – www.wfp.org/fais

[18] EC (2006) "Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament - A Thematic Strategy For Food Security - Advancing the food security agenda to achieve the MDGs" - www.eur-lex.europa.eu

The 2007-08 food price crisis

The 2007-08 global food price crisis led to violent protests in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, forced humanitarian agencies to cut food rations in half, and provoked government changes. The crisis also led to intense scrutinizing among food security specialists and others to identify possible causes for the crises. The identified causes were many and were interlinked in complex ways. They included increasing oil prices, bad harvests in important grain producing countries, rising grain demand due to improved livelihoods in Asia, urbanization, pandemics, competing demand for alternative use of grains and agricultural land for bio-fuel, speculations in commodities, water scarcity, climate change, etc. The analysis also indicated that the food price crisis was not just the result of sudden-onset factors but also depended on certain structural causes. This analytical work thus once again highlighted the extent to which food security is under increasing threat from a very large number of inter-dependent and ever-changing political, social, economic, and environmental factors.

1.7.2 FAO's and WFP's Mandate to Support ISFSs

36. FAO's Constitution defines the organization's main functions (Art. 1) in terms of:

- Collection, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of information relating to nutrition, food, and agriculture, and
- Promotion of national and international actions with regard to research, education, administration, spread of public knowledge, conservation of natural resources, improved methods for agricultural production, processing, marketing, and distribution, policies for agricultural credit, and international agricultural commodity policies.

37. This double function is described in the recent Independent External Evaluation of FAO (2007) as "producing global public goods" and "ensuring their accessibility to those who need them." The span of activities to fulfil these functions is wide; for instance capacity development for Non Government Organizations (NGOs) to undertake Household Economy Analysis at community level, concept development of consolidating analysis frameworks such as the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), management of regional platforms on food security such as the Observatorio del Hambre in LAC, and production of food security outlooks through GIEWS. FAO's food security information portfolio remains dynamic in response to changing demands and requirements for new focus areas such as the Right to Food agenda. It is expected that the current internal reform process in FAO guided by the 2007 Independent External Evaluation will further change the portfolio and lead to a greater streamlining of the ISFS functions within the organization.

38. WFP's mandate, as the food aid arm of the UN, requires effective food security monitoring for all programming and planning activities. Over the years the organization has boosted its ISFS initiatives, particularly through the Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) unit established in the mid-90's to improve monitoring of food insecurity vulnerability, including establishing national baselines. In 2004 WFP launched an important three-year initiative "Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessment Implementation Plan" (SENAIP) to increase the quality, credibility and transparency of emergency needs assessments, thus further stressing WFP's role in

ISFS conceptual development and implementation. Likewise, WFP's current Strategic Plan (2008 – 2011) puts increasing emphasis on food assistance in support of longer-term development initiatives, thus emphasizing the need for comprehensive understanding of both structural and emergency factors causing food insecurity.

39. While both FAO and WFP are involved in promoting effective ISFSs, the two organizations have had different agendas in this field based on their different mandates For FAO, support to ISFSs takes two forms: (i) supporting the creation and strengthening of effective ISFSs in member countries and regions, and (ii) providing global food security information as a public good. WFP's ISFS activities, on the other hand, have focused on development of corporate ISFSs to improve WFP's own programme management and decision-making related to the organization's overall food assistance objective. It is important, though, to recognize that while the primary objective of WFP's ISFS work is to support the organization's food assistance activities, WFP supported ISFSs are increasingly being used for purposes not directly linked to WFP and considered by many food security stakeholders as public goods.

40. More recently, WFP is increasingly providing support to ISFS capacity development at national and regional levels. At the same time FAO's shrinking budget has led that agency to reorganize its ISFS support putting less emphasis on in-country support to specific national ISFSs over the last decade.

41. It is expected that the current development towards greater collaboration among Rome-Based UN agencies will lead to a clearer shared vision of FAO / WFP ISFS support. The issue is further discussed in section 2.6 in the findings section.

1.7.3 Key Challenges of FAO / WFP ISFS Support at the Point of Departure for the Evaluation

42. **Weak food aid needs assessments:** During the late 90s major food aid donors such as the EC and USAID raised concerns regarding FAO and WFP's food security assessments[19]. In particular, they questioned the estimation of food aid needs and the targeting methods and they requested improved food security information for their decision-making processes. Moreover, they called for greater transparency and coordination of assessments and adequate information to facilitate the most appropriate response strategies, for instance distinguishing between emergency and chronic food insecurity.

43. **Limited coverage of nutrition and urban areas:** The launching of the SENAIP by WFP in 2004 was a response to this criticism. Initial assessments[20] of SENAIP showed great appreciation of products such as CSFSVAs although there was some concern regarding the limited coverage of critical issues including nutrition and the delays between data collection and dissemination of results.

44. **Limited awareness of ISFS support and ISFS products:** According to the 2002 Thematic Evaluation of FAO's preparedness and response to food and agricultural emergencies[21] both national governments and the donor community

[19] See for instance EuropeAid (2006) "Review and Perspectives of the EuropeAid/UN Strategic Partnership on Food Security Needs Assessments (CFSAMs)" European Commission, Brussels

[20] See for instance Development Information Services International (2006) "Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis: An External Review of WFP Guidance and Practice" ODAV, World Food Programme, Rome

[21] FAO (2002) "Thematic Evaluation of Strategy A.3: Preparedness for, and effective and sustainable response to, food, and agricultural emergencies", Food and Agriculture Organisation, Rome

recognized FAO's food security assessments as valuable in raising awareness of impending food crises. However, the evaluation also noted that improvements in tools and functions developed by GIEWS did not always translate into higher-quality field assessments, partly due to lack of sufficient awareness about the products and functions, as well as training in their use. The 2002 evaluation, furthermore, stated that while the FIVIMS initiative had improved food security monitoring use of ISFS products for prevention purposes it was still weak compared to the goals set out at the 1996 WFS.

45. **ISFSs focusing on emergency and humanitarian contexts:** A review of evaluations and assessments of ISFS related activities from the beginning of the 2000s[22] shows that food security information was mainly used for informing response actions to emergency and humanitarian situations while little evidence could be found for use of ISFS products for longer-term development related decisions. A 2002 / 2003 review of the integration of food security into 75 key national development frameworks showed a lack of food security analysis in general[23].

46. **Weak communication:** A major concern raised in many of the former ISFS evaluations and assessments is they systems' weak communication functions. More recently, the joint African Union (AU) – EC - FAO assessment of food security early warning systems in sub-Saharan Africa24 notes that "the format and content of many reports demonstrate the lack of a clear communication strategy that identifies what change or action needs to occur, which decision-makers need to be informed, and how to formulate a comprehensible message."

Comment from Online Survey

It is obvious that FAO / WFP support to information systems for food security is necessary for any action to ensure food and nutrition security".

47. **Sustainability questioned:** Sustainability of national ISFSs in terms of national stakeholders taking full financial and technical responsibility for the function of the ISFSs have often been questioned in former evaluations and assessments. A 2004 global assessment of ISFSs[25] explained this lack of national ownership partly by the supply-driven ISFS support from organizations such as FAO and WFP.

48. **Room for greater ISFS cooperation between FAO and WFP**: The 2003 FAO/WFP joint statement, "Deepening the Cooperation", highlights positive ISFS related collaboration mechanisms between the two organizations, such as Crop and Food Supply Assessment (CFSAM) and FIVIMS. The agreement also showed that corporate instruments such as WFP's VAM and FAO's Special Programme on Food Security should be mobilized for complementary ISFS work including for targeting, use of sex-disaggregated data, and overall sharing of information. However, the agreement has received weak follow-up and cooperation remains an issue.

[22] The list of 16 evaluations and assessments reviewed for the Evaluation is presented in annex 4.
[23] Bindraban P.S. et al. (2003) "Focus on Food Insecurity and Vulnerability – A Review of the UN System Common Country Assessments and World Bank Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers" FIVIMS Secretariat, Rome
[24] Tefft, J. And McGuire M. (2006) "Planning For The Future: An assessment of food security early warning systems in sub-Saharan Africa" Food and Agriculture Organisation, Rome
[25] McCalla, A.F. and Mock, N. (2004) "Report of the External Assessment and Strategic Planning Exercise (EASP) for the Interagency Working Group, Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems", IAWG-FIVIMS, Rome

2. Findings

49. The Evaluation has analyzed a wide range of FAO / WFP supported ISFSs at many different levels: local, sub-national, national, sub-regional, regional, and global. The contexts in which FAO / WFP ISFS support has been provided vary from situations where there are no pre-existing or functioning ISFSs to situations where a multitude of more or less competing systems are already available. It is important to keep this broad spectrum of contexts, users, and levels in mind when examining the following findings of the Evaluation, which attempts to distil general trends from very complex and heterogeneous structures.

2.1 Relevance of FAO / WFP Support to ISFSs

50. The relevance of the two organizations' support to ISFSs is evaluated by assessing the coherence between the objectives of the support and the needs as perceived by main ISFS user groups: national governments, donors, FAO, WFP, other UN agencies, and INGOs. The section addresses the relevance of support at various levels: national, sub-regional, and regional. Moreover, this section assesses the relevance of the support for emergency and humanitarian contexts compared to development ones.

2.1.1 Overall Relevance of FAO / WFP ISFS Work

51. The Evaluation found that FAO / WFP ISFS support is highly relevant to food security information needs at country, regional, and global levels and that progress has been made in responding to new ISFS needs.

52. Within FAO, ISFS work is particularly relevant vis-à-vis FAO's mandate to monitor the implementation of the World Food Summit 1996 Plan of Action and targets. Moreover, FAO's general organizational practices require that project and programme documents be justified with updated information on food security, including trend analyses, which are typically based on FAOSTAT generated information combined with other data sources.

53. During the Evaluation, many stakeholders emphasized FAO's unique position and role in ensuring well-functioning global ISFSs. FAO's continuous support and implementation of global ISFS initiatives such as GIEWS and FIVIMS are found relevant to ISFS needs among all key stakeholder groups: governments in food insecure countries, UN agencies, INGOs, and donors. Interviews as well as the online survey showed appreciation of FAO's global ISFS products including Food Outlook, The State Of Food Insecurity in the World (SOFI), and FAOSTAT that are seen as valuable for general awareness, food security analysis, and advocacy work. However, there is also a general concern regarding FAO's capacity to maintain its leadership in a context of eroding resources. This echoes the findings of the 2008 independent evaluation of FAO's statistical system[26] that the general deterioration of FAOSTAT as a result of diminishing resources was limiting the system's ability to maintain its relevance.

Comment from the Online Survey

"Overall, the FAO / WFP food security information systems are very relevant and useful."

[26] Dunmore, J. and Karlsson, J. (2008) "Independent Evaluation of FAO's Role and Work in Statistics" Food and Agriculture Organisation, Rome

54. In WFP, the internal demand for well-functioning ISFSs is institutionalized as highlighted in a 2004 directive, which holds WFP Regional and Country Directors accountable for ensuring that all new Emergency Operations and Protracted Relief and Rehabilitation Operations (PRROs) are adequately supported by either a needs assessment or VAM analysis.

55. By far the largest donor globally in this field has been and continues to be the European Commission. As illustrated in the box below, this donor has identified FAO and WFP as critical actors to strengthen, support, and implement ISFSs at all levels.

Relevance of FAO / WFP ISFS support to the EC

Following the principles for the European Commission's food aid and food security support the Commission has signed key agreements with both FAO and WFP to strengthen their ISFS support.

In 2000, the EC and FAO signed an agreement to contribute to the definition and monitoring of food security interventions. The initial activities included support to reinforce FAO's ISFS support portfolio through a broad range of initiatives such as the GIEWS workstation, improved early warning for complex emergencies, and FIVIMS support to national and regional organizations. A joint EC / FAO mid-term review of the first phase of the programme concluded in 2003 that the activities are relevant to both EC and FAO's food security policies. Moreover, the review found that with the exception of a few countries the activities are relevant for countries and regions' ISFS needs. A second phase of the programme, the Food Security Information for Action (FSIA) was designed specifically to support the use of food security information through support to A joint EC / FAO final evaluation of the FSIA reiterated the programme's relevance to EC and FAO food security policies as well as to countries and regions' ISFS needs, although the evaluation also indicates concern regarding the lack of capacity needs assessment or ISFS needs analysis before launching support activities In the end this limits the relevance of specific activities. A third phase of the programme was launched in 2008 putting still more focus on the use of food security information for decision-making processes and response planning.

In close collaboration with key donors, WFP developed in 2003 / 2004 the SENAIP to improve the quality of needs assessments. While various donors have shown their commitment and interest in SENAIP the EC provided a major funding through the project Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessments Capacity (SENAC) launched in 2005. SENAC aims particularly at reinforcing WFP's capacity through improved methodologies and further development of an integrated corporate ISFS. A 2007 evaluation of SENAIP[27] concludes that the SENAIP objectives were relevant to the ISFS needs within WFP in order to provide key partners with high quality and time food security information.

56. While WFP's VAM is primarily developed for WFP related decision-making process, the Evaluation also found VAM products, including CFSVAs and EFSA's to be relevant for decision-making processes that are not directly linked to WFP. The online survey, for instance, showed that stakeholders use many of the VAM products for general information.

[27] Maunder, N. et al. (2007)"Evaluation of the WFP Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessment Implementation Plan (SENAIP)" World Food Programme, Rome

2.1.2 Issues and Challenges related to Relevance

57. As the overall direct objective of ISFSs is to promote informed decision-making for food security at all levels, ISFS support needs to be based on a thorough understanding of decision-making processes in order to be relevant. The Evaluation found that while ISFS narratives almost always refer to decision-makers and decision-making it is presented in a rather indiscriminate way with limited or no differentiation between stakeholder groups and different decision-making processes. The Evaluation noted that both FAO and WFP have recently launched initiatives to better understand decision-makers and decision-making processes. Initiatives such as the FIVIMS-IAWG and the SENAIP have provided some insight and analyses of ISFS related activities at national, sub-regional, regional, and global level to assess their functioning, analyze potential for greater integration, monitor needs for ISFS support, and identify potential partners. If applied systematically in the design of all ISFS support, it is expected that these recent efforts will ensure more relevant ISFS support.

58. While important background analyses and needs assessments are part of project and programme documents, little attention is given to comparative analysis; e.g. prioritization of some countries for certain support, focus on certain ISFS functions, or comparative analysis of why FAO / WFP should support these activities and not some other organizations. The Evaluation also found that the relevance of capacity development activities is jeopardized by inadequate assessments of needs as a basis for the design of the activities. According to the FSIA evaluation: "In most cases, the programme did not undertake a capacity or needs assessment or a FSIS constraint analysis before initiating activities, limiting its ability to gear the programme to the capacity of stakeholders". In 2007, WFP carried out an evaluation of the organization's performance of capacity development initiatives, including the design of capacity development policies and strategies28. The evaluation refers to the general absence of capacity assessments prior to support to national institutions. But the evaluation also highlights a notable exception, namely the SENAIP piloting of capacity assessments for the design of country-level ISFS capacity development.

WFP Piloting of Needs Assessments for the Design of Country-level ISFS Capacity Development

To address national capacity constraints, SENAIP conducted three pilot studies in Tanzania, Madagascar, and Nicaragua in 2006 / 07 based on a systematic approach of assessing the country needs, existing capacities, capacity development activities supported by others and activities where WFP has a comparative advantage. Based on the pilot experience a draft strategy was developed on national capacity development in emergency needs assessments and preparedness. As stated in the 2007 SENAIP evaluation, funding had not been found, though, for implementation of the draft strategy and the positive experience from the pilots.

59. Assessing needs for ISFS support requires a good understanding of the benefits and usefulness of well-functioning systems. The Evaluation found that the concept of ISFSs remains vague to many involved in food security activities although most people seem to agree that "some kind" of food security monitoring and early warning is important particularly from a disaster risk management perspective. Still, the role of ISFSs as a key institutional prerequisite to promote long-term food

[28] WFP (2008) "Evaluation of WFP Capacity Development Policy and Operations" World Food Programme, Rome

security is less clear and many stakeholders are unaware of the potential contribution of ISFSs to management of economic development

60. The problem is compounded by a limited knowledge of FAO and WFP's ISFS products and initiatives found among many ISFS user groups. In the online survey, over 100 of the 600 respondents provided comments and suggestions regarding ISFS relevance according to needs. Respondents generally recognize the important role of FAO and WFP in promoting effective ISFSs. However, they also indicate lack of knowledge particularly about a number of FAO ISFS products and initiatives and even FAO staff members are often unaware of ISFS products and initiatives. Some respondents felt that most ISFS support is driven from the two organizations' HQs, thus limiting the knowledge and relevance of many activities for non-HQ staff. Some respondents called for a more systematic and regular introduction of different ISFS products with clear information on their strengths and weaknesses for different purposes, user groups, and contexts.

61. The Evaluation found that there is little knowledge regarding targeted users of much of FAO's general ISFS support through products such as guidelines, reference material, and interactive database. This is particularly noteworthy considering that an important part of FAO's ISFS support is provided through such products. So while the support might be useful for various ISFS stakeholders, it is not necessarily the most relevant support. This problem persists also due to the lack of systematic user surveys.

Adjusting ISFS support in Burkina Faso

Both FAO and WFP have been relatively slow to adjust food security information management to the reality of growing urbanization and ISFS support has by and large focused on rural concerns. The 2007 / 08 food price crisis suddenly pushed the urban question into centre-stage and many of the impact assessments of the food price crisis prepared by FAO and WFP highlight the lack of monitoring systems of the purchasing power of vulnerable populations in urban areas. The targeting of immediate and medium-term response actions such as food safety nets has therefore also been questioned by many stakeholders. In a follow-up to the 2008 rapid urban assessment[29] in the two largest urban agglomerations in Burking Faso, WFP suggests the establishment of a "registration system covering the most vulnerable households."

62. FAO and WFP have also shown their adaptability to address evolving food security information needs. For example, in response to the rapidly rising food prices in 2007-08 which led to widespread requests for causal analysis, the two organizations, working jointly, launched a series of price impact analyses at national and regional levels. During the Evaluation many respondents recognized the critical role of both FAO and WFP in these new information initiatives. In that context, the collaboration between FAO and WFP in the analysis of the crisis was highly praised especially by OECD interviewees, who expressed the hope that the two agencies would be able to work together and produce more such joint products in future.

[29] WFP / FAO / UNDP / Save the Children-UK / UNICEF (2008) "Impact de la Hausse des Prix sur les Conditions de Vie des Ménages et les Marchés de Ouagadougou et de Bobo-Dioulasso" World Food Programme, Rome

2.1.3 Responding to Needs at National Level

63. The Evaluation found that FAO / WFP support to national ISFSs is coherent with national policies. Country case studies indicate that reference to ISFS is common in United Nations Assistance Frameworks and Common Country Assessments (CCA) as well as in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) and some other relevant national policies, for instance, in Mozambique, Chad, or Cambodia. In Ethiopia and Kenya the Government plays a key role to ensure that ISFS support is coherent with national policies.

64. Compared to the limited attempts to base ISFS work on assessed needs at global level, adaptation to context and needs is somewhat better for institutional support to national ISFSs, such as SETSAN in Mozambique and SAP in Chad, which are in the form of specific projects that will typically be preceded by a preparatory phase. In the case of SETSAN, for instance FAO undertook a six-month in-country preparation, including stakeholder consultations before the final project document was drafted. In the case of Chad the first project document for FAO's support to revitalizing the SAP was drafted in 2006 and underwent a number of national consultations with national and international ISFS stakeholders before the project was finally launched in 2008. This preparatory work does not only serve to ensure that the ISFS support will reflect local needs and capacity but is also important to increase the understanding of the importance of well-functioning national ISFSs.

National ISFS in Cambodia

The Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD) was established with technical assistance from the German Development Cooperation in 2003 and with support from FAO and WFP, inter alia through the FAO-Netherlands Partnership Programme (FNPP): "Food Security Policy for Poverty Reduction" to establish the national Food Security and Nutrition Forum. FAO and WFP's support to the national ISFS has allowed the development of a web-based information system (also available on CD-ROM) to support the policy-making processes. The Food Security and Nutrition Forum is a unique venture making relevant information available to stakeholders and keeping them informed on upcoming relevant initiatives and events. Two formal user surveys were conducted in 2005 and 2007 to improve the system according to users' evolving needs. According to the answers, the Food Security and Nutrition Information System was the only information-sharing system that addresses food security in Cambodia. It was the first attempt to build up a bilingual repository that provides all different types of information: Who are the players in the food security and nutrition sector, what is the theoretical concept of food security and nutrition, and what are the best-practices and lessons-learned. By doing so, it tried to incorporate all the different sources of information.

65. FAO's broad range of initiatives supporting the development and functioning of ISFSs provides input that is relevant for ISFSs at various levels whether the support is designed specifically for ISFSs, as in the case of the FSIA, or if it is provided through more general FAO initiatives such as FAOSTAT. These initiatives are managed from FAO Headquarters and are principally based on standardized methods and approaches. This does not necessarily mean that the support is supply-driven, but the Evaluation finds that it is less adapted to national and local demands and optimal use of existing structures. This was also confirmed in the final evaluation

of Phase II of FSIA[30], which concludes that FSIA has been most successful in tools development and less successful in adapting to decision-making processes and strengthening of analytical capacities at country level. Similarly, a 2007 evaluation of an EC funded project to promote food security in Central America,31 which included development of ISFSs through FAO support, expressed concern about FAO's use of standard packages developed at HQs, including the GIEWS workstation.

66. Whereas WFP's VAM system is primarily considered a corporate ISFS to support decision-making processes related to WFP's programmes, the Evaluation found that the system is also a major avenue for general development of ISFS methods and technical guidance. This role was significantly strengthened through SENAIP and was recognized for ISFSs in general by stakeholders at national level during the Evaluation, including INGOs that are often cooperating closely with WFP for ISFS conceptual development and implementation. This has been the case, for instance, in Southern Africa where WFP / VAM developed Community and Household Surveillance (CHS) with the INGO consortium C-SAFE[32]. Although VAM activities are mainly implemented in countries where WFP is present the partners apply VAM or VAM-inspired methodologies in other countries as well highlighting the relevance of the initiative beyond purely corporate use. The Evaluation confirms the positive assessment of the 2007 evaluation of SENAIP[33] that concluded that the Plan and strengthened VAM is highly relevant to the identified needs and the comprehensiveness of the global approach is pertinent to the context.

Responding to local ISFS needs: Harmonization of agricultural datasets in Ethiopia

For many years agricultural data collection in Ethiopia has been assumed in parallel by the Central Statistical Agency (CSA) and the Ministry of Agriculture. The two data sets provide significantly different estimates, though, and annual CFSAMs have taken place in Ethiopia since 1995 in order to improve the credibility of the production estimates. Through an EC-funded FAO project and with support from WFP, the Government of Ethiopia has agreed to harmonize the two data sets, and since 2008 there has been only one official production estimate, which is highly appreciated by all parties.

2.1.4 Responding to Needs at Sub-Regional and Regional Level

67. Intergovernmental organizations have played a central role in defining and supporting national ISFSs over the last couple of decades, especially in Africa. Along with other international cooperation agencies FAO and WFP have played a decisive role in the design and implementation of ISFS work of many of these intergovernmental bodies both at sub-regional and regional levels34 to a large

[30] EC / FAO (2009) "EC/FAO Joint Evaluation: Food Security Information for Action Programme - GCP/GLO/162/EC" Volume I: Final Independent Evaluation Report, Food and Agriculture Organisation, Rome

[31] Palermo, M. et al. (2007) "Programa Regional de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional para Centroamérica – PRESANCA - Mision De Evaluación de Medio Término" Comisión Europea. The evaluation took place in October / November 2007.

[32] Consortium for Southern Africa Food Security Emergency (C-SAFE): World Vision, CARE, Catholic Relief Service

[33] Maunder, N. et al. (2007) "Evaluation of the WFP Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessment Implementation Plan VOL. I Evaluation Report" World Food Programme, Rome

[34] The terms "sub-regional" and "regional" often cause confusion. The Evaluation adheres to UN usage where "regional" is used for what some might refer to as "continental", such as ECOSOC's regional commissions, and "sub-regional" is a sub-set of countries in a region.

degree strengthening and complementing the ISFS support capacity of these organizations. Overall, the Evaluation finds that both organizations' support to sub-regional and regional ISFSs is important and relevant when based on proper adaptation to the regional contexts.

2.1.4.1. West Africa

68. At sub-regional level in West Africa, FAO / WFP has provided ISFS support to CILSS since this intergovernmental organization was created in 1973. Both organizations were key partners in the development of the Harmonized Framework initiative for vulnerability monitoring in the Sahel, which was launched by CILSS in 1999. The Harmonized Framework aims at improving the quality of early warning information within and among the countries through compatible ISFS calendars and methods across the region. The framework, which is still tested, includes all basic ISFS functions, building on existing ISFS work, such as WFP's CFSVAs.

> Comment from Online Survey
>
> *"The major limitations of FAO / WFP support to ISFSs originate from the fact that they tend to be top-down or imposed by headquarters, rather than bottom-up. The way forward is to explore more decentralization in order to make it more effective and to link it with the process of decision-making."*

69. The existence of the Harmonized Framework initiative was a major reason for the sub-region's and particularly CILSS's general resistance to FAO's introduction of the IPC approach as a sub-regional activity in 2006. The IPC was seen as a duplication of ongoing efforts and various Information System on Food Security (ISFS) stakeholders in the sub-region have expressed concern that the IPC was introduced as a blueprint with no adaptation to existing structures or involvement and responsibilisation of relevant local actors. After some years of dispute, FAO is now collaborating with CILSS to ensure complementarity between the Harmonized Framework and IPC.

70. Over the years, FAO has provided substantial technical support to the CILSS institution Agrhymet[35], which provides several regional ISFS functions in support of national ISFSs, including early warning and monitoring of food security[36]. Moreover, Agrhymet provides training and capacity development of national institutions. While FAO has funded specialists within Agrhymet in the past, the technical support over the last decade has mainly been based on input from FAO HQ. FAO and WFP do also play an active role in CILSS's regular ISFS activities such as shared country missions throughout the region and annual meetings in the Food Crisis Prevention Network in the Sahel. The relatively well-functioning regional and national CILSS ISFS considered to provide reliable monitoring and early warning has led to few requests from the region for CFSAMs.

71. For humanitarian issues, sub-regional working groups on food security have been established with active participation of INGOs and UN agencies. FAO and WFP play an active role in the platform in West Africa, where the food security and

[35] Agriculture, Hydrology, and Meteorology. Agrhymet is located in Niamey, Niger.
[36] Moreover, Agrhymet has various databases with historical datasets such as a geo-referenced database with country information beginning in 1985. The information includes demographic, agricultural and livestock production, and animal health data. The information is divided into structural and emergency information and can be explored through mapping software, which has been developed with substantial support from FAO.

nutrition working group was established in 2007 under the leadership of the UN's Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). FAO and WFP prepare monthly updates on the food security situation, including response recommendations.

2.1.4.2 Southern Africa

72. In Southern Africa, FAO and WFP have played a key role in the development of the Regional Vulnerability Assessment Committee (RVAC) established in 1999 as part of and SADC as a multi-stakeholder sub-regional platform based on FIVIMS principles. During the Evaluation, INGOs, Governments, donors, and UN partners expressed appreciation for RVAC's role as a platform for exchange of information among the countries in the region, support to national Vulnerability Assessment Committees (VACs) and development of national ISFSs that are comparable, and general monitoring and early warning of the regional food security situation. This confirmed the findings of numerous specific reviews of the VAC system.

73. FAO and WFP support to RVAC included the creation and staffing of a regional programme management unit within SADC to coordinate RVAC activities, including assessment of analysis capacity development in the region. Originally the staffing of the unit included a jointly funded FAO / WFP specialist. The position does no longer exist but the functions have been taken over by Southern African Development Community (SADC) staff. Interviews during the Evaluation showed some concern, though, by the current staffing of the RVAC, which is mainly reduced to two technical staff. It should also be noted that the as the rest of SADC, the RVAC has undergone various reorganizations and has been slimmed down over the last couple of years. This is explained by decreasing external funding.

74. The relevance of FAO / WFP support to RVAC in building a regional ISFS is clearly demonstrated. However, the limited current human resource capacity of RVAC leads partners to question relevance of the support from a longer-term perspective. This concern should be seen in the light of the experience of FAO's support to establishing early warning systems in SADC through a project from 1992 through 1996. The support activities, including capacity development were highly appreciated. However, SADC's regional Early Warning System (EWS) human resource capacity is now reduced to one person and many national EWS officers have never received any training. FAO is still funding SADC's remote sensing activities, which are fundamental for providing national partners with the required EWS products. But the funding comes to an end in 2009 and the continuation of the remote sensing activities is uncertain. Moreover, some resource persons noticed that the EWS structure needs to be updated, for instance to include animal production.

75. The humanitarian community in Southern Africa benefits from the Regional Inter Agency Coordination Support Office established by the UN in 2002 to provide a food security coordination platform for INGOs and UN agencies through the Emergency and Response Cluster facilitated by OCHA. After some years of ad hoc briefings from FAO and WFP, the Cluster recently requested FAO / WFP to provide a joint weekly food security matrix. The matrix was still under development during the Evaluation, but the preliminary outputs were received positively by INGOs and UN agencies.

2.1.4.3 Eastern and Central Africa

76. In Eastern Africa and Central Africa where there have been no sub-regional 'ISFS-relevant' structures such as CILSS and SADC,[37] FAO plays a leading role in coordinating the regional Food Security and Nutrition Working Group (FSNWG). The group was established in Nairobi in 2005 as a forum for humanitarian actors in the sub-region, particularly INGOs, UN agencies, and some donor representatives and with an initial focus on 11 eastern and central African countries. Coordinated by FAO's Regional Emergency Office for Africa, the Food Security and Nutrition Working Group aims at consensus and information sharing, joint food security and nutrition assessment tools, and joint advocacy for food security interventions. The sub-regional platform is seen as an important structure for exchange of information and has also been used as a steering committee for the implementation of the IPC in Eastern and Central Africa. This has attracted state actors to the regular meetings for stocktaking on regional food security and exchange of information among countries.

2.1.4.4 Africa Regional

77. At regional level, the AU is mainly supporting ISFSs through advocacy for national structures and FAO has been collaborating with the AU on various initiatives to promote sub-regional and national ISFSs. There is an understanding within the AU that FAO's technical leadership in ISFS work is crucial for such outreach activities. Products like the 2006 assessment of sub-Saharan early warning systems prepared by FAO for the AU with EC funding[38] have played an important role in various organizations' advocacy efforts for ISFSs.

78. However, the full relevance of such activities is highly dependent on the implementation of a dissemination strategy with clearly stated goals and objectives at various levels. In the case of the EW assessment, partners at regional level agreed early on that the results should be presented to heads of state at an AU meeting to gain full political support. A presentation of main results was put on the agenda for such a meeting in 2006, but the meeting was cut short before the assessment could be presented. To the disadvantage of the report and of FAO, the partners have not been able to organize another opportunity until now, for an upcoming meeting of heads of state in July 2009, to present the study officially within the AU. FAO's lack of an overt strategy for dissemination and pragmatic but risky practice of depending on others for dissemination opportunities of this sort in the region - for instance using CILSS food security meetings - has not been adequate. In the case of this particular 3-year-old product, some sub-regional EW units had still not seen the assessment at the time of the Evaluation, though they could have benefited from it.

2.1.4.5 Latin America

79. FAO played a facilitating role in the establishment of the regional Food and Nutrition Surveillance System Network (SISVAN) in 1986 covering 17 South and Central American countries. The 2004 assessment of the FIVIMS initiative[39] identified

[37] The inter-governmental organization, IGAD (Intergovernmental Authority on Development), has had limited capacity for more than a decade. While food security is among the main objectives of IGAD, ISFS activities are mainly limited to ICPAC, the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre producing decadal, monthly, and seasonal climate forecasts for the region.

[38] Tefft, J. And McGuire M. (2006) "Planning For The Future: An assessment of food security early warning systems in sub-Saharan Africa" Food and Agriculture Organization, Rome

[39] McCalla, A.F. and Mock, N. (2004) "Report of the External Assessment and Strategic Planning Exercise (EASP) for the Interagency Working Group, Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems", IAWG-FIVIMS, Rome

SISVAN as "the best institutionalized multi-sectoral food and nutrition information initiative" at regional level. The network served inter alia as a platform for exchange of experiences and capacity building. However, over the last six years SISVAN has not been active as a regional support structure due to limited national commitment and the ending of FAO's technical support from the regional office. Some national governments have expressed concern and requested renewed support from FAO.

80. Recent discussions within the Organization of American States and in response to the 2007 / 08 global food price inflation have also pointed to the need for strengthening food security monitoring. More recently, FAO has participated in a partnership to support sub-regional, national, and local ISFSs in Central America through an EC funded project. The sub-regional ISFS aims at building ISFS capacity in intergovernmental organization - Central American Integration System (SICA). According to a 2007 evaluation of the project regional food security monitoring capacity has been strengthened at SICA, which has led to influencing particularly climate change policies[40].

2.1.4.6 Asia

81. ASEAN agreed in 2001 to establish a regional Food Security Information System (AFSIS), to meet the need for inter-country information and support national ISFSs. This activity was somewhat parallel to some of FAO's regional support activities, particularly, regional system for exchange of food and agricultural data[41] launched in 2001 and FAO-FIVIMS support to the Asia-Pacific Network for Food and Nutrition (ANFN) launched in 1999. In spite of declarations during project and programme designs of coordination among these different regional activities addressing ISFS aspects, it was noted in the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistic in 2006[42] that countries often had different focal points for FIVIMS and AFSIS indicating lack of coordination. But at that meeting, Japan as the main donor of these various activities also insisted on the need for FAO's engagement in AFSIS to benefit from the organization's technical ISFS knowledge and leadership.

82. This example from FAO's ISFS support in Asia is typical for the dilemma in determining the relevance of the two organization's ISFS support. There was clearly a need for support to regional ISFS activities but the means of delivery of the support might not have been the most relevant. Particularly, the lack of sufficient integration into existing structures such as the ASEAN has been a weakness.

2.1.5 Support to ISFS Functions

83. Conceptual work on food security shows that at various stages different stakeholders will have different information needs. Those needs can be categorized into five major ISFS functions as shown in the ISFS definition presented in Section 1: baselines, early warning, needs assessments, monitoring of food security, and monitoring and evaluation of activities to promote food security. This does not mean that an ISFS should undertake all these functions but rather that there should be an overall coordination to ensure that all functions are attended to.

[40] Palermo, M. et al. (2007) "Programa Regional de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional para Centroamérica – PRESANCA - Misión De Evaluación de Medio Término" Comisión Europea.
[41] Strengthening Regional Data Exchange System on Food and Agricultural Statistics in Asia and Pacific Countries
[42] FAO (2007) "Report on the Twenty-First Session of the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics – Thailand 2006" Food and Agricultural Organization, Rome

84. The Evaluation found that some functions are more developed than others. The most developed functions appear to be needs assessments and baselines. At the opposite end, information from the monitoring and evaluation of activities to promote food security, including responses to food insecurity is largely ignored by the ISFSs, and early warning capacities seem to be eroding. This observation was found to be valid at national, regional, and global level.

2.1.5.1 Baselines

85. Overall, the Evaluation found that FAO and WFP ISFS support to baselines is highly relevant at national, regional, and global levels and both interviews and the online survey confirmed ISFS users' appreciation of this support for their food security related activities.

86. While the CFSVAs produced by WFP are baselines in themselves, many of the different ISFSs supported by FAO and WFP generate products that can be used directly to establish baselines. This is particularly the case with FAOSTAT, which is generally considered relevant and useful by all ISFS stakeholder groups although the requirement for Internet connections seems to reduce the relevance for certain user groups. The Evaluation found, though, that many potential users were unaware of the possibilities offered by FAOSTAT, a problem reinforced by the perception by many users that the websites of the two organizations are complicated to navigate. More recent FAO products such as the GIEWS workstation[43] and Country Statistical Information System for Food and Agriculture (CountryStat) that facilitate data management are considered as promising initiatives to provide baseline functions allowing for comparison in time and space.

87. At country and regional levels the Evaluation identified several FAO / WFP supported initiatives that users appreciate for their complementary baseline information. Over the last decade WFP has supported the preparation of poverty maps in various countries in Asia, Latin America, and Africa to support targeting and resource allocation using poverty as a proxy for vulnerability, particularly in countries characterized by a general lack of data. This was the case in Cambodia in the 90s, for instance, where has generated poverty maps almost every second year since 1995. In addition to WFP's internal use, the poverty maps are used by various partners for activities not directly linked to WFP decision-making processes. In Cambodia, for instance, the Asian Development Bank used the 2001 poverty map for the baseline for an integrated rural development project.

CFSVA: WFP's Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis[44]

Since WFP launched the CFSVAs in 2004 to establish much needed baselines in WFP's programme countries, more than 40 CFSVAs have been completed. While the online survey showed a relatively higher percentage of respondents declaring to be familiar with CFSVAs than was found among other stakeholder groups it is important to note that CFSVAs are known and appreciated for analyses not directly related to

[43] GIEWS workstation is an open-access software developed to strengthen national capacity in the use of information for improving food security policies through standardized data management, analysis, and presentation and dissemination, including early warning. The software is linked to a reference database with texts, datasets, satellite images, and geographical information system layers related to food security at global, regional, national, and sub-national levels. The finished product - GIEWS WS version 3.1 - was only launched in April 2009.

[44] The comprehensiveness refers to the integration of all major dimensions of food security such as nutrition, social factors, policy environment, natural disaster risks, etc. The CFSVA format is a further development of an initial generation of baselines launched in 2002 (Standard Analytical Frameworks)

WFP's food assistance. In particular, users declared CFSVAs highly relevant for targeting food security interventions. Some OECD[45] and UN decision-makers, though, noted during the Evaluation that the lack of comparability in time and space of the baselines limit their relevance. Moreover, there is a concern regarding the lack of sufficient and reliable information on key food security elements. Many of the first generation of CFSVAs, for instance, did not include anthropometric measurements as part of the household surveys but used secondary data to inform nutritional indicators. Likewise, some resource persons interviewed noted that the current livelihood analyses do not allow for sufficient understanding of the implications of different response strategies. These different challenges were highlighted in the 2006 external review of the effectiveness of CFSVAs[46]. The review also points to the lack of a standardized methodology, making the CFSVAs less relevant. It is expected that with the application of the new guidelines that were launched in May 2009, CFSVA comparability in time and space will be possible, thus increasing their relevance. It is expected that the guidelines will address another general concern regarding the CFSVAs related to their coverage of all aspects necessary to undertake food security analyses. It should be noted, however, that a certain flexibility to adapt the CFSVAs to specific contexts is also requested by many stakeholders, for instance to allow the CFSVAs to be harmonized with other country-specific surveys. This underlines a constant dilemma for many ISFS products: on the one hand the need for comparability and use of well-established methodologies to increase transparency, and on the other hand the need for adaptation to local and national contexts.

88. While many of these regional and country level initiatives provide significant baseline information and are highly appreciated by ISFS stakeholders, a major challenge to their use is the lack of predictability as they are typically prepared as a single event with no inbuilt plans for regular updating. Furthermore, they are not always well publicized.

89. The relevance of FAO / WFP support to baseline functions is confirmed by the important level of external funding. The CFSVA in Rwanda (2006), for instance, was prepared with funds from the United Nations Fund for Children (UNICEF), the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), and Doctors Without Borders (MSF) Belgium, among others. The recent decision of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to fund two rounds of CFSVAs as well as the establishment of CountryStat in 17 African countries is based both on the Foundation's own needs for reliable baseline information and the belief that countries should have a strengthened capacity to undertake these functions.

2.1.5.2 Early warning

90. Early warning is critical for all food security stakeholders. According to interviews during the Evaluation, though, the perception of many stakeholders was that the warnings produced are not early enough to allow for crisis prevention or risk reduction. Rather, the timing of early warning only allows for responses to existing crises, for instance pre-positioning of food aid responses, while it is not early enough for interventions to prevent crop losses in the first place, making the early warning functions less relevant.

[45] Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
[46] Development Information Services International (2006) "Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis: An External Review of WFP Guidance and Practice" ODAV, World Food Programme, Rome

91. Many stakeholders expressed the appreciation that FAO's unique support to early warning systems from the late 70s to the 90s[47] greatly improved early response to looming crises. Moreover, the approach was regularly adapted and developed into more integrated early warning systems and with greater links to decision-making. However, since then, the reduction of project support for EW has had a severe negative impact on the early warning capacities in many countries, such as in Southern Africa.

Relevance of Early Warning and translation into actions – Locust Control

Locusts started invading croplands in the Sahel in at the end of June 2004. In October 2003, FAO had already issued an early warning to boost control efforts including spraying the swarms before they started moving from Northern Africa. As very limited funding and responses materialized (The African Development Bank funded US$ 6 million to the FAO EMPRES programme for activities in the Sahel countries) FAO issued an appeal for US$ 9 million in February 2004 but failed again to obtain adequate responses to prevent a locust invasion in the Sahel. In August 2004, FAO estimated that the costs for containing the locust problem would be more than US$ 100 million. In June 2005, it was estimated that the livelihoods of more than 9 million people had suffered from the combined impact of the locust upsurge and reduced rainfall.

92. Although there is a certain improvement with regard to more integrated early warning systems, the Evaluation found that existing early warning functions still tend to focus on agricultural production through use of climate forecasts. Forecasts of health aspects of food security directly linked to nutrition, for example, are still not common. While FAO and WFP responded to the 2007-08 food price inflation through analysis of the impact on vulnerable populations and future food security in general, recent studies of the response to the crisis indicate that better and more integrated early warning systems would most likely have significantly mitigated the severe impacts of the price hikes.

2.1.5.3 Needs assessments

93. Needs assessments, particularly for emergency and humanitarian interventions, have received a lot of attention over the last decade through initiatives such as SENAIP. The Evaluation found that there is a general perception that WFP's leadership in improving needs assessments has been strengthened and improved over the last few years. This has taken place with regular collaboration and support from FAO, which has increased the relevance of the assessments for food security interventions. Many stakeholders highlight that a fundamental improvement has been the increasing focus on non-food aid needs.

94. In emergency situations, decision-makers are clearly waiting for WFP assessments to inform their decisions. In Sri Lanka, for instance, all decision-makers interviewed were waiting for WFP to provide them with regular assessments of needs in the troubled North and East of the country. Similarly, in Kenya the Evaluation

[47] In support of FAO's relief operations started in 1973 in response to the Soudano-Sahelian drought, began in 1978 for the development of regional and national Early Warning and Food Information Systems (EWFIS) "particularly through projects lasting from between 2 and 12 years. The objective has been to develop sufficient local- and/or regional-level capacity to enable national governments and subregional organizations to monitor the food supply and demand situation closely and to provide timely notice of impending food problems" (FAO (2002) "Thematic Evaluation of Strategy A.3: Preparedness for, and effective and sustainable response to, food, and agricultural emergencies", Food and Agriculture Organization, Rome

found that decision-makers were waiting for the assessment that the Kenya Food Security Steering Group coordinates twice a year with major WFP support. Still, needs assessments are often not comparable, which is an important aspect for some OECD decision-makers. Within WFP, it is expected that the 2nd edition of the EFSA Handbook in May 2009 will lead to greater harmonization of the approaches used for emergency needs assessments. Before finalization, the Handbook was the subject of a consultation with participation of INGOs, national NGOs, governments, UN agencies[48], and some donors.

2.1.5.4 Monitoring of Food Security

95. As part of SENAIP, in 2005 WFP launched the FSMSs as country or region specific systems to monitor food security and vulnerability to provide early signs of possible deterioration and if needed trigger emergency assessments. Participants at the first SENAC[49] meeting in 2005 noted that WFP had no particular comparative advantage in supporting FSMSs, and that the relatively large number of actors already supporting different ISFSs, such as FAO and FEWS NET, would dictate the approach, which WFP should apply in the implementation of FSMSs. However, the meeting also acknowledged WFP's substantial ISFS experience and capacity, justifying that WFP should support FSMSs. WFP recognized in December 2008[50] that "many challenges remain to ensure the comprehensiveness, sustainability, and cost effectiveness of the systems." The 2007 SENAIP evaluation notes that the Chad FSMS implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture is very popular in WFP and among ISFS stakeholders.

96. The FSMS framework was applied by WFP to studies on the impact of increasing food prices in around 30 countries in 2008 / 09, and used to produce a quarterly global bulletin on price impacts. These price impact analyses are highly appreciated by ISFS stakeholders and considered highly relevant as monitoring instruments. During the Evaluation, OECD donors and INGOs interviewed, highlighted that a major challenge used to be the lack of appropriate monitoring of regional and international markets.

97. Global Information and Early Warning System' (GIEWS) role in food security monitoring is generally recognized as a unique global monitoring instrument. Around 12 percent of the respondents of the online survey identified GIEWS as the FAO ISFS they were most familiar with and rated it as relevant to their work functions.

Nutritional Monitoring in Mali

In 2005 WFP launched a sentinel system for nutritional monitoring in Mali with regular anthropometric measurement of children under 5 in communities selected based on results from a rapid assessment in 2004. Interestingly, nutritional aspects were in fact already included in the national ISFS in Mali established in the mid-1980s. However, when the system was reorganized in the 90s it was concluded that it would be too expensive to maintain that surveillance system with its 630 sentinel sites.

[48] It was noted during the Evaluation that FAO did not respond to the invitation for commenting
[49] SENAC, Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessments Capacities is an EC funded program to facilitate the SANAIP.
[50] WFP (2008) "Evaluation of WFP Capacity Development Policy and Operations" World Food Programme, Rome

2.1.5.5 Monitoring and Evaluation of Responses to Food Insecurity

98. The Evaluation found that ISFSs often neglect the function of systematic monitoring of activities to promote food security and particularly of responses to food insecurity at global, regional, and national level. For instance, some ISFSs do not facilitate mid-term assessments of operations to know if they are delivering on the intended results, whether markets are able to fill more of the food gaps identified, and whether operational adjustments or even a change of course might be required. Information which is available from assessments, monitoring reports and evaluations by governments, projects or agencies are often not recorded or reported by the ISFSs.

99. The Evaluation identified several exceptions however. In Somalia, for example, a Food Security Analysis Unit (FSAU)[51] 2007 analysis of malnutrition rates by location, compared with INGO nutritional rehabilitation activities by location, identified a mismatch between needs and responses. The analysis resulted in refocusing the geographical targeting of agencies working in this sector. Formal or informal joint food security response monitoring also typically occurs in the context of cluster responses where the use of the cluster approach facilitates regular information sharing and, particularly in the case of pooled cluster funds, reporting. Similarly, the national ISFS platforms that are supported by both FAO and WFP provide great opportunities for monitoring and evaluation of response activities and the Evaluation found that some of the national ISFSs, such as the Kenya Food Security Steering Group, organize regular discussions on the efficiency and effectiveness of food security interventions.

100. Overall however, interviews with OECD donors and national Government stakeholders indicate that there was a very strong request for real-time evaluations during emergency response actions to see if needs had been rightly estimated in initial assessments, or if new information shows a need to alter the content of the relief operations.

101. An important role of the monitoring and evaluation of activities to promote food security is identification of good practices. Both FAO and WFP issue regularly bulletins, press clips, special reports, etc., on such good practices. However, much of this very valuable and highly relevant information is not reaching all stakeholders through the current communication channels, as discussed later in this report. In general, little effort is invested in using the monitoring function for systematic identification of good ISFS practices.

2.1.6 Addressing Emergency and Development Contexts

102. The concept of food security including availability, access, utilization, and stability as applied in FAO and WFP's food security frameworks covers both emergency and development contexts. The Evaluation found that ISFS initiatives such as FIVIMS, GIEWS, and VAM in principle are relevant to emergency, humanitarian, and development food security management among all stakeholder groups. As discussed in the section on the use of FAO / WFP supported ISFS products, the terminology and expectations related to ISFSs tend to stress humanitarian use rather than development. This has a clear impact on the use of the products but it does not mean that the content of the products is not generally relevant.

[51] Operated through a FAO project and functions in practice as the national ISFS.

103. The Evaluation found that while the demand for well-functioning ISFSs is relatively high among OECD decision-makers, this is mainly true in the context of information systems related to emergencies. As stated in the 2004 evaluation of the FIVIMS initiative52 the current generation of integrated development instruments such as PRSPs and the Millennium Development Goals that often give priority to food security should lead to greater attention to the need for ISFSs for management of development assistance. However, the Evaluation did not identify many concrete examples of OECD decision-makers expressing the need for ISFSs for development planning. It might be argued that funding for ISFS initiatives through development grants, such as EC-EuropeAid[53] funding for FAO's large FSIA programme (see box in section 2.1.1 above), do in fact reflect a development interest in ISFSs among OECD decision-makers. Also, as noted above, the concept of ISFS is often poorly understood by a number of potential users, including donors.

104. CILSS countries in West Africa, as well as Asian countries such as Cambodia and Indonesia, have arguably made good progress in establishing systems for monitoring the emergency-to-development "contiguum54". The Harmonized Framework55 developed by CILSS with WFP and FAO support, for instance, is based on this perspective. Overall, however, a simplistic dichotomy in analytical understanding is still common practice, and a review of ISFS products suggests that food security situations are often classified as either emergency or non-emergency. The issue is further discussed in the finding sections 2.4.1 on use of products from FAO / WFP supported ISFSs.

2.2 Efficiency of FAO / WFP support to ISFSs

105. The efficiency of FAO and WFP's support to ISFSs is evaluated through an assessment of the performance of the support activities and their contribution to needs and demands. Efficiency issues related to synergies, complementarities, and / or duplication and contradiction between the support provided by FAO and WFP are addressed in the section (2.6) on complementarity and cooperation. Considering that the focus of the Evaluation is on the usefulness of food security information for decision-making making processes the efficiency assessment deals with the overall aspects of FAO / WFP support and does not provide detailed financial analyses related to the input provided.

2.2.1 Cost-effectiveness Considerations

106. A review of project and programme documents related to FAO / WFP ISFS support for the period being evaluated reveals little information regarding cost-effectiveness analyses or considerations that might have taken place in preparation of the support. Alternative input options are normally not presented, nor are analyses showing the comparative advantages of FAO / WFP support compared to that of other organizations. A large part of FAO and WFP's ISFS support is based on

[52] McCalla, A.F. and Mock, N. (2004) "Report of the External Assessment and Strategic Planning Exercise (EASP) for the Interagency Working Group, Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems", IAWG-FIVIMS, Rome

[53] Europeaid is the development arm of the European Commission

[54] Referring to relief and development situations and response options co-existing in the same time window rather than seeing them as linear and necessarily sequential.

[55] CILSS launched the Harmonized Framework initiative for the Identification of Zones at Risk and Vulnerable Populations in 1999 to improve the quality of early warning information and ensure uniform calendars and methods across the region.

the core list of integrated ISFSs, support initiatives, and products that form the focus of this Evaluation[56]. Principally, these different initiatives are based on standardised Headquarter (HQ)-developed methods and approaches, which might increase the cost-effectiveness particularly from a global perspective through broader-scale utilization of investment in concept development. Moreover, standardized methods are required to respond to typical demands from OECD donors and INGOs for ISFSs that allow for comparisons among countries, sub-regions, and regions.

107. However, if the objective is to strengthen local and national systems to respond to specific demands at those levels and ensuring harmonization and alignment with existing relevant structures and capacities, the support needs to be flexible and cost-effectiveness considerations will be different.

108. Both organizations provide technical assistance to national and regional ISFSs through project-based support that has typically involved considerable preparation activities which seek to ensure cost-effective use of project funds. In Mozambique, for instance, FAO provided technical assistance to the national ISFS, SETSAN through a five-year capacity development project launched in 2002. The project was designed after a six-month preparatory project with in-country consultations meant to identify the most efficient approach for providing support.

109. In an example where this did not lead to better cost-effectiveness, an 18-month preparatory project was launched in 2004 to prepare FAO's support to Mozambique's Agricultural Statistics System. The project supported, inter alia, the introduction of FAO's CountryStat software, and the preparatory activities included an analysis of existing structures and systems. In spite of this, during the Evaluation's visit to Mozambique it was noted that the national counterpart, the National Statistical Institute, applies other software programmes similar to CountryStat but provided by other cooperation agencies. While it might be justified from FAO's global perspective to apply CountryStat, the cost-effectiveness at national level of running several similar software programmes is questioned. However such issues were not examined in the project documents.

2.2.2 ISFS Organizational Architecture

110. FAO's ISFS support originates in a large number of initiatives, departments, and projects, which does not allow for an overall picture of support options. This is a serious challenge to the efficiency of FAO's ISFS support. The scattered nature of support combined with the lack of systematic assessments of weakness of ISFSs and a corporate ISFS strategy becomes particularly critical, as there is no clearing-house function to ensure that the most appropriate support is being provided. While programme entities in support of FIVIMS and GIEWS in principles should provide the corporate ISFS vision, FAO continues to provide support to the development and functioning of ISFSs through a wide range of initiatives.

111. Project and programme coordination structures at FAO HQs with participation of all relevant technical units have proven to increase the efficiency of ISFS support, particularly for integrated multi-function and wide-coverage national and regional ISFSs, e.g., SETSAN in Mozambique and FSAU in Somalia. On the other hand, FAO's ISFS support is often provided as single-function activities; for instance support to early warning systems or CountrySTAT with limited coordination or even awareness of other relevant support activities in the same country.

[56] The core list is presented in Table 1, Chapter 1.

112. While FAO country and regional offices in the field could play a clearing-house role at national level, part of the HQ ISFS support is provided directly to national institutions bypassing country and regional offices and thus lowering efficiency. Moreover the lack of a single vision is reflected in the often unstructured interactions with partners that might have to interact with many different but uncoordinated units, lowering potential efficiency benefits of partnerships.

The importance of location of the national ISFS: cases from Mozambique, Kenya and Latin America

Mozambique constitutes an interesting twist to the usual situation. Initially, the national ISFS, SETSAN, was established within the Ministry of Finance and Planning with support from FAO. However, the Council of Ministers decided to move SETSAN to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development in 1998 as food security was considered to be an agricultural production concern. With support from FAO[57] SETSAN has advocated for the establishment of what is referred to as the "Brazilian Model" with a national food security council at the prime ministers' level. However the efforts have not been successful and SETSAN has difficulties in ensuring full participation of other line ministries. Efforts to move SETSAN physically out of the Ministry of Agriculture to improve sector integration have not proven successful either but rather strengthened the perception in SETSAN of isolation not only vis-à-vis other ministries but also within the Ministry itself.

There are also countries where the organizational architecture causes serious efficiency challenges despite ISFS's location outside of the Ministry of Agriculture. In Kenya, the ISFS is located within the Office of the President, which would appear an ideal situation for its convening and political power. However this location has meant that the system is primarily linked to emergency programmes. While it has proven to be a well-functioning institution for emergency response, the structure is generally considered weak for integrating and addressing longer-term development situations.

113. In terms of the efficiency of the ISFSs that FAO and WFP are supporting at national level, the organizational architecture is a key factor, for instance for ensuring efficient use of existing information sources as well as allowing efficient communication with different actors whether their focus is emergency response or longer-term development. Historically, FAO has supported the establishment of ISFSs within the ministries of agriculture in many countries and thereby limiting the full integration of key sectors such as health and nutrition.

114. FAO and WFP are aware of the importance of the organizational anchoring of national ISFSs and the issue is discussed in various guidelines and capacity development material developed by FAO, such as the Handbook for Defining and Setting up a Food Security Information and Early Warning System[58] and the online training modules developed under the FSIA initiative[59]. But the limited use in practice of proper organizational and institutional analysis outlining strengths and weaknesses of various options, as a basis for the design of national ISFSs, is limiting national ISFS efficiency and ultimately FAO and WFP ISFS support.

[57] Through the 2002 – 2007 project "Support to the Coordination Structure for Food Security Information System Activities of the SETSAN" - (UTF/MOZ/071/MOZ)
[58] FAO (2000) "Handbook for Defining and Setting up a Food Security Information and Early Warning System (FSIEWS)" FAO, Rome
[59] www.foodsec.org

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115. In Latin America and Caribbean national ISFSs have primarily been located within health ministries and offices reflecting the strong role played by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in supporting ISFSs in the region. The effect this has of limiting the focus mainly to health and nutrition was highlighted as a major concern for the effectiveness and sustainability of ISFS in the region in FIVIMS workshops in 2002[61]. The VAM structure within WFP integrates the organization's ISFS support with clear definition of development of key ISFS functions: baselines through CFSVAs, needs assessments through EFSAs, food security monitoring through FSMSs. The management of VAM under one single unit, the Food Security Analysis Service (OMXF), is found to greatly increase efficiency allowing for coherence and transparency of ISFS work at HQs as well as in the field through VAM officers in country and regional offices as the key focal points. The fact that WFP's ISFS support is primarily for internal use, furthermore increases efficiency as has been seen with the SENAIP, which allows for a monitoring of the overall efficiency of ISFS information products for decisions related to WFP food assistance. The Evaluation found that key elements that have led to the relative success of SENAIP include improved technical guidelines, greater standardization of the information system processes, and better adaptation of ISFS products to WFP programming needs.

[60] Through the 2002 – 2007 project "Support to the Coordination Structure for Food Security Information System Activities of the SETSAN" - (UTF/MOZ/071/MOZ)

[61] FIVIMS / FAO (2002) "Informe de la Reunión Conjunta IX Mesa Redonda de la Red de Cooperación Técnica en Sistemas ee Vigilancia Alimentaria y Nutricional (Red SISVAN) y VI Reunión del Grupo de Trabajo Interagencial (GTI) Sobre Sistema de Información y Cartografía sobre la Inseguridad Alimentaria y la Vulnerabilidad (SICIAV)" FAO Regional Office, Santiago de Chile

2.2.3 Communication

116. Communication is a critical element for the efficiency of any information system. The communication concept is often used in a very general manner and often as a synonym for information. However, communication is much more than information dissemination. In fact, a basic principle of communication is to make sure that the transmitted information will be understood and hence any communication should be based on a good knowledge of the context of the target group, in terms of values, priorities, resources, capacities, etc. Communication becomes even more important, and takes on added dimensions when it involves inter-cultural or inter-organizational communication, which is the context for practically all ISFS work.

Putting one's own recommendations into practice

The online food security training programme developed under FAO's Food Security Information for Action initiative offers a number of "hands-on-training" modules, which were highlighted as a positive component in the 2009 FSIA evaluation.[62]

Among the courses offered under the food security programme are "Food Security Information Systems and Networks," "Reporting Food Security Information", and "Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis". Each course is comprehensive and covers a number of recommended practices that would offer a quantum leap towards more efficient ISFSs *if* they were being applied by FAO itself and by WFP. For instance, it was observed during the country visits of this Evaluation that there is little to no tradition of targeted and differentiated communication. Also, information is normally disseminated with no follow-up. Both differentiated targeting and follow-up to dissemination are highlighted in the online training as examples of good practice.

117. The Evaluation found that proper communication strategies are a general challenge for practically all ISFSs. The Evaluation identified very limited targeted communication based on understanding of the potential users of food security information, including their priorities and capacity to use the information. This reflects a key finding in the joint AU-EC-FAO assessment of food security EWS in sub-Saharan Africa63 that "the format and content of many reports demonstrate the lack of a clear communication strategy that identifies what change or action needs to occur, which decision-makers need to be informed, and how to formulate a comprehensible message."

118. Interviews with different stakeholder groups during the Evaluation showed a concern regarding the length and details of many ISFS products, which impacts negatively on efficiency of communication. Many donors and INGOs called for greater attention to targeted and shorter briefs that were policy oriented and policy useful for decision makers, whether in donor agencies, NGOs or the concerned countries.

[62] www.foodsec.org
[63] Tefft, J. And McGuire M. (2006) "Planning For The Future: An assessment of food security early warning systems in sub-Saharan Africa" Food and Agriculture Organization, Rome

Information Dissemination Strategy in Mozambique

While the communication strategy is still not finalized, SETSAN has institutionalized a set of communication principles based inter alia of the FAO and WFP support. As such, communication is often done in phases which helps forewarn politicians for instance through info flashes, and press releases which will be followed by final reports and bi-annual meetings with the council of ministers and the state administration. Likewise, one-page information sheets are often issued before assessments to increase the attention from various stakeholders, including potential participants in the assessments.

The communication strategy builds inter alia on the experience from the 2005 drought, which led to media statements about famine, which was far away from the fact. SETSAN used the occasion to train governors and media about the meaning of food security, famine, and malnutrition and some impact has been observed in terms of less use of the famine concept.

119. Both FAO and WFP have taken various concrete steps to improve communication through the format of the disseminated information, for instance the systematic use of one-page summaries highlighting key elements in CFSAMS. In Southern Africa, WFP is preparing regular fact sheets summarizing the CHS[64]. Although mainly prepared for WFP's internal monitoring the CHSs are highly appreciated by partners for their comprehensive yet succinct information and presentation of key Food Security areas such as effects of food assistance, contribution to total income, livelihood sources, targeting efficiency, and preferred type of assistance. Moreover, since 2006 WFP has increasingly used Executive Briefs for EFSAs, CFSVAs, and Market Studies. These briefs are typically two pages long, focusing on key issues.

120. An important finding is that the extent to which ISFS information outputs actually influence decisions external to FAO and WFP is very much a function of how ISFS results are communicated. In this regard, words are important. The credibility of assessments can be undermined or questioned by inappropriate choices of words in press releases[65] and ambiguous "marketing" language not supported by the assessment. In the interviews numerous respondents pointed out that advocacy efforts, especially by WFP, have led to altered perceptions of assessment credibility. Inappropriate communication has often been cited as a reason for the delayed response to the Southern Africa Emergency in 2003-04. In spite of assessments by various international agencies such as Save the Children indicating the use of inappropriate communication during that emergency, many of the communication mistakes were repeated during the 2004-05 food security crisis in West Africa, which started with strong media focus on Niger. Some of the early communication problems leading up to the 2004-05 crisis were seen by stakeholders as the result of confusing, ambiguous and at times contradictory messages coming from different agencies and entities.

121. A perverse effect of the inappropriate choice of words to describe an evolving food insecurity problem can also be to inadvertently worsen a problem situation by causing speculative traders and farmers with surpluses to retain rather than market stocks, resulting in price increases and worsened food access. This

[64] Community and Household Surveillance

[65] WFP has recently developed a quality control system which it hopes will help ensure that inappropriate language in press releases is flagged by its Technical Units, Country Offices and Regional Bureaus, and resolved prior to final clearance by the Communication Division in Rome.

points to the need to strike a careful balance between the more evidence based but overly technical ISFS products and the more emotion based media advocacy communication for the wider public.

Communicating Food Security Analyses in Kenya

The Kenya Food Security Steering Group has prepared Short and Long Rains Assessments Reports for several years based on a close collaboration among key line ministries (mainly agriculture, health, water, and education), UN agencies, FEWS NET, and INGOs. The 2005 report after the long rains marked a shift in terms of data collection when household and community surveys became a major input component with samples of 4,000 households. Another major shift to the food security assessments has been the application of the IPC framework and the 2007 Long Rains Assessment report shows major changes in the analysis and presentation including a substantially improved coherence between the response analysis and the situation assessment. Moreover, the application of the IPC framework and increased focus on livelihood zones has improved the comparison among the districts and thereby improved the overall presentation of a national report instead of a list of analyses of the different regions. The improved consolidation of district analyses into an overall national analysis has also greatly reduced the size of the document, which is an important factor for its final use. The 2005 main report, for instance covered 87 pages while the 2007 report was presented in 23 pages. (Independent IPC Review, 2009).

122. The Evaluation also found that WFP is aware of this perception among many potential users of their ISFS products. WFP's regional information officer in Nairobi, for instance, is regularly organizing events to "educate" the media about food insecurity and the meaning of terms such as famine, transitory vs. chronic food insecurity, and malnutrition. The initiative responds inter alia to WFP's concern about the local media's indiscriminately use of the word "famine" for most levels of food insecurity. Likewise, WFP's Executive Director sent out a message to all Country Offices requesting that statements should not be out of proportion and that numbers should not be overestimated. Annual programme quality assurance meetings should in principle also cover communication policies. However, WFP recognizes that once press releases are issued the organization has very limited control over the further use of the messages even by 'enlightened' media such as IRIN and Reliefweb.

2.3 Usefulness and Accessibility of Products from FAO / WFP Supported ISFSs

123. The effectiveness of FAO / WFP ISFS support is evaluated against the improvement of the usefulness and accessibility of products generated by the ISFSs being supported by the two organizations. The effectiveness assessment focuses on key quality requirements identified by different stakeholder groups and gives special focus to decision-making processes. A summary of key strengths and challenges of specific ISFS qualifiers identified by the Evaluation is presented in Annex 3. Moreover, the online survey puts special focus on key qualifiers of ISFSs. The analysis of the Survey is presented in Annex 1.

124. In the interviews, many respondents particularly cited substantial improvement in the quality of the needs assessment function as a direct outcome of FAO and WFP support, including new ISFS products that have been developed over

the last six to eight years to improve data management, analysis, and comparability at country, regional, and global level.

125. The Evaluation found that emergency decision-makers, in particular, generally identify the ISFS products and support provided by FAO and WFP as useful, and many point to quality improvements observed over the last decade. Crop forecasting tools and methods developed and rolled-out by FAO in the 70's and 80's are still in obvious use today, although the lack of financial and technical resources have modified their usefulness.

2.3.1 Accessibility

126. Both interviews and the online survey showed that stakeholders generally find that most ISFS information products are accessible to the wider public. Almost half of the ISFS users participating in the online survey rated both FAO and WFP's ISFS products as accessible. The use of electronic media has greatly improved and most ISFS information products are posted on relevant and open-access websites such as those of national Government Institutions, FAO and WFP corporate websites, and specific and relevant country office websites of the two organizations. In addition, products are disseminated though both electronic and hard-copy mailing lists, although the audience for these lists are generally very limited and often require active attention from the user to know about the possibility to be on such lists. While the websites are generally recognized as important sources of information, many users have trouble navigating to the different portals with food security information and much information remains unknown to a large group of users. Moreover, Internet connectivity and reliability remains a major challenge for many potential users of ISFS products. On the other hand, during the interviews several decision-makers, particularly at management level, indicated that they rarely use FAO and WFP websites at all in spite of good Internet connectivity. Both organizations undertake ad hoc surveys of accessibility of ISFS products although the Evaluation did not identify a systematic use of such surveys.

2.3.2 Compatibility and Comparability

127. There has been an increasing focus on compatibility and comparability of data as part of the different ISFS initiatives over the last decade. The VAM system offers a suite of ISFS functions that are compatible. Furthermore, the increasing use of standardized methodologies for the different VAM products facilitate comparison in time and space. FAOSTAT and the linked CountryStat, similarly, allow for greater comparability. Likewise, the EC-funded FSIA has a stated objective of promoting methodologies that are compatible with international standard classifications. Some users, though, indicate that their institutions use other data management systems that are not necessarily compatible with FAO / WFP datasets.

128. Methodological differences continue to be a major challenge to both comparability and compatibility. During the interviews stakeholders often referred to the problem as more linked to some organizations' need for branding than for keen interest in overall usefulness of IFSI products. While WFP and FAO were sometimes specifically mentioned in these statements they tend to reflect a more general concern.

129. Other compatibility and comparability challenges are related to insufficient understanding of food security and the relationship between the different

components of the concept. It was found, for instance, that many assessments combine food production data set with nutritional surveys from another year.

Methodological differences in Ethiopia

ISFS methodologies and approaches particularly for needs assessments have received a lot of attention over the years in Ethiopia. A methodology subgroup was established under the Early Warning Working Group within the national food security platform in 1996. WFP has participated actively in the debate and development of new approaches with an internal preference for quantitative methods rather than qualitative such as the Household Economy Approach promoted by Safe the Children-United Kingdom, which was finally adopted in 2008.

According to a WFP sponsored 2005 review of needs assessment practices in Ethiopia[66] "This difference in methods became the subject of serious personality and institutional clashes, the legacy of which is still felt today. In more recent years, particularly from 2000, the methodology sub-group of the Early Warning Working Group has been through a much more collaborative and constructive period of discussion, problem identification and piloting of new methods."

The Evaluation found that while the debate might still continue, issues of comparability and compatibility have improved.

2.3.3 Comprehensive Food Security Information

130. The Evaluation found that in recent FAO and WFP ISFS work there is an increased attention to the need to cover all key food security elements - availability, accessibility, utilization, and stability, and therefore also to include relevant data on a wide range of issues. These include areas such as gender, urban issues, nutrition, income opportunities, health, etc. However, while many users appreciate the increased availability of data related to access and use, some users referred to the lack of integration of the data in many ISFS information products. Particularly, OECD and government decision-makers called for integrated information that will reflect all different aspects and not leave it to the user to combine several datasets. Several of these OECD decision-makers interviewed for the Evaluation commented that they are not able to get all the information they would like from FAO and WFP to understand underlying factors of the increasingly complex global food security situation.[67]

131. The online survey confirmed some concern among many different stakeholder groups regarding the limited attention specifically to nutrition, to gender, and to urban issues in a number of ISFS information products. While relatively few

[66]Haan, N. et al. (2005) "A Review of Emergency Food Security Assessment Practice in Ethiopia" Overseas Development Institute, London

[67] These interviewees identified some examples of gaps which they felt could be better covered by FAO and WFP supported ISFSs, including:

- Comprehensive analyses of livelihood stresses and with predictive outcomes.
- Complete baselines with timely monitoring updates to discern and predict trends,
- More sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis,
- Comprehensive information on urban food security,
- Analysis of threats to pastoralist livelihoods and livestock related issues.
- Regional and sub-regional price and market analyses,
- Analysis of national and sub-regional labor markets and wages,
- Nutrition monitoring with real time and compatible data,
- Analysis of transitory versus chronic food insecurity, and
- Analysis differentiating vulnerability to different types of threats.

respondents to the online survey indicated familiarity with IPC, IPC products are highlighted for their integration of different food security components.

Comprehensive Food Security Information in Somalia

The FSAU implemented by FAO with funding from the EC) was established to provide readily available and relevant information for better Food Security interventions in Somalia. The FSAU originally developed the IPC approach, which allows comprehensive food security information based on information generated through different ISFS projects, including a USAID funding Nutrition project, and the EC-funded Somalia Water and Land Information System (SWALIM) implemented by FAO. To facilitate the overall coordination and harmonization of the different ISFSs efforts have recently been made to move the units closer together physically in Nairobi.

FSAU produces a wide range of products, including monthly FS and nutrition briefs and market and climate reports as well as technical reports and maps with classification of food insecurity. FSAU is also issuing regular press releases and offer presentation in various settings. Many of the information products are issued in both English and Somali. FSAU is maintaining a website with relevant FS documents prepared by the FSAU, including normative products. The products are generally praised; particularly products that allow an easy overview such as the maps.

The 2008 final evaluation of phase 5 of the FSAU project[68] showed that FSAU is a key information source for programming of activities of a wide range of development and emergency actors such as UNICEF and the Ministry of Water. However, it also noted that some targeted users find the information too complicated and lengthy and do not use all of the products.

132. The online survey confirmed some concern among many different stakeholder groups regarding the limited attention specifically to nutrition, to gender, and to urban issues in a number of ISFS information products. While relatively few respondents to the online survey indicated familiarity with IPC, IPC products are highlighted for their integration of different food security components.

133. While both organizations have clearly stated policies for coherent integration of the role of women and gender aspects in all projects and programmes, the Evaluation found limited attention to the minimum requirement for any gender analysis, namely sex-disaggregated data. It was noted, for instance, that among the long line of annual CFSAMs in Ethiopia only the 1995 CFSAM[69] had a special section dedicated to gender issues while all the following CFSAMs had limited, if any, references to the role of women and gender relations. Therefore, the targeting and subsequent monitoring utility of CFSAMs in Ethiopia was highly questioned. At the beginning of 2000, the FAO Gender and Development Service (SDWW), the FAO Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division (TCE), and WFP agreed to collaborate in the preparation of a "Guide on Socio-economic and Gender Analysis for Emergency and Rehabilitation Programmes.", which contains special modules on how to integrate gender in different ISFS functions such as needs assessments. During country visits, the Evaluation noted a very little, if any, knowledge of these guidelines among FAO and WFP staff working with ISFS issues.

[68] Bell, L. et al. (2008) "Support to the Food Security Analysis Unit (Phase V) – Somalia FAO OSRO/SOM/604/EC (EC FOOD/2006/118-318) & Nutrition Information Project (Somalia) FAO OSRO/SOM/702/USA" Final Evaluation, Food and Agriculture Organization, Rome

[69] The World Conference on Women in Beijing took place in 1995.

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134. The Evaluation also found that analysis of livestock and fishery resources are rarely fully integrated in national ISFS information products. In Kenya, for instance, it was noted that there is a perception that lack of appropriate early warning and needs assessment information related to livestock conditions contributed to the lack of an adequate response to the drought in 2006, which ultimately lead to the deaths of more than 2 million goats. Still, the early warning systems in Kenya collect on a monthly basis, data on rangeland conditions, including livestock prices and some animal health information.

135. The issue of comprehensive ISFSs have received a lot of attention over the last years. Particularly, many ISFS practitioners feel that big integrated systems covering all aspects should not be strived at. Rather, different contexts call for different ISFSs and often single-item systems. National and regional ISFSs if applied as coordination platforms play a key role in ensuring that comprehensive food security information is available although not necessarily generated from single systems.

[70] Bell, L. et al. (2008) "Support to the Food Security Analysis Unit (Phase V) – Somalia FAO OSRO/SOM/604/EC (EC FOOD/2006/118-318) & Nutrition Information Project (Somalia) FAO OSRO/SOM/702/USA" Final Evaluation, Food and Agriculture Organization, Rome

Comprehensive Food Security Information in Somalia

The FSAU implemented by FAO with funding from the EC) was established to provide readily available and relevant information for better Food Security interventions in Somalia. The FSAU originally developed the IPC approach, which allows comprehensive food security information based on information generated through different ISFS projects, including a USAID funding Nutrition project, and the EC-funded Somalia Water and Land Information System (SWALIM) implemented by FAO. To facilitate the overall coordination and harmonization of the different ISFSs efforts have recently been made to move the units closer together physically in Nairobi.

FSAU produces a wide range of products, including monthly FS and nutrition briefs and market and climate reports as well as technical reports and maps with classification of food insecurity. FSAU is also issuing regular press releases and offer presentation in various settings. Many of the information products are issued in both English and Somali. FSAU is maintaining a website with relevant FS documents prepared by the FSAU, including normative products. The products are generally praised; particularly products that allow an easy overview such as the maps. The 2008 final evaluation of phase 5 of the FSAU project[71] showed that FSAU is a key information source for programming of activities of a wide range of development and emergency actors such as UNICEF and the Ministry of Water. However, it also noted that some targeted users find the information too complicated and lengthy and do not use all of the products.

2.3.4 Consensus based Information Products and Independency

136. During the Evaluation the IPC approach was often highlighted by donors, FAO and WFP stakeholders, and INGOs for the special effort the approach gives to food security analysis based on consensus among key partners. On the other hand, it was noted that while some consultation with key partners take place before final information products are been publicized it mainly consists of requesting comments on draft analyses. However, while stressing that consensus based products increase their usefulness, many users also recognize the challenges involved in such processes and that the timeliness of the products can be jeopardized. In Ethiopia, WFP and FEWS NET have been issuing monthly joint food security bulletins since 2007 recognizing the increased usefulness of such an approach. However, in some cases the internal approval process within FEWS NET has led WFP to issue its own bulletin in addition to promoting fast dissemination of the information.

137. Several country examples showed that when the national ISFSs are based on multi-stakeholder partnerships and consensus information, they have a much higher impact on decision-makers. The Evaluation found that national ISFSs such as Kenya's inclusive Kenya Food Security Steering Group, Mozambique's SETSAN, Burkina Faso's Food Security Information System (SISA), the FSAU for Somalia, and the Council on Agriculture and Rural Development of Cambodia are all examples of strong partnership around food security and food security information. In all these cases, interviewees underlined the importance of shared responsibility over the

[71] Bell, L. et al. (2008) "Support to the Food Security Analysis Unit (Phase V) – Somalia FAO OSRO/SOM/604/EC (EC FOOD/2006/118-318) & Nutrition Information Project (Somalia) FAO OSRO/SOM/702/USA" Final Evaluation, Food and Agriculture Organisation, Rome

information for increasing credibility and consensus on decisions about responses. In this respect, the Evaluation notes a significant increase in partnerships and networks at all levels in ISFS work over the period under review. These emerging networks are considered a very positive development, because such partnerships, by fostering information sharing also help create consensus on a situation and lead to more appropriate responses. Interviews with OECD donors indicated that consensus-based ISFS products are considered more credible and expected to lead to earlier response and funding decisions.

Integrated Food Security Phase Classification

Together WFP and other key international partners FAO developed the IPC as a new approach in response to the protracted food crises in Somalia. The basic principle is that consensual food security analysis among different agencies will promote transparency, clarity, and understanding of the food security situation. This will then improve the thrust and quality of the food security information and thus promote better-informed decisions related to responses to food insecurity.

Since IPC's launch in 2004 donors, UN agencies, and INGOs have highly appreciated the approach, including the consensus building. The positive feedback to IPC's usefulness for decision-making processes related to food security quickly led to the suggestion for its application beyond Somalia. In 2006, FAO and key partners, including the EC, WFP, UNICEF, FEWS NET, Oxfam-Great Britain, Care International, and Save the Children - United States met to further discuss the options for a broader scale introduction of IPC. Certain challenges were identified and partners agreed to test the approach in different regions and for different purposes. While IPC in principle is a general approach and not an organizational programme, the fact that FAO has taken the leadership in its implementation since 2004 also led many to see IPC as FAO's approach. In 2008 / 09 a formal partnership among INGOs, UN agencies, and FEWS NET was established to strengthen the IPC as a common approach. Through the partnership, partners agree to some key principles, including that IPC should be a consensus process facilitated by a broad interagency working group, including national governments and other key constituencies.

Importance of Collaboration in Reducing 'Interview Fatigue' - the example of Somalia

A common argument for inter-agency assessments is the need to overcome perceptions of agency biases and thus provide more credible results. However, as highlighted by Niazi (2006) joint assessments should also be seen as a means to reduce the number of assessments that many communities have to endure resulting in an "aversion by the public to assessments." In fact, in many vulnerable regions specialized agencies will carry out separate assessments for water, infrastructure, health, education, food security, and other sectors. In Somalia, "there are regular monthly assessments and many ad hoc assessments. Drought brings its own barrage of assessments before, during and after. All these questions raise expectations and complaints about unmet needs, when projects to meet those needs may be months if not years away. Asking and measuring a desperate family's level of hunger, without providing any immediate relief, is itself a challenge for both the researcher and the interviewee."

2.3.5 Credibility

138. The Evaluation found that users of ISFS products generally consider FAO data as credible and data from FAOSTAT and GIEWS, for instance, are often cited in other ISFS products.

139. In spite of some older perceptions of WFP as being biased towards inflated needs assessments, there is an increasing recognition of the credibility of WFP data. WFP / VAM work is well-known and appreciated among key ISFS stakeholders, including national governments, donors, INGOs, the mass media, and research institutions. In particular, the CFSVAs are appreciated for offering important and reliable baseline information and are now widely used by both humanitarian and development actors. Many new rural development programmes, for instance, are based on CFSVA information.

140. These gains in credibility are at risk if the communication of these needs assessments is inappropriate in choice of language or presentation of facts, as observed in paragraph 121. Numerous interviewees raised the issue of ambiguous advocacy efforts which can alter the perceptions of credibility.

141. As mentioned above, both organizations participate in a number of initiatives to increase the credibility of their ISFS information products. Furthermore, both organizations promote principles methodological soundness and joint assessments in ISFS capacity development initiatives.

2.3.6 Timeliness

142. In order for ISFS information products to be useful, the timeliness requirements include demands for both collecting ISFS information in a timely manner and to ensure that the information products are disseminated according to the information users' calendars. Overall, the Evaluation found that assessments are done in a timely manner; for instance emergency assessments are carried out quickly after being triggered by early warning signs. These warnings come from various sources, including for instance annual cropping assessments, which are also undertaken appropriately according to the agricultural calendar.

143. Interviews with OECD decision-makers made it clear to the Evaluation that the timing of the dissemination of the results of an FAO / WFP early warning report or needs assessments is critical for their usefulness for programme decisions. While most assessments take place according to agricultural calendars or immediately around emergencies, the communication of results is not always geared to the decision-making calendars of key decision-makers such as governments, donors, and INGOs. Decisions within OECD donor agencies, for instance, are often time bound by legislated policy restrictions, budget request deadlines, and end of fiscal year obligations limiting carry-over from one fiscal year to the next. Moreover, while the fiscal year in most donor agencies follows the calendar year, there are several exceptions including Japan, Canada, United Kingdom, and United States of America, thus creating different calendars and windows of opportunities for donor responses.

Immediate 'rough and ready' information versus more substantial information at a later stage: the case of the 2004 tsunami response

An evaluation of needs assessments in the 2004 Tsunami[72] notes that the mass media, and not the UN, was able to provide convincing early assessments on immediate needs. As a result of the intensive media coverage donors became very anxious to show immediate response, with the result that the mass media being the prime if not only source of needs information. This led the evaluation to question the investment in cross-sectoral humanitarian assessments if the results are mostly irrelevant to key decision-making. However, the more formal UN needs assessments were used at a later stage by donors to justify initial funding. The report shows how agencies carrying out proper needs assessments, for example following Sphere standards, were penalized in the end as other agencies had moved in with funds based on little to no assessments. It notes that Canada decided to await proper needs assessments before response planning, but that this position was sharply criticized by the Canadian public.

144. In addition, dissemination of food security information is often delayed by long analysis and editing processes and multiple layers of approval, including by governments in the concerned country or region. In Burundi, for instance, it was found that the editing of the IPC Report can take up to a month while official approval processes in some countries can take several months. There is also an inherent dilemma in striving for more government involvement and national ownership of ISFS functions and food security information and minimizing the time lag between data collection, analysis and the dissemination of results. This clearance/ ownership process frequently does take time, but many ISFS users suggest that it would be very useful to have discrete communication of preliminary findings to key partners prior to formal publication of results. Both FAO and WFP have shown efforts to overcome some of these challenges. For CFSVAs, for instance, the draft report and results are shared and recommendations are discussed with main partners and governments before the report is finalized, allowing for a first initial communication of results. WFP analysts are also encouraged to prepare and disseminate an executive brief presenting the main findings of an assessment, before the final report is made available.

2.4 Use of Products from FAO / WFP Supported ISFSs

145. The impact analysis focuses on the extent to which the information products have been used to inform decision-making related to food security interventions, policies, and programmes for emergency, humanitarian, and development contexts.

2.4.1 Analysed ISFSs primarily serve decision-making processes related to humanitarian contexts

146. While broader ISFS initiatives such as Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems(FIVIMS), GIEWS, and VAM are based on ISFS models integrating both development and emergency elements, the Evaluation found that the primary interest in ISFS products is related to emergency and humanitarian

[72] de Ville de Goyet, C. and Morinière, L. (2006) "The role of needs assessment in the tsunami response" Tsunami Evaluation Coalition, London

contexts. Likewise, the Evaluation found that previous WFP and FAO supported ISFS projects and current initiatives at country level indicate that they are often designed to serve both development and emergency information needs and to cover the multi-sectoral dimensions of food security. In practice, however, most ISFSs analyzed for this Evaluation[73] focus on the generation and analysis of information on transitory food insecurity. Likewise, the majority of the resources persons informing the Evaluation are mainly engaged in humanitarian related activities.

147. It should also be noted that the concept of ISFSs and the terminology used to describe ISFS functions such as needs assessments and early warning are often associated with emergency and humanitarian contexts. Recent development with increased focus on the need to integrate disaster risk management[74] in development efforts as highlighted in the Hyogo Framework for Action might very well change this general perception. Still, conclusions from various evaluations and assessments of ISFSs over the past years[75], found that food security information is mainly used to inform decisions on response actions to emergency and humanitarian situations, while the application for longer-term development related decisions is much less apparent. Interviews for the Evaluation confirmed this perception among different ISFS stakeholder groups although the Evaluation also found that ISFS information products are being used to justify development programmes and projects. CFSVAs, for instance, are being cited more and more often in poverty eradication strategies.

148. The majority of the standard methods and approaches that have been developed by the two organizations, such as CFSAMs, IPC76 and EFSAs, are designed specifically for situational analyses in emergencies. While there is a widespread use of tools that serve analytical needs for information and analysis related to chronic food security and poverty reduction, such as CFSVAs, they serve mainly as an analytical backdrop for understanding the impact of emergencies on different population groups. Similarly, while the information collected by ISFSs could be usefully employed to better understand and provide guidance for disaster risk management77 and post crisis / conflict response, the analytical ISFS tools analyzed for this Evaluation do not offer targeted information for long-term development decisions.

149. The focus on emergency is not only reflected in the design as discussed above in section 2.1.6 but also in the use of ISFS products. During the Evaluation, for instance, it was observed that national governments primarily report food security information for emergency mitigation contingency planning, for instance to support food reserve management. Likewise, WFP, FAO, and INGOs report using food security information mainly for the preparation of humanitarian work plans, funding appeals, and for advocacy to galvanize donors in emergency situations.

[73] Kindly refer to the core list of ISFSs presented in Chapter 1

[74] Baas, S. et al. (2008) "Disaster Risk Management Systems Analysis" Food and Agriculture Organisation, Rome

[75] See for instance list of ISFS related assessments, reviews, and evaluations in Annex 4. These studies have all been used to inform this Evaluation

[76] An on-line expert consultation on the IPC in 2007 highlighted the focus on acute food insecurity within the IPC phase classification system and the need to refine the definitions of categories at the other end of the spectrum i.e. moderately food insecure.

[77] The Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2011 approved by most countries outlines the major priorities of disaster risk management integrating emergency response, disaster mitigation, with disaster prevention through long-term development investment

Could IPC promote greater integration of development and emergency actions?

The IPC framework, which was developed for food security management in Somalia, has been introduced to a number of countries in Asia and Africa over the last couple of years through FAO and WFP leadership. A major criticism has been the focus on emergencies in the indicator framework and food security categories or phases. As a result of this criticism, it was decided in Kenya that a sixth phase should be included to describe livelihoods that may still be vulnerable even when production is good. Such conditions would be typical for protracted crises. The Kenyan IPC partnership under FAO leadership therefore developed criteria for a new phase reflecting food secure zones but with low resilience. It was further suggested that the new phase should be included in an updated IPC Technical Manual[78].

Ultimately, however, the IPC Partnership has decided not to move ahead with a six-phase classification. Instead, a more detailed analysis of the current food secure phase will be supported if necessary in countries where current analysis will not reflect all necessary nuances. In the view of the Evaluation, this is a sound decision only if the IPC is to be applied first and foremost in emergency / humanitarian contexts.

150. The Evaluation found that ISFSs can be responsive to decision-making calendars around emergency response planning such as the Common Appeal Processes for humanitarian crises and WFP Emergency Operations. On the other hand, ISFS activities are generally not well oriented around development planning cycles, such as annual government planning and budgeting, sectoral strategy revisions, and donor strategic planning cycles. Some notable exceptions, however, were documented during the country visits, including ISFS contributions to the PRSP decision-making process in Mozambique; VAM and FIVIMS products integrated into the PRSP and other development decisions in Cambodia; and ISFS analysis supporting social safety net programming in Ethiopia. Furthermore, there were found to have been an increase in the use of ISFS products in CCAs as well to inform some national development strategies

2.4.2 Different Decision Maker needs at different levels and at different times

151. Understanding the contexts and circumstances in which decisions are made is key to the impact of food security information on decision-making processes. However, the Evaluation found many cases of inadequate understanding of the different elements that characterize stakeholders' decision-making, including the policy context, the organizational complexity, timetables, budget and general resource constraints, and organizational integration and networking.

152. At HQ and decentralized levels many programme officers will make daily decisions on whether further actions are required based on general monitoring of the food security situation. According to interviews during the Evaluation, FAO and WFP technical staff use internal and external monitoring systems and generally feel that they have sufficient information to decide whether or not a given situation would warrant further attention from their organization.

[78] IPC Global Partners (2008) "Integrated Food Security Phase Classification Technical Manual. Version 1.1." Food and Agriculture Organisation, Rome

153. The Evaluation found that programme staff working with longer-term development activities use products from the ISFSs reviewed by this Evaluation to further illustrate and strengthen their background analysis. For instance, CFSVAs are used to justify PRROs as well as longer-term development interventions. However, these products are rarely seen as critical to programme decisions

154. At higher levels of the decision-making chain, including the management levels, the use of ISFS information products is often indirect: decision-makers use information provided by their programme officers, which will typically be based on ISFS products. This leaves programme officers with an important influence on information inputs to decision-making and hence a need for appropriate contextual analyses and the capacity to understand the importance of the food security information they receive to the final decision-making of their organization. The tracking of the impact of ISFS information products on the final decisions thus needs to look at many different levels and the real impact from one level to the next basically remains unclear. The general impression highlighted in past evaluations that ISFS information products have limited impact on food security related decision-making is therefore also difficult to confirm.

155. process is complex and dynamic, and would merit greater analysis in order to maximize the impact of ISFSs.[79]

Use of needs assessments for decisions in the wake of the Tsunami

FAO's evaluation of the response to the Tsunami[80] notes that after some initial "guestimate" assessment missions, the recovery assessments were well-structured but biased towards agricultural production and with limitations in the approach applied, for instance regarding involvement of stakeholders. Moreover, FAO together with other international stakeholders initiated monitoring and evaluation at a relatively early stage of the food aid response to the Tsunami although no systematic monitoring system was established. The evaluation concludes that the integrated food security assessments based on livelihood approaches have contributed significantly to recovery and rehabilitation strategies that FAO developed in cooperation with national governments. The evaluation also shows how both FAO and WFP food security assessments have had impact on decisions regarding modalities for future recovery and rehabilitation programmes, including locally anchored development, whether in terms of local food purchase or local construction of livelihood assets such as boats. However, the longer term needs identified went largely unmet.

156. The Evaluation found that OECD donors generally use information from many different sources, including their country missions, embassies, and from non-WFP and FAO sources. FAO and WFP products are perceived as being of great value for programme and policy decisions, typically as part of an information triangulation process. However, the same ISFS information products will often directly or indirectly inform many of these different information sources. In addition, the information enters into decision-making contexts that are influenced by a number of other factors too, including organizational structures, budget processes and calendars, and

[79] A typical analysis of decision-making processes will include assessment of the complexity of the policy context (e.g. number of decision-makers and hierarchy levels, resources available, integration and networking, and political commitments) combined with the severity of constraints on decision-makers (e.g. time constraint, comprehensiveness of available information, clarity of problem definition)

[80] FAO (2007) "Real Time Evaluation of the FAO Emergency and Rehabilitation Operations in Response to the Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami" Food and Agriculture Organization, Rome

foreign policy and political considerations. This decision-making environment and While as noted already, WFP ISFS information products are used extensively within WFP, the Evaluation found limited observable impact of these food security information products on donor decision-making. This finding was in line with the 2007 SENAIP evaluation. So while programmes such as the SENAIP have led to widely recognized improvement of WFP's assessment procedures and production of internally useful information, the impact of the needs assessments on external decision-making processes still needs strengthening. As part of the SENAC project, WFP commissioned several studies on the linkages to decision-making81. One of those studies[82] looks at food crises in Pakistan, Malawi, Sudan, and Somalia and concludes that "the extent to which WFP's assessments influenced external decisions stemmed from the way assessment results were communicated, as well as their perceived credibility".

Linking needs assessments with response design – WFP's Response Analysis Project (RAP)

As highlighted in many ISFS related evaluations and assessments linking assessments with design of responses has been a constant challenge. In 2007, WFP undertook a review to identify links between decision-making and emergency needs assessments[83]. The review showed that at the early stages of crises WFP responses tend to match assessments. However, over time as more information and more detailed analyses emerge the gap between assessments and responses become more and more marked. With funds from the German Government WFP launched in 2008 an 18-month project to improve the links between situation analysis, response option analysis, and response design. The project has allowed WFP to undertake a number of studies and reflections. In 2009, the organization analyzed 60 interventions over a three-year period 2006 – 2008 and found that 50 percent of the response activities had never been recommended in the assessments. It was found that particularly assessments making more detailed recommendations were more likely to be used that assessments with very general recommendations. It is expected that the Response Analysis Project will allow greater engagement of decision-makers in the analysis of response options.

2.4.3 Role of Content of Food Security Information in Decision-making

157. The Evaluation found that while donors call for more information on needs, they also often complain about the large quantity and length of assessments. The 'food balance sheets' typically produced by national ISFSs[84] are an example of this contradiction between simplicity and the need for more information. National food balance sheets have been highly criticized over the years for not presenting a sufficiently comprehensive picture of the food security situation. Critics say they must include more food products that are part of the local diet, such as roots, tubers,

[81] See Evaluation of the SENAIP (Maunders et al., 2007)
[82] Darcy, J. et al. (2007) "A review of the links between needs assessment and decision-making in response to food crises" Study Undertaken for WFP under the SENAC Project, Overseas Development Institute, London
[83] Darcy, J. et al. (2007) "A review of the links between needs assessment and decision-making in response to food crises" Study Undertaken for WFP under the SENAC Project, Overseas Development Institute, London
[84] FAOSTAT also produces country Food Balance Sheets (FBS), which contain several hundred commodities for any one country

fish and meat; and that they need to be combined with information on cross-price elasticities of demand for basic food items. But their simple and clear format means they are easily understood and provide an availability forecast at a relatively early stage. The Evaluation found that these food balance sheets are still widely used for emergency planning by government institutions in food insecure countries, as well as by agencies and donors.

158. Similarly, donors are often ambiguous regarding the role they think needs assessments should play in providing recommendations for response planning, and they will often question prioritization resulting from needs assessments. Better understanding of the causes and consequences of food insecurity influences decision-making. It is also understood that the simple facts are not enough, unless they are presented in ways that resonate with the priorities of the different decision-makers. This is needed to ensure that the many aspects of food security will be addressed when policy and programme planning decisions are taken. There are different viewpoints regarding the level of information required and warranted from ISFSs to inform decision-making. Some ISFSs, for instance, are only doing "basic data / information" with no interpretation. Others develop advocacy messages as part of the interpretations, while some ISFSs produce action-oriented information with clear response recommendations or even solutions based on formative research.

159. As an example, during the 2008 Independent Review of the implementation of the IPC approach in Eastern and Central Africa, several donors noted that they would always double-check priorities for food security interventions identified in analysis such as the IPC, as part of their decision making process. However, some donors also noted that with the current move towards sector-wide funding, donors will be less likely to have their own network in the field that they can rely on for checking information, which should lead to more interest in proper ISFS assessments and response options for decision-making.

160. Initiatives such as the Food Security Information for Action (FSIA) have put greater emphasis on the complexity of decision-making, for instance in the distance learning training application. However suggested methods for improving the understanding of decision-making processes is still very limited as highlighted by the FSIA programme itself. Recent initiatives such as the ongoing FAO study on the role of food security analysis in decision-making are expected to improve the consideration of decision-making contexts within ISFS activities.

2.5 Sustainable Benefits of FAO / WFP ISFS Support

161. In development assistance, sustainability of donor-funded initiatives is defined by the OECD/DAC[85] to be "the continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed". When referring to institution building for and operation of national information systems of the kind which this Evaluation has reviewed and where "continued benefits" implies continued operation, this means a transfer of funding and operational responsibilities to the national governments after the end of external funding. This Evaluation of FAO / WFP support found it challenging to apply this traditional sustainability definition to most ISFS support.

[85] OECD Development Assistance Committee

162. In the case countries visited as well as in those reviewed through documentation the Evaluation did not find any examples of sustainability, which would fit the above description, in particular the take-over of full funding of the ISFS by national institutions. The analyzed ISFSs where external funding had come to an end had suffered significant setbacks, and in many cases the systems had all but ceased to function. There are examples of national ISFSs depending mainly on national government funding, for instance in South Africa and Botswana, but these are not from the lowest income countries, which are the main focus of WFP and FAO assistance.

2.5.1 Reconsidering the Concept of Sustainability for National ISFSs

163. Compared to previous generally negative assessments of the sustainability of FAO and WFP's ISFS support, this Evaluation found a more nuanced picture. On one hand, FAO ISFS support has strengthened integrated ISFS structures in many countries, including all those visited during the Evaluation. Moreover, while WFP in the 80s and 90s carried out ISFS work primarily for internal corporate use, WFP's support is now part of key national ISFSs in many countries in developing regions. The better functioning ISFSs are usually based on partnerships or networks between national governments, UN agencies, donors, and INGOs, where all have a say and a clear stake. FAO and WFP have often facilitated these partnerships.

164. On the other hand, as mentioned above, none of the systems reviewed were able to demonstrate the allocation of sufficient national funding to maintain the system without external support. This indicates that ISFSs, when designed to serve both donor and national food security information needs - as nearly all are - are not a high enough priority for national governments of low-income countries to allocate sufficient funds when faced with many other pressing issues.

165. Donors interviewed clearly indicated the critical importance of the information from national ISFSs for their own planning, policy-making, and accountability. This raised a key issue in the Evaluation's discussions: it is not only governments and other national stakeholders such as civil society organizations that have an interest in ensuring well-functioning national ISFSs. Donors, as well as development agencies and INGOs, all have a clear vested interest in maintaining the flow of high quality food security information for decision-making and advocacy. Therefore, sustainability cannot be considered an objective to be achieved only through national ownership and national funding. All stakeholders, and in particular donors, along with national governments, must consider the scenario of long-term shared funding and support - indefinite as long as the need for information remains. Therefore, in the case of information systems for food security, sustainability should be redefined to include the long-term continuation of shared funding to ensure continuation of benefits to all parties.

166. The Evaluation observed two examples in CILSS countries where this principle is already being explored. The first is the experience of Burkina Faso.

167. The national ISFS in Burkina, generally known by the French acronym for 'early warning system', SAP, was originally established in the 1980s as part of an overall regional SAP system in the CILSS countries with technical and financial support from FAO and other external actors. From 1984 through 2000, the national

SAPs received important financial assistance from an EC-funded project[86] which was initiated in 1984 as a capacity-building initiative. The overall objective of the EC project was to support the creation of national and regional ISFSs to provide political decision-makers and partners with necessary and timely information on the development of agricultural production in order to improve food security in the region. When the EC funding ended in 2000, many of the national Early Warning Systems (SAP) became practically non-functional. It soon became clear to external partners that the lack of FS information due to the end of the national SAPs hampered decision-making, including their own. With external funds and committed support from partners including WFP and FAO as well as the EC, the SAP in Burkina Faso was reinvigorated and is now functioning as a multi-stakeholder partnership among external partners, the government, and some civil society organizations. The government is allocating specific funds to the SAP, but it is not able or willing to cover the full cost of the system.

168. The second interesting example of donors' vested interest in SAPs leading to long-term funding is from Mali. The interest of donors and other external agencies to partner with national ISFSs was demonstrated in a 2002 assessment of the agricultural sector in Mali[87]. The assessment indicated that the Malian Government would assume 50 percent of the recurrent costs of the SAP while international donors would fund the rest. According to the assessment, the Government of Mali was in a position to assume the whole budget but several donors had made a strategic decision to continue to fund part of the SAP in order to continue to influence and improve information products for their own needs.

2.5.2 Capacity Development and Sustainability

169. The global assessment of FIVIMS in 200488 concluded that "the current analytical and technical capacity of most food insecure developing countries is so limited that sustainability is highly questionable and that FIVIMS is a fragile intervention that has a questionable prognosis for longevity."

170. Within the framework of support to national ISFSs, both FAO and WFP have provided substantial training assistance for ISFS capacity development throughout the current decade, on the assumption that this will promote institutional sustainability. While the training activities might be effective in the short term, the Evaluation found that most training was not planned within a framework of longer-term institutional sustainability.

171. WFP is primarily focused on food security assessment and analysis as part of its ongoing activities, and FAO's support includes different ISFS functions and activities through in-country projects, online training courses, scholarships, conferences and workshops, as well as "on-the-job" training. While participants are clearly happy with the training received, there is generally no systematic follow-up. In addition, the Evaluation found that there has been a tendency for capacity development support to focus on training of individuals rather than development of organizational capacity. This was also a finding of the 2008 evaluation of WFP's

[86] Called DIAPER – 'Diagnostique permanent' - Permanent (generally bi-annual) Regional and National Food Security Diagnosis.
[87] ABT (2002) "Mali Agricultural Sector Assessment" United States Agency for International Development Mali Mission, Mali
[88] McCalla, A.F. and Mock, N. (2004) "Report of the External Assessment and Strategic Planning Exercise (EASP) for the Interagency Working Group, Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems", IAWG-FIVIMS, Rome

capacity development policy and operations89. Considering the fast staff turn-over that characterizes most of FAO and WFP's partner institutions, this approach does little for sustainable institutional change.

172. In an example from FAO's regional IPC project in Eastern and Central Africa, 'training-of-trainers' workshops were organized. However, the programme of these workshops was not based on prior assessments of whom the trainers would train or how the training would take place, including what technical support the trainers would need once they were going to apply their newly acquired skills.

173. In another case, FAO introduced a training-of-trainers approach in Mozambique where initial planning and preparation included careful field assessments for the identification of suitable trainers. However, while this approach initially proved more successful, with course graduates going on to provide training to others, there was inadequate support for ensuring that the pool of trainers would continue to be renewed, that the trainers would be employed for training purposes, and that the trainers would receive sufficient follow-up support.

174. There are some recent positive examples of partnerships and contracts with national training institutions, which should help to overcome the problem of weak follow-up to capacity development interventions. For instance, FAO and WFP are providing technical support to the establishment of a Centre of Excellence90 on ISFS at the Kwazulu Natal University in South Africa, in support of national ISFSs in the SADC region. The establishment of the Centre is part of an overall five-year technical support project to the southern African VACs. It is expected that this type of centre-of-excellence relationships will help promote self-sustaining ISFSs.

175. As mentioned in the relevance section above (2.1.3), ISFS support is often implemented without proper assessments of need for support. The Evaluation, though, took note of several thoroughly prepared project documents for FAO capacity development support to ISFSs. The example of Mozambique included a thorough review of existing systems, including assessments of the functions of different components in providing ISFS products such as timely agricultural forecasts, though it did not offer a systematic capacity diagnostic as such. In Chad, the FAO SISA-SAP project included a full year of preparatory institutional analysis and exploration of existing capacities and capacity development needs.

176. A final issue is that the support is generally defined, measured and reported upon in terms of products or outputs, such as number of workshops organized or number of people trained. There is little or no reporting on outcomes, such as through verification of post-training capacity or the application of training content to ISFS work. Reporting thus provides little information on the potential sustainable benefits.

2.5.3 Weakness of the Project Approach for ISFS Support

177. The Evaluation found that FAO's project-based support model is inconsistent with positive longer-term impact of ISFS assistance. This type of assistance lacks predictability, continuity and stability. Time-bound projects usually end with unclear strategies and no resources for continued technical support and follow-up from FAO.

[89] WFP (2008) "Evaluation of WFP's Capacity Development Policy and Operations" World Food Programme, Rome

[90] In cooperation with partners, SADC is currently establishing a network of Centers of Excellences for different sectors to serve the whole region

The problem is compounded by the fact that ISFS support is often not part of an overall national country strategy for FAO's medium- and long-term interventions. Furthermore, FAO's ISFS support is sometimes provided through emergency funding and is hence short-term and tend to be piecemeal in nature in the absence of an overall corporate ISFS support strategy. Though mainly an issue for FAO, this problem of predictability and stability in project assistance is now also - to a lesser extent - something WFP will need to consider with the implementation of its Strategic Objective 5 on capacity development.

178. The Evaluation found in several countries that the organizational structure of FAO creates additional problems related to the sustainability of FAO's capacity development support. This because various Headquarters divisions will often provide direct support to national institutions but without engagement from FAO's country representations, further reducing possibilities for follow-up. The problem is made worse by the fact that many FAO country offices have limited capacity. The challenge was raised in many of the interviews during the Evaluation.

179. Even in countries with relatively strong national ISFSs with government ownership, the project approach has had its limitations. In Ethiopia, for instance, a reasonably well functioning sentinel site system for nutritional data established through external support came to an end more than 10 years ago and the national ISFS is often criticized for its lack of appropriate attention to nutritional aspects. Likewise, during the country visit national ISFS users in Ethiopia stated that data from the Central Statistical Bureau were more easily accessible when FAO provided more technical support through specific projects.

180. FAO recognizes the shortcomings of the project-based approach to ISFS support but it is dependent upon the current structure of FAO's country support. Assurance of long-term ISFS support would require a clearer mandate from the governing bodies to allocate core funding for instance.

2.5.4 Sustainability and Demand-Driven Information

181. The interviews during the Evaluation confirmed the finding of many ISFS evaluations that a key to sustainable ISFS institution building is the production of information deemed essential by the key stakeholders responsible for managing, financing, and operating the system. While normally, this refers to the national government, in the case of ISFS, the information should respond to the demands of all key stakeholders, including government, donors, and other development partners.

182. While FAO and WFP ISFS support is generally based on a background review of existing information and a very broad identification of users and their needs, the Evaluation did not encounter examples of comprehensive analysis of how information is being used in different organizations, of potential ISFS users, of information management capacity, or of other critical elements. It was observed that even where the potential for demand is present, many potential users of food security information are unaware of the possibilities offered by a well-developed national ISFS in terms of policy-useful food security information. Better information, communication, and ISFS needs assessments would greatly increase chances of sustained activity and benefits in the long term. It is expected that strengthened attention to better understanding of decision-making processes through initiatives such as FSIA will address some of these problems.

183. The Evaluation found very little active participation in ISFSs of the private sector and civil society, beyond some participation of national-wide farmer

associations, although these different groups are potentially important food security stakeholders. Chances for sustainability would be enhanced by integrating national NGOs, the private sector, and other national stakeholders in ISFS work at country level in support of food security planning, coordination, and policy work.

2.6 Complementarity and Cooperation of FAO / WFP ISFS Support

184. Over the last ten years, the international aid community has emphasized the need for greater harmonization of UN agencies as expressed, for instance, in the Millennium Declaration from 2000, the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative from 2005, and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness from 2005. Similarly, the UN Secretary General has launched various global initiatives calling on increased collaboration and alignment of UN activities, including the Humanitarian Reform process from 2005 and the Delivering as One initiative from 2007. Lately, the Secretary General's High Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis called in 2008 for better coordination of global monitoring and information systems, stressing the need to combine existing complementarity and overlapping information systems to provide systematic understanding of countries at-risk.

185. The lack of sufficient progress towards the Millennium Development Goal of halving the number of people in the world suffering from hunger by 2015 led the Rome-based UN agencies, together with a number of INGOs, to establish the International Alliance Against Hunger in 2002 based on decisions at the World Food Summit +5. The primary objective was to work in partnerships, including common advocacy and awareness campaigns. As part of the follow-up, FAO and WFP in 2003 signed a joint statement entitled "Deepening the Cooperation", which outlines the complementarity and comparative advantages of the two agencies: FAO's focus on agricultural productivity to enhance incomes and nutritionally adequate food and WFP's focus on food aid to save lives, protect livelihoods, and improve nutrition and health. The agreement highlights that while there are many positive ISFS-related collaboration mechanisms between the two agencies, such as the CFSAMs and FIVIMS there was still room for further collaboration.

186. In 2007, FAO, WFP, and IFAD initiated negotiations for yet another collaboration agreement, under the title "Directions for Collaboration among the Rome-based Agencies". At the time of this Evaluation this agreement was yet to be finally approved by the heads of the three agencies. The Directions paper is organized around four pillars, of which two are of direct relevance to ISFS work: (1) Policy Advice, Knowledge and Monitoring, and (2) Advocacy and Communication. The other two pillars are related to common administration and to operations. The paper highlights WFP's comparative advantage in its extensive field presence and ISFS functions while FAO's comparative advantages include collection and dissemination of global information. The paper furthermore notes that "WFP and FAO already have a long experience of extensive collaboration in vulnerability assessment, early warning systems and information systems."

187. The paper is based, inter alia, on a mapping exercise on collaboration between the Rome based agencies, which indicated that staff of the agencies reported in 2006/07 that there had been 231 cases of 'collaboration' between FAO and WFP. However, the analysis does not allow for identification of ISFS activities as such, nor even of the nature or level of collaboration in the 231 cases. The conclusions show that while commendable progress has been made in terms of

collaboration on administrative issues, joint technical work is still a challenge. Along these lines, in 2007 the joint meeting of FAO's Programme and Finance Committees called for additional information on the potential for collaboration between FAO, WFP, and IFAD on normative activities and on harmonizing data collection and vulnerability mapping methodologies.

FIVIMS: the Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System

As a follow-up to the 1996 WFS, the global FIVIMS was established as an initiative to strengthen governments' commitments to reinforce their own ISFSs (called 'fivims', in lower case) with improved information on who the food insecure are, where they are located, and why they are food insecure, nutritionally vulnerable, or at risk. To promote harmonized advice on the development of methods and tools for national and regional ISFSs (fivims), an Inter Agency Working Group (IAWG) was established as well as a Permanent Secretariat to the Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG). Concrete support to programmes and projects is primarily provided by FAO.

The operationalisation of the basic idea of FIVIMS as an Inter-Agency initiative to promote coordination, harmonization, and efficiency has been questioned in various assessments over the years, including a 2004 Independent FIVIMS Assessment. So while the IAWG has proven an important forum for exchange of initiatives, plans, and experience of the individual partners, the group does not necessarily lead to alignment and harmonization of activities, and a multitude of approaches and methodologies for food security assessments continue to flourish.

In a follow-up to the external assessment of the Interagency Working Group, a business plan process was finally launched in 2006. The business plan process aims at establishing a process that will reinforce the international leadership of FIVIMS on all ISFS matters. According to the original plans the process would have been initiated and finalized already in 2004.

2.6.1 Informal and Formal ISFS Collaboration

188. The Evaluation found that different divisions of the two agencies collaborate on various ISFS activities. However, much of this collaboration is on an ad hoc basis, is not strategically planned, and is based on personalities rather than organizational incentives. The Evaluation found, furthermore, that collaboration is more spontaneous in and around emergencies. It was noted, for instance, that Gaza is an excellent case of productive collaboration between FAO and WFP.

189. In 2008, FAO and WFP both identified lists of countries that suffered severely from the impacts of the food price inflation. However, the lists were not identical, with FAO focusing more on production shortfalls and WFP focusing on import dependency. In the end, though, the two organizations agreed on a common list and important collaborative activities between the two organizations took place over the following year to identify and monitor the impact of the food price inflation at country level. The Evaluation found that this work is particularly appreciated by partners as an example of useful collaboration based on comparative advantages.

It doesn't always work: FAO / WFP Roadmap for Food Security in the Horn of Africa

As part of the UN Horn of Africa Initiative[91], the UN Secretary General's special envoy, K.M. Bondevik, asked FAO and WFP in 2006 to jointly undertake national consultations in the region to identify best practices to address chronic food insecurity. Based on the national consultations FAO / WPF presented a Roadmap in 2007 for future activities to address food insecurity including risk management and crisis response. In spite of a number of international press releases from the UN praising the joint effort and follow-up letters from Bondevik and the UN Secretary General urging FAO and WFP to work together for the implementation of the Roadmap, the initiative has been halted. During the Evaluation, interviewees explained that this was partly due to the lack of government buy-in when it became clear that funding would be limited. Moreover, FAO and WFP had different views regarding the document with FAO feeling that the document was too biased towards WFP activities.

190. Over the last years, more formal partnerships around ISFSs have evolved involving both FAO and WFP. A key example of such multi-stakeholder initiatives is the IPC Global Partners92, which was established in 2008. In 2006 the regional FAO-led interagency working group on food security in Kenya agreed to test the IPC approach beyond Somalia (for which it was originally developed). The regional discussions were echoed at global level and FAO, WFP, and FEWS NET agreed to apply the IPC framework within their food security support activities, WFP through piloting the IPC approach as part of the preparation of PRROs in Asia, FEWS NET through the application of the classification system for the Outlook publications, and FAO by introducing the IPC approach within its country and regional programmes in Africa.

191. The collaboration between FAO and WFP in the pilot activities have faced several challenges, particularly linked to the lack of clear formal agreements at the onset of the country activities regarding roles and responsibilities of the different partners. Part of the problem is linked to funding, branding, and opportunities to use IPC as a means to mobilize resources. Moreover, some of the controversies seem to stem from different interests in the IPC approach, with FAO insisting more on the process, while WFP is more interested in the outcome. In fact, this should not lead to controversies, but can be seen as complementarities and comparative advantages. However, obtaining the benefits of this complementarity will require clear agreements and close collaboration at country level between the two organizations.

[91] The UN Secretary General established in 2000 an "Inter-Agency Task Force on the UN Response to Long Term Food Security, Agricultural Development, and Related Aspects in the Horn of Africa" under the leadership of FAO. Based on country consultations, regional workshops, and agency analysis, the Task Force prepared a Strategy and Framework for Action presented in the document: "The Elimination of Food Insecurity in the Horn of Africa – A Strategy for Concerted Government and UN Agency Action", which was presented in August 2000.

[92] The IPC Global Partners include FAO, WFP, FEWSNET, the European Commission Joint Research Centre (EC JRC), the Famine Early Warning System Network, Oxfam Great Britain, and Save the Children United Kingdom and United States

2.6.2 Crop and Food Supply Assessment Missions - CFSAMs

192. CFSAMs are one of the most cited and concrete examples of FAO and WFP ISFS collaboration. The instrument is intended to respond to early warnings of looming food crises and are undertaken jointly by FAO / WFP technical advisors or consultants coming from outside the country requesting a CFSAM. The number of CFSAMs have decreased substantially over the last five years, reflecting both lack of country requests and lack of funding. However, international food security decision-makers, including donors and INGOs recognize the importance of CFSAMs in countries where information and food insecurity information is very limited, such as Myanmar and Zimbabwe.

193. Ethiopia constitutes a special case for CFSAMs as they have been undertaken annually in that country since 1995. The EFSAs undertaken under WFP leadership are typically carried out some weeks after the crop assessment. However, the phased process – crop assessment followed by an EFSA before final consolidation of the two, has led to unacceptable delays before the final CFSAM can be publicized. For instance, a long-rain EFSA was undertaken in mid-December 2007 but results were still not available for the final CFSAM analysis by end of January and the final CFSAM report was only publicized at the end of March 2008. The phased process also leads to questions about the "jointness" of CFSAMs.

2.6.3 Complementarity between FAO and WFP

194. The Evaluation found that partners generally recognize FAO and WFP's different mandates and interests. The general perception, though, is often reduced to seeing FAO as focusing on agricultural production and WFP on food aid. WFP's perceived link to food aid also makes it less neutral than FAO for many partners. In Mozambique, for instance, FAO was initially the major external partner of the national ISFS, SETSAN. However, with the FAO project support coming to an end in 2007, WFP has increasingly provided necessary external support to SETSAN in cooperation with FEWS NET. The national authorities are keen, though, to have both FAO and WFP as active partners in order to maintain a more balanced dialogue within the ISFS structure and avoid focusing too much on emergency issues because of WFP's and FEWS NET's perceived bias. Likewise, the joint assessments with participation of both FAO and WFP are considered important and the current limited FAO support to SETSAN is considered a problem by the institution.

195. FAO's limited country presence in many cases, combined with the project modality for support, has limited the possibilities for fully exploiting the technical and operational complementarity between FAO and WFP. FAO, for instance, used to lead most market studies at country and regional levels, including a number of market profiles then used by WFP in preparation of EFSAs in Honduras, Guatemala, and Afghanistan within the framework of the SENAC[93] project. However, FAO staff reductions over the last years have forced WFP to gradually take over more and more responsibility for these market analyses.

[93] Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessment Capacity

REACH – End Child Hunger and Nutrition Initiative

In 2005 WFP and UNICEF in collaboration with the World Bank launched an initiative to raise awareness of under five child hunger and the known solutions in order to generate necessary political, financial, and technical resources for effective responses. The initiative builds on a WFP/UNICEF partnership established in 1976. The End Child Hunger and Nutrition Initiative (originally known as ECHUI; later REACH) will establish an information system to map undernutrition at community level, identify needs, monitor responses, and identify outreach partners. In 2008, the partnership was further extended to include FAO and the World Health Organization (WHO). The information system will be developed based on existing systems, surveys, and assessments, including those of WFP and FAO as well as Multiple Indicator Clusters Surveys [94], FIVIMS, INDEPTH[95], and DevInfo[96]. The main focus of REACH has been on operational responses, particularly to malnutrition, with less attention to other elements of food security. According to REACH staff members this is closely linked to the history of the initiative. However, with the wider participation of FAO and WHO it is expected that some of the original principles will receive more focus. It is particularly expected that REACH will develop as a ONE UN initiative at country level.

196. WFP is fully aware of the potential impact of its ISFS information products at national policy level, but WFP interviewees did not consider provision of direct policy advice, to be within its comparative advantage. Rather, WFP seeks to mobilize other partners, including FAO and INGOs, on issues directly linked to national policy making. WFP interviewees referred to recent cases in countries such as Cambodia, Laos, and Liberia where ISFS information products have had a direct impact on policy changes. The main drivers of these processes are the staff at the country offices however, indicating that the use of WFP ISFS products for policy change is to a large degree personality driven.

197. The Evaluation found that OECD donors are interested in seeing a common strategic approach to ISFS among key UN agencies, including FAO and WFP, along with joint work plans and in some cases jointly staffed offices for special common objectives. While donors often minimize their role in defining how agencies such as FAO and WFP are collaborating, many of the positive examples of joint FAO / WFP ISFS work have been brought about by donors. For instance, as mentioned in a case already cited earlier, the EC requested WFP participation in a FAO project to streamline data management in Ethiopia. In another case cited above, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is providing parallel funding to FAO and WFP in support of data, research, and policy analysis in 17 African countries, specifically through funding implementation of FAO's CountryStat and WFP's CFSVAs in those countries.

198. In the case of support to the national ISFS in Chad, the Evaluation found that donors initially considered funding WFP for early warning activities based on their VAM experience. However, further negotiation and recognition of FAO's tradition

[94] Prepared by UNICEF
[95] International network currently consisting of 31 demographic surveillance system (DSS) field sites in 17 countries that collectively monitor 1,800,000 people at a household-level.
[96] Integrated database implemented through the UN Country Teams and used inter alia for MDG monitoring

for working with the government finally resulted in early warning funding being channeled through FAO, with close involvement of WFP in implementation.

2.6.4 Different Organizational Setups and different perceptions

199. As discussed in section 2.2.2, OMXF at WFP was established in a follow-up to the SENAIP to improve response analysis and decision-making through improved assessments: EFSAs, CFSVAs, and Interagency assessments such as CFSAMs, IPC, and PDNAs[97].

200. In FAO, ISFS work is undertaken in a compartmentalized manner, where for example a key ISFS unit, like the Food Security and Agricultural Projects Analysis Service (ESAF) works practically independently of the Emergency Division or the Statistics Division. During the Evaluation many partners expressed concern about the scattered nature of FAO's ISFS work at HQ and the lack of an overall corporate ISFS strategy and business plan. WFP referred to several cases where consultations on ISFS products had not been responded to by FAO, apparently due to the complicated structure and scattered responsibilities, and the difficulty for WFP to know exactly who to address.

3. Conclusions

3.1 Relevance of FAO / WFP Support to ISFSs

201. Overall, FAO and WFP's support to ISFSs is relevant to the needs for improved systems to provide food security information to national governments, donors, FAO, WFP, other UN agencies, and INGOs, although the knowledge and understanding of these needs remains uneven. The international leadership of both FAO and WFP for conceptual development, technical guidance, and general support to ISFS development and functioning has been crucial for the form and existence of ISFSs in general, whether they are single function-systems, limited coverage structures, or global, integrated ISFSs.

202. FAO is well recognized by all stakeholder groups for its unique position and role in providing global food security information and comparable multi-country information as a public good. Considering FAO's funding challenges the Evaluation is concerned, though, about the organization's ability to sustain this leadership.

203. WFP's VAM approach represents a corporate vision for a single ISFS. The system integrates key ISFS functions: baselines, early warning, needs assessment, and food security monitoring, in support of decision-making processes related to the organization's food assistance activities. In addition, information products generated by WFP/VAM are relevant not just for WFP: they are also used and considered highly relevant by a large number of humanitarian and development stakeholders.

204. The uneven knowledge and understanding of needs for ISFS support is evident from project and programme documents, evaluations and reviews, which

[97] Emergency Food Security Assessments, Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessments, Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, Post Disaster Needs Assessments, and Consolidated Appeals Processes.

provide patchy information on needs for FAO and / or WFP ISFS support. The information does not allow a comparative analysis showing need priorities. It is not easy to understand, for instance, why some countries and regions rather than others have been selected for ISFS support, or why specific ISFS functions have been supported and not others.

205. The project-based approach that FAO has applied to a large degree for ISFS support at national and regional levels has normally involved the preparation of project documents with information on existing and relevant ISFS structures and activities. There is a risk that FAO's current move from specific national and regional ISFS support projects toward HQ-led ISFS support will lead to more standardized ISFS support and reducing the flexibility to fully adapt to existing capacities, resources, and demand at national and local level. This can further strengthen a general misleading perception among many ISFS stakeholders that FAO / WFP ISFS support is supply-driven.

206. While increasingly responding to changing needs, FAO's and WFP's adaptation of their ISFS support is mainly reactive with limited capacity for proactive concept development to identify new or potential emerging issues and crises before they become mainstream.

207. FAO / WFP support has strengthened certain ISFS functions more than others, particularly baselines (e.g., WFP's Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessments - CFSVAs) and needs assessments. Of the other functions, the monitoring and evaluation of activities to promote food security and particularly responses to food insecurity appeared to have received the least attention. Like other organizations, FAO and WFP have well-established programme and project monitoring and evaluation systems for their own management. However, these systems are seldom linked to ISFSs, such that support to general monitoring of responses to food insecurity is weak. Also, support to the early warning function has been steadily decreasing over the last decade, mainly as a result of FAO's discontinuation of a number of regional and country support programmes. This has been a result of reduced funding, leading to closure of many sub-regional and national programmes and projects.

208. Although generally designed to cover both, ISFSs supported by FAO and WFP tend to concentrate on emergency and humanitarian contexts rather than long-term development situations. This focus is in large part a result of the history of ISFSs and the associated terminology, which have mainly been developed for humanitarian settings. So while corporate ISFSs initiatives such as GIEWS and VAM are relevant to both types of decision-making, they are generally perceived as humanitarian instruments, and hence needs for ISFS support tend to be addressed with typically humanitarian approaches and terminology.

3.2 Efficiency of FAO / WFP support to ISFSs

209. The organizational architecture and mandates of FAO and of WFP significantly influence the efficiency of their ISFS support. WFP, with the internally focused VAM approach in support of its food assistance mandate, has developed an efficient single corporate ISFS. FAO, with its much wider mandate and dual function of both providing FS global information and building country/regional ISFS capacities, has provided far more fragmented ISFS support. Among the various ISFS activities, communication remains the greatest challenge, mainly due to lack of a strategic

approach and to an inadequate understanding of the decision making processes which the ISFSs should inform.

210. The Evaluation found little evidence of consideration of cost-effectiveness as a basis for different types of ISFS support from the two organizations. Alternative solutions were generally not presented in project documents, nor was comparative analysis showing why FAO or WFP should provide the ISFS support and not other organizations.

211. In WFP, specific ISFS activities are coordinated by one unit at headquarters, which ensures coherence of ISFS work at country, regional and headquarters' levels. SENAIP has improved efficiency in meeting internal needs and demands for ISFS products for decision-making processes related to WFP food assistance. This has mainly been obtained through improved technical guidelines, greater standardization of the information system processes and better adaptation of emergency needs assessments and baselines to WFP's programming needs.

212. In FAO, many units at Headquarters are responsible for developing and supporting different aspects of ISFSs at national, regional, and global level. While the organization also works through country and regional offices, ISFS support to national and regional counterparts is mostly developed and implemented directly by HQ technical units. The discrete nature of FAO's ISFS support with many different and often un-coordinated actors and without an overall ISFS strategy leads to unstructured and often inefficient interactions with partners who find it difficult to understand who is doing what in FAO.

213. FAO has been advocating for many years that cross-sectoral national ISFSs are better placed in overarching structures with the capacity to ensure that different line ministries, for instance, will provide relevant input to ISFS work. However, FAO's structural link with Ministries of Agriculture and historical tendency to view food security mainly in terms of calorie availability from grain production have led to frequent placing of FAO-supported national ISFSs in agricultural production divisions of these ministries. Placing these multi-sectoral platforms in a single line ministry significantly limits the ability of the ISFS to engage other key ministries and food security stakeholders, increases the potential for duplication and reduces overall efficiency.

214. While some progress have been made in the recent years, the Evaluation, found that, among the various ISFS activities, communication continues to be a challenge: a decisive factor reducing the efficiency of ISFSs in informing decision-making is poor communication of ISFS products. For example, products are often widely disseminated but without adequate criteria for why, to whom and how the information should be communicated. This results in inefficient targeting of diverse users, poor timing, and mismatch between content of the products and needs and capacities of the decision-makers. Since few ISFSs systematically monitor the use of their products, they are not able to adjust to evolving needs.

3.3 Usefulness and Accessibility of Information Products from FAO / WFP Supported ISFSs

215. FAO and WFP ISFS products are more timely, analytically sound, accessible and cover more ISFS elements than in the past. Moreover, the systems are increasingly being built on partnerships and consensus. However, there is still some

concern regarding key food security dimensions that are not being sufficiently addressed by the ISFSs, particularly nutrition, gender and urban issues.

216. Most FAO and WFP ISFS information products are easily accessible to the public. There is increased attention to covering all key food security elements - availability, accessibility, utilization, and stability - and therefore also to including relevant data on a wide range of issues, though there are some gaps as noted. While many users appreciate the increased availability of data related to access and use, some referred to poor integration of the data in many ISFS products. OECD and government decision-makers in particular seek integrated information products that do not leave it to the user to combine several datasets.

217. While in the past WFP was often perceived to be biased towards inflated needs assessments, there is increasing recognition of the credibility of WFP FS data. WFP's VAM work is well-known and appreciated among key ISFS stakeholders, including national governments, donors, INGOs, the mass media and research institutions.

218. Overall, the Evaluation found that assessments are generally done in a timely manner. For instance, emergency assessments take place quickly after being triggered by early warning from annual cropping assessments, which are also undertaken appropriately according to the agricultural calendar. Dissemination of food security information is often delayed by long analysis and editing processes and multiple layers of approval, including by governments in the concerned country or region. However, both FAO and WFP have shown efforts to overcome these challenges.

219. Food security information arrived at through country level consensual processes was found to be much more credible for decision-makers and consequently more likely to be used. Participation in consensual information generation or analysis was considered very important by both FAO and WFP, as well as by other institutions involved in generating food security information. This approach was often visible through the presence of multiple logos on food security information documents. Nonetheless, it is still far from generalized practice to produce information backed by consensus across the full range of stakeholders, including government, other national partners, donors, UN agencies and INGOs.

220. The stronger the multi-stakeholder partnerships underpinning a national ISFS, the more likely that its ISFS products will have an impact on decision-making. Positive examples of consensus-based ISFS products were observed by the Evaluation in Kenya, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Somalia, and Mozambique. All of these national ISFSs are strongly supported by FAO and WFP, and in several cases FAO in particular had had a key role in their creation.

3.4 Use of Products from FAO / WFP Supported ISFSs

221. The evaluation confirms the conclusions of many previous studies that FAO and WFP supported ISFS information products are being used extensively in emergency and humanitarian decision-making. It is much harder to draw a causal line from ISFS information products to decisions on development policy or interventions, although various ISFS products are often cited to justify decisions taken for development investment. Overall, an inadequate understanding in most

ISFSs of stakeholders' decision making processes means that ISFS products are not being used to their full potential, especially in development work.

222. While food security frameworks used by FAO and WFP such as FIVIMS, GIEWS or VAM are valid for both humanitarian an development contexts, there is more explicit use of ISFS products for humanitarian decisions than for development ones. This seems to be the result of a general perception of the main functions of the ISFS model. ISFS terminology such as "needs assessment" or "early warning" is used typically in humanitarian contexts.

223. Although current national ISFSs are generally designed to cover a wide range of situations, the systems analysed by the Evaluation also tended to concentrate on humanitarian rather than development issues. National governments most often reported using food security information for such activities as crisis mitigation, contingency planning or the management of the emergency food security reserve. Likewise, ISFSs are responsive to decision-making calendars tied to emergency response planning, such as the common appeals processes.

224. While the Evaluation was also able to observe the utilization of ISFS products to justify development programmes and policies or poverty reduction strategy documents, development actors were clearly not using information generated in humanitarian contexts to its full potential for longer term development policy and planning.

225. More recent initiatives in both agencies, such as FAO's ongoing study on the role of food security analysis in decision-making and WFP's work on its own ISFS information products through the SENAIP, have been successful in increasing understanding of decision-making processes for food security policies and programmes, including WFP's internal food assistance programming. This kind of understanding of stakeholders' decision-making processes is essential to ensure optimal utilization of food security information.

3.5 Sustainable Benefits of FAO / WFP ISFS Support

226. The Evaluation did not find national ISFSs that continued to be fully functional following the end of external funding. It concluded that ISFSs, when designed to serve both donor and national needs, often have not been a funding priority for the national governments in low-income countries. ISFS sustainability should not be viewed as only an issue of national ownership and national budget. Rather, donors, UN agencies, and INGOs all have a vested interest in the continuation of a well functioning national ISFS.

227. The Evaluation found that overall FAO/WFP ISFS support strengthened integrated ISFS structures in many countries, including all those visited by the evaluation team. Moreover, while WFP carried out ISFS work in the 1980s and 1990s primarily for internal corporate use, the agency is now playing a key role in the functioning of national ISFSs in many countries. The more successful ISFSs are usually based on partnerships or networks between national governments, UN agencies, donors, and INGOs, where all have a say and a clear stake. FAO and WFP have been instrumental in building these partnerships.

228. However, the Evaluation did not find examples of 'sustainability' in line with the common definition of this concept, where it means full funding and operation of an ISFS by national institutions. All ISFSs where external funding had come to an

end had suffered significant setbacks, and in many cases the systems had all but ceased to function. There are examples of national ISFSs depending mainly on national government funding, for instance in South Africa and Botswana, but these examples were not found in low-income food deficit countries.

229. The Evaluation has great concerns regarding project-based ISFS support, which includes almost all of FAO's assistance and a limited amount of that of WFP. Project-based assistance is inconsistent with longer-term sustainability of ISFSs as it is discontinuous, with projects lasting for limited periods due to dependence on external funding, and often with no follow-up or realistic exit strategies.

230. The Evaluation found that within the framework of support to national ISFSs, both FAO and WFP provided extensive training programmes to ISFSs throughout the current decade, on the assumption that this will promote institutional sustainability. However, while training might be effective in the short term, it did not lead to lasting ISFS institutions as it was not planned in a framework of longer-term institutional sustainability. Therefore, the Evaluation concludes that while national capacities have been strengthened, the assumption that this will be sustainable is not valid. Capacity development has been too focused on outputs and on individual capacity, and has lacked a strategic approach, needs assessments, enough attention to the institutional contexts or follow-up on post-training support and capacity retention.

3.6 Complementarity and Cooperation of FAO / WFP ISFS Support

231. The Evaluation concludes that FAO and WFP collaborate on a number of ISFS related issues, challenging the common perception that FAO and WFP tend to compete rather than cooperate. Nonetheless, potential exists for greatly strengthening complementarity and collaboration in the area of ISFS support.

232. Documents, interviews, and country case studies of the Evaluation have all shown evidence of coordination and cooperation between FAO and WFP. Cooperation around ISFS support was found to take place in the field more commonly than at HQs. It was however observed that this cooperation is mainly based on interpersonal interaction and ad hoc opportunities and arrangements, rather than strategic vision and formal agreements. While this can work in the short term, longer-term goals require greater corporate strategic coordination.

233. The Evaluation found that many positive examples of collaboration for ISFSs have been brought about by donors who have often played a key role in promoting constructive ISFS cooperation between the two organizations.

234. The Evaluation supports the conclusions of the recent joint FAO/WFP/IFAD policy paper entitled "Directions for Collaboration among the Rome-based Agencies" regarding the importance of cooperation for development of food security information and the comparative advantages of the partners. The paper indicates that WFP's comparative advantage is in the support to ISFS is its extensive field presence and its production of VAM information products. FAO instead has a comparative advantage in the collection and dissemination of global information and analysis, in technical assistance and tool development, and in capacity development. The Evaluation also concludes that WFP has a comparative advantage in providing ISFS

support for emergency and humanitarian contexts as well as for analysis of national data.

4. Recommendations

235. The recommendations of the Evaluation are addressed to Senior Management of FAO and WFP as well as to their Governing Bodies. The implementation of some of these recommendations will have resource implications and will therefore require prioritization by both organizations. Recommendations to be implemented jointly by the two organizations are clearly identified

4.1 Strategies

Recommendation 1.1: FAO and WFP should each develop corporate ISFS Strategies for the range of their ISFS work at national, regional, and global levels, based on overall goals defined jointly and including means and plans for implementation.

236. The strategies should clearly differentiate between ISFS support such as generation of models, methods, and tools, capacity development and technical advice, and direct execution of ISFSs. The corporate strategies should be based on analysis of comparative advantages of major ISFS stakeholders, for instance other UN agencies, development banks, INGOs, donors, and inter-governmental organizations, in providing ISFS support at different levels. This analysis should be based on an open and continuous dialogue with the different stakeholders putting special emphasis on the long-term functionality of the ISFSs. Given the global leadership of FAO and WFP in ISFS work, both agencies' Governing Bodies should take responsibility to ensure that these well-coordinated corporate ISFS strategies and business plans are prepared and implemented.

237. When preparing these strategies:

- FAO should develop its strategy as part of its ongoing reform process to ensure improved coordination of overall FAO support to ISFS, thereby ensuring greater efficiency. Key elements of the strategy should be a restructured FIVIMS Secretariat building on the positive integration of the FIVIMS Secretariat into ESAF and maximizing collaboration with the new phase of the FSIA project. As part of the strategy development, FAO's global ISFS products should undergo a user analysis.
- WFP should include the maintenance of an effective food security information capacity in all low income and food deficit countries, including countries that are not affected by acute emergencies or immediate humanitarian demands. This country-level ISFS should function in close collaboration with FAO and other relevant partners.

Recommendation 1.2: FAO and WFP should develop a joint FAO/WFP ISFS Strategy based on their identified comparative advantages

238. The corporate ISFS strategies should be complemented by a joint FAO / WFP ISFS strategy which should include operational plans for complementary and joint ISFS support. This joint strategy development process should be closely monitored by the two agencies' Governing Bodies whose role as key ISFS stakeholders should be recognized.

239. The joint FAO/WFP ISFS strategy should include:

- Awareness raising and advocacy activities on the importance of well functioning ISFSs.
- A strategy for mobilization of much needed new investments in FAO / WFP joint food security diagnostics to strengthen national as well as global ISFS capacities.
- Guidelines for integration of FAO / WFP ISFS work and ISFS work in general into coordination and harmonization frameworks such as One UN, the Common Country Assessments, UN Development Assistance Framework, Poverty Reduction Strategies, donor country strategies, etc.

4.2 Leadership

Recommendation 2: FAO and WFP should jointly maintain and Strengthen their leadership in ISFS

240. FAO and WFP should jointly invest in maintaining and strengthening – and in the case of FAO, to a great extent reclaiming – their leadership in ISFS development and implementation, based on the analysis of comparative advantages and policy decisions made during the development of the ISFS strategies.

241. In order to maintain and strengthen the ISFS Leadership the following should be prioritized:

- As early as possible, FAO and WFP should jointly organize an informal, multi-stakeholder group including UN agencies, INGOs, donor governments, national and regional ISFSs, research institutions, the international media, and other key ISFS stakeholders. The multi-stakeholder groups should focus on future ISFS institution building. This should be along the lines of the original FIVIMS, but under a joint FAO / WFP leadership, and redesigned and renamed to learn from and avoid failures of the past. It will be particularly important to ensure that the multi-stakeholder group will set realistic goals and work according to a rolling five-year business plan updated every year. The group should consider how best to establish a global ISFS network with a focus on national ISFSs, supported by sub-regional, regional, and global ISFSs. The ultimate goal of the ISFS multi-stakeholder group would be to identify how to sustain collaboration for more effective and continuous ISFS institution-building. In this context, WFP should ensure that the positive experience from the expert groups established under SENAIP is used to establish similar working groups to support this informal group, with FAO closely involved
- WFP's leadership role in supporting ISFSs should be widened beyond being just a means for corporate effectiveness and should be designed to equally serve decision-making by partners not directly involved in decisions related to WFP's food assistance. WFP's ISFS support should thus be defined in part as a public good similar to that of FAO.

4.3 Technical support

Recommendation 3: FAO and WFP should Promote ISFSs which respond to identified needs

242. FAO and WFP must each ensure that ISFSs at all levels have the technical capacities to provide the types of information and analysis needed by decision-makers for today's and tomorrow's food security challenges.

243. In order to provide the most useful and appropriate technical support FAO and WFP should:

- Regularly undertake strategic analyses of food security information needs of intended, actual and potential decision-makers. This work should preferably be undertaken jointly and should give special attention to potential future threats to food security.
- Jointly advocate for an agreement on a core set of indicators for integrated measurement of food security, including nutrition, building on already established initiatives such as the Standing Committee on Nutrition's Task Force on Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation, which is co-chaired by FAO and WFP.

4.4 Sustainability

Recommendation 4: ISFS support should promote long-lasting national multi-stakeholder ISFS partnerships

244. In seeking to achieve "sustainability" of national ISFSs, FAO and WFP should each discuss with funding partners to reconsider the usual working definition of sustainability, which presumes continuation of benefits under exclusively national funding and management. In the case of ISFSs, donors and other partners are users as well as supporters, and "sustainability" should be redefined to mean "continuation of benefits under long-term multi-stakeholder funding and partnership."

245. To promote long lasting national ISFSs FAO and WFP should each:

- Continue to support the development of national ISFSs based on multi-stakeholder partnerships and networks, focusing on the production of consensus-based information. Whenever possible, FAO and WFP should privilege joint ISFS work between the two agencies.
- Base their capacity development work on systematic capacity needs assessments, including the policy, institutional / organizational and individual levels.
- The two agencies should consider the joint development of a set of guidelines for ISFS capacity needs assessments.

4.5 Communications and decision making

Recommendation 5.1: FAO and WFP should strengthen the application of ISFS communication strategies based on a genuine understanding of food security decision-making processes

246. FAO and WFP must each ensure that all of their ISFS activities maintain the focus on informing decision-making. In order to do this effectively, supported ISFSs must incorporate explicit communication strategies targeted to different stakeholder groups. The communication strategies should be based on clear identification of the different targeted stakeholder groups' resources, interests, priorities, and capacity to use different ISFS products as well as an understanding of the different decision-making processes involved. Moreover, systematic feedback mechanisms should be included.

247. In order to improve the use of ISFS communication strategies FAO and WFP should each:

- Build their own communication capacities for their work in support of ISFS development, including specific focus on understanding food security related decision-making processes.
- To the extent possible, ensure that development of ISFSs includes the support of communication specialists to supplement information experts.
-

Recommendation 5.2: FAO and WFP should work together to develop a joint FAO/WFP ISFS communication and advocacy strategy

248. FAO and WFP should develop a joint communication and advocacy strategy for food security information. The advocacy work should strive to improve awareness of the usefulness of complementary ISFSs that provide comprehensive food security in formation required for food security analysis according to food security definition from the 1996 World Food Summit. This would include nutrition, urban areas, gender aspects, etc. Special efforts should be made to advocate for the usefulness of ISFSs for development purposes.

Annexes

1. Analysis of on-line survey
2. Evaluation matrix
3. Strengths and challenges of key ISFS qualifiers
4. List of key evaluations, reviews and assessments analyzed for the preparation of the joint FAO/WFP ISFS evaluation
5. Definitions used for the evaluation
6. Terms of Reference (TOR)
7. Resource persons interviewed
8. Bibliography

Annex 1 Analysis of Online Survey

1.1 Executive Summary of the Survey

Background

At the request of FAO and WFP's Governing Bodies, the Offices of Evaluation of the two organizations launched the first joint independent evaluation: "Joint Thematic Evaluation of FAO and WFP Support to Information Systems for Food Security (ISFSs)" in 2008. The objective of the Evaluation was to assess the extent to which FAO and WFP have separately and jointly contributed to improved and more effective ISFSs, and how far these information systems have, in turn, contributed to improved decision-making.

As part of the fact finding for the Evaluation an online survey was carried out in April 2009. More than 3,000 users of FAO and WFP ISFS products and initiatives received an email invitation to participate in the survey and 593 persons replied and responded to questions regarding general knowledge of key FAO / WFP ISFS products and ISFS support, perceived utility, and general comments. The respondents represented a reasonable regional distribution from Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) with comparable work functions and organizational belonging of the respondents.

The Survey did not follow basic requirements for statistical analysis. Still, the results present important general trends in support of the other fact-finding tools of the Evaluation.

Overall Results

Generally users of both FAO and WFP ISFS products and initiatives indicate appreciation of their usefulness and the major shortcomings are lack of sex-disaggregated information, limited coverage of urban food security, and limited information on nutrition. There is no significant difference between reasons for using FAO compared to WFP ISFS products. Survey respondents indicated that the major reasons are food security assessments, input to programme and project development, and general information. Few respondents indicate resource allocation of input to prepare funding requests as a major reason for using the different ISFS products.

When presented with a list of FAO and WFP assessment guidelines, reference works, and training materials less than 20 percent of respondents indicted knowledge or use of any of these ISFS products. Similarly, few respondents indicated knowledge of FAO's different software tools developed to facilitate food security analyses and interpretation. Similarly, relative few respondents commented on questions regarding the effectiveness of FAO and WFP's technical and operational support to use of food security information. Overall, though respondents indicated that support such as expert advice and workshops and training to be of good quality although some respondents indicate a these support activities are often poorly targeted.

The survey showed that users of ISFS products and initiatives are often unaware of the many options offered by FAO and WFP and in fact many respondents highlighted that the survey itself had been an eye-opener regarding the many different products

and initiatives. The lack of awareness about the different ISFS products and initiatives, including capacity development tools seems to be linked to the difficulty in accessing and navigating the web-sites of the two organizations. This point that becomes even more important considering the limited and unreliable internet access that many ISFS users are faced with.

FAO ISFS Initiatives and Products

52 percent of the respondents indicated familiarity with at least one FAO ISFS product, 43 percent with two, and 34 percent with three. The FAO products that respondents were most familiar with were: FAOSTAT, GIEWS, Crop Prospects, CFSAMs, IPC, SOFI, and Food Security Analysis papers. Following a set of general ISFS qualifiers98 these products were not rated particularly high by the respondents. In fact, the products rated highest were Food Security maps, SOFI, and IPC based maps and reports, while FAOSTAT and GIEWS were rated relatively low. Still, overall all products were rated relatively well, the highest ratings being for Reliability, Accessibility, and Relevance; while the lowest ratings were for integration of Sex-disaggregated data, coverage of Urban areas, and integration of Nutrition. While the Survey did not reveal significant regional and organizational differences regarding respondents' familiarity with different FAO ISFS products, SOFI seems to constitute an exception as the publication is identified more for its familiarity by respondents in OECD and Asian countries than by respondents in other regions. Moreover, SOFI is more familiar to FAO and WFP staff than to respondents from other organizations.

It is interesting to note that respondents rate CFSAMs low for integration of sex-disaggregated data and nutrition information considering that those elements were part of standard CFSAM reports in the 90's. However, the more recent CFSAM reports are often both gender and nutrition blind.

According to the respondents FAO ISFS products are particularly used for food security assessments, general information, and input to programme and project development. Some respondents offered other uses that were not presented in the questionnaire, including disaster preparedness and teaching while some indicated that they used the FAO products in the absence of accessible alternative information sources.

Overall, Government staff from developing countries seems to rate FAOSTAT a little higher than government staff from OECD countries. Moreover, OECD government staff do not identify any specific use of FAOSTAT contrary to government staff from developing countries who indicate use of FAOSTAT for various analytical purposes. It should also be noted that there are no significant difference between FAO and WFP staff regarding the rating of FAOSTAT.

Respondents do not identify duplication of products as a particular problem for FAO ISFS products.

WFP ISFS Products and Initiatives

41 percent of all respondents indicated familiarity with at least one WFP ISFS product, 32 percent with two, and 27 percent with three. The WFP products that respondents were most familiar with are CFSVAs, VAM Website, and EFSAs.

[98] Reliability, Timeliness, Accessible, Relevance, Urban coverage, Integration of Nutrition, Sex-disaggregated information, Synergies / Complementarities with other information sources, and Collaboration FAO / WFP.

According to the set of qualifiers[99] all 12 WFP ISFS products were rated relatively high; the highest being IPC maps and reports, VAM website, CFSAMs, EFSAs, and CFSVAs. The highest ratings were for relevance, accessibility, and reliability while the weakest ratings were for integration of sex-disaggregated data.

CFSAMs, which are characteristic for being a joint FAO / WFP ISFS products and with the two organizations playing complementary roles were rated a little higher as WFP ISFS products than when identified under FAO products mainly due to better rating for integration of nutrition information and sex-disaggregated data. Similarly IPC maps and reports, which are also joint FAO / WFP ISFS products were rated higher under WFP products than when identified under FAO products, mainly due to accessibility and integration of sex-disaggregated data.

WFP ISFS products are particularly used for food security assessments, input to programme and project development, and general information while some respondents also identified teaching and early warning.

Respondents in developing countries seem be less familiar with the VAM website than respondents from other regions. Moreover, respondents who identified CFSVAs as the WFP ISFS product they were most familiar with are particularly from OECD countries while relative few respondents from Asian countries identify familiarity with CFSVAs. Moreover, respondents from UN agencies are relatively more familiar with CFSVAs than respondents from other organizations.

FAO and WFP Assessment Guidelines, Reference works, and Training Manuals

Respondents were presented a list of FAO / WFP key reference works and training manuals. 18 percent of respondents had knowledge of FAO's distance learning (e-learning) package on food security produced under the FSIA initiative. Respondents reported that the distance learning modules are used primarily for general information and as capacity development for trainers. 19 percent of respondents had knowledge of WFP's EFSA guidelines (handbook and technical guidance sheet) and reported that to use the EFSA guidelines primarily for specific assessments or food security analyses. Overall, the FAO and WFP reference material and training materials was used because of work relevance.

Respondents were also asked to make general comments on ISFS relevant guidelines, reference works, and training manuals. Among the 31comments and suggestions many suggest that the survey exercise has been a useful eye-opener to the many ISFS products available at both FAO and WFP. Even FAO and WFP staff members highlighted this point. Respondents therefore also ask for improved dissemination, including targeting, proper training, and regular follow-up of the different FAO / WFP ISFS products. In this way, while the products are generally available on FAO and WFP's websites, many respondents find it cumbersome to find the material on the web sites when they are not directly referred to with specific links. Furthermore, some respondents complain about the difficult access through Internet, reflecting the reality of many parts of the world where high-speed Internet connection is still a dream. More specific suggestions include consolidation of the different guidelines and tools and development of regional tools.

[99] Reliability, Timeliness, Accessible, Relevance, Urban coverage, Integration of Nutrition, Sex-disaggregated information, Synergies / Complementarities with other information sources, and Collaboration FAO / WFP.

FAO Food Security Data Management software that the organizations Of the Respondent have been using

About 10 percent of respondents have knowledge of data management software such as CountryStat and GIEWS workstation. It should be noted that those products are still considered as relatively recent ones within FAO and still under development / introduction. The primary reason for using those products was their work relevance. Relatively few respondents offer more details on other reasons for not using the listed software packages. Several of the respondents, though, mentioned the lack of knowledge about the packages or the non-availability at country- and sub-national levels as well as the non-availability of the software in some specific sectors. According to the respondents the non-availability of software reflects in some cases the lack of appropriate hardware.

Dissemination and Communication of FAO and WFP Food Security Information

When presented with a number of different means of dissemination and communication of FAO and WFP ISFS products, the primary reason for using different means was identified as accessibility. Only 31 per cent of the respondents indicated to be familiar with FAO's website and 25 percent with the one of WFP.

Comments related to the perceived usefulness of different means of dissemination repeat comments from earlier sections of the questionnaire regarding the lack of knowledge about different ISFS products and means of dissemination and the difficulties in navigating particularly FAO's website. Likewise, the reality of limited and unreliable Internet access for many food security information users should be taken into account when updating dissemination strategies. Moreover, several respondents call for more targeted dissemination stressing that different user groups use different means of communication. Some respondents state that some of FAO's so-called flagship publications such as SOFI and SOFA are difficult to obtain in many countries.

FAO / WFP Technical and Operational Support to Food Security Information

When asked to rate a number of FAO / WFP technical and operational support products such as expert advice, training, and various material most of the respondents identify general satisfaction with quality and relevance of this support. Still, relatively few respondents consider these products as being timely or relevant for long-term changes.

Very few respondents had any input regarding perceptions of ineffectiveness regarding technical support from FAO and WFP to strengthen ISFS and the use of ISFSs. One respondent request more realistic budgets for support to the use of ISFS products.

Overall Comments

Finally, respondents were requested to provide general comments regarding FAO and WFP's ISFS support.

More than 100 respondents offered comments and suggestions; mainly around the following issues:

- Respondents generally recognize the important role of FAO and WFP in promoting effective ISFSs and appreciate the various products and initiatives outlined in the questionnaire. However, respondents also indicate lack of

knowledge about a number of particularly FAO ISFS products and initiatives and even FAO staff members are often unaware of ISFS products and initiatives. Some respondents comment that most ISFS support is supply-driven from the two organizations' HQs, thus limiting the knowledge and relevance of many activities for non-HQ staff. Respondents therefore call for a more systematic and regular introduction to different ISFS products with clear information on their strengths and weaknesses for different purposes, user groups, and contexts. Moreover, respondents call for continuous support to the use of the products within different user groups recognizing that key users of ISFS products are not only the final decision-makers but also a range of technical staff, which need continuous support in how best and when to use ISFS products. Respondents also stress that this work should be done with greater involvement of local training institutions.

- Several respondents stress the importance of strengthened cooperation, alignment, and coordination of ISFS activities not only among FAO and WFP but also ensuring greater collaboration with other ISFS stakeholders, including local media. This would not only increase resource efficiency but also improve usefulness of ISFS products, for instance through standardized and compatible methodologies that will increase the understanding of food security information in general. Regarding FAO and WFP cooperation there are some suggestions for more institutionalized frameworks for collaboration building on FAO's comparative advantage in methodology development and WFPs' comparative advantage in data collection and analysis. Moreover, it is suggested that the two organizations should complement and substitute for each other more systematically; for instance in countries where only one of the two are represented. Finally, some respondents call for closer monitoring of ISFS collaboration efforts.
- The FIVIMS conceptual framework is recognized as important but the underlying notions are still considered as too theoretical with limited understanding of the concrete benefit that well functioning ISFSs based on the FIVIMS approach might offer. Some respondents therefore also call for more involvement of ISFS staff in concrete field level activities.
- The means of dissemination of ISFS products through Internet is raised as a special problem by several respondents referring to unreliable Internet access in many countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and Caribbean. Furthermore, several respondents call for improved food security information products meaning shore and more succinct information.
- Several respondents indicate that the current ISFS products and initiatives are still too focused on food availability while information on factors to inform about accessibility, utilization, and stability need to be developed and integrated into the products. Respondents particularly highlight that nutrition information is still lacking in many ISFS products.
- Finally, respondents express concern regarding some country specific products and availability of FAO and WFP in some countries.

1.2 Introduction

After a decade-long series of droughts and famines, the 1974 World Food Conference concluded that the existing monitoring and information systems were inadequate. In response new Information Systems for Food Security (ISFS) were developed by different agencies, including FAO's Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS). After repeated needs for emergency food aid during the 80s and 90s the 1996 World Food Summit encouraged FAO to lead a United Nations (UN) inter-

agency process to develop more effective information systems to track food insecurity and vulnerability. As a follow-up, the initiative for Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems (FIVIMS) was established. Thirteen years later food insecurity remains a major concern, subject to increasingly complex threats such as climate change, accelerated urbanization, pandemics, and global food price volatility. All this has created unprecedented challenges for but continued need for stronger ISFSs.

While specific projects and programmes have been assessed over the years, the area of information systems for food security as a major strategic theme has not been evaluated before. Thus, in the course of 2008, at the request of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Programme Committee and with the agreement of the World Food Programme (WFP) Executive Board, the two organizations launched an independent Joint Evaluation of FAO and WFP Support to ISFS.

The scope of the Evaluation only allowed visiting a limited number of countries for more detailed analysis based on interviews with resource persons. To get information on a broader range of ISFS users' perception of FAO / WFP ISFS support, an online survey was carried out in April 2009. The targeted respondents for the survey included a broad list of ISFS users identified by FAO and WFP country offices combined with people on key mailing lists from FAO and WFP such as the SENAIP[100] list from WFP and the GIEWS[101] list from FAO.

More than 3,000 ISFS users received an email requesting them to go online to fill in the survey, which as designed around:

- knowledge about a number of key FAO and WFP food security information products and initiatives such as FAO's integrated statistic system FAOSTAT and WFP's Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability analysis (CFSVAs) and the perceived utility of the different products and initiatives,
- knowledge about assessment guidelines, reference works, and training material such as FAO's food security distance or e-learning and WFP's Emergency Food Security Assessment (EFSA) handbook, the use of such products and the perceived utility,
- knowledge about food security data management software such as GIEWS workstation and tools supporting the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), the use and the perceived utility,
- perceived utility of different means of dissemination of food security information such as FAO and WFP's websites,
- perceived utility of technical and operational support to ISFSs, use of ISFS products and support initiatives such as technical guidelines, food security analysis, workshops, and specific project support,
- general comments on FAO / WFP ISFS support.

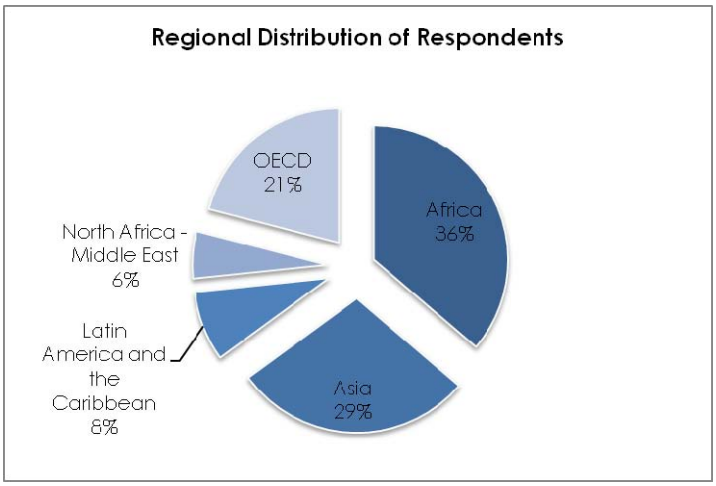
In designing the survey, the Evaluation tried to make it brief enough to ensure that ISFS users would invest the required time to fill it out but also meaningful enough to ensure that stakeholders would not feel that they were wasting their time. The design was therefore based on a check-box format reducing the time required to reply but with options for complementary comments. The relatively good response rate witnesses that the format and length of the survey was acceptable for the general ISFS user. The offline version of the questionnaire is presented at the end of this annex.

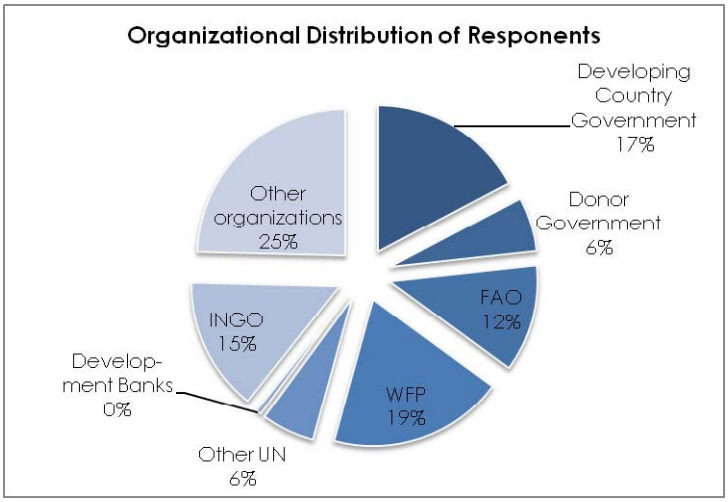
[100] Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessment Implementation Plan
[101] Global Information and Early Warning System

593102 people filled in the survey; the majority online but an offline version was also offered to users with unreliable internet connection. The majority of respondents filled in all sections of the questionnaire.

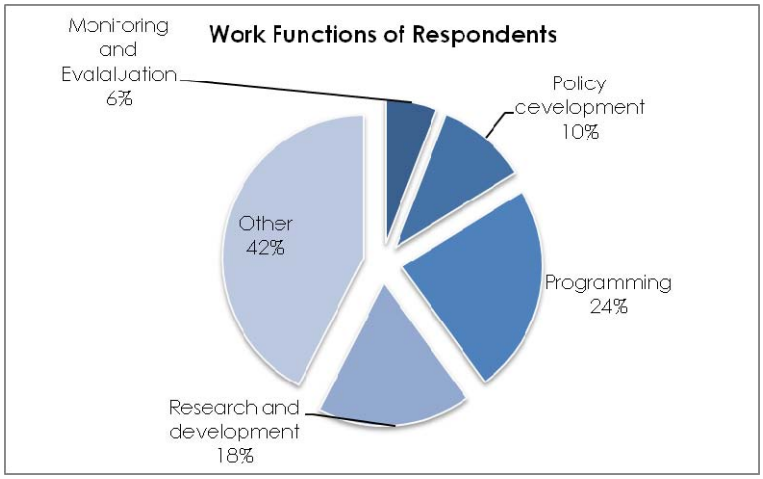
Due to limited time and staff resources available for the Evaluation the survey was only prepared in English. The Evaluation recognizes the obvious limitation of this although users responding in French and Spanish were encouraged to provide input in their own language.

As can be seen in the following charts, the respondents constitute a reasonable regional distribution, considering the key ISFS users addressed for the Evaluation; i.e. countries where FAO and WFP are supporting ISFS work as well as decision-makers in OECD countries. Moreover, the respondents represent a reasonable mix of ISFS users from different organizations and holding different work functions. It should also be noted that the work function distribution as well as the organizational distribution are comparable among the regions.





[102] The responses were verified and a couple of entries were eliminated as they clearly did not reply to the intention of the survey.



1.3 Results

The survey was not carried out following basic requirements for statistical analysis. Still, the results present some general trends as presented in the following, which support findings from the Evaluation's interviews and literature review.

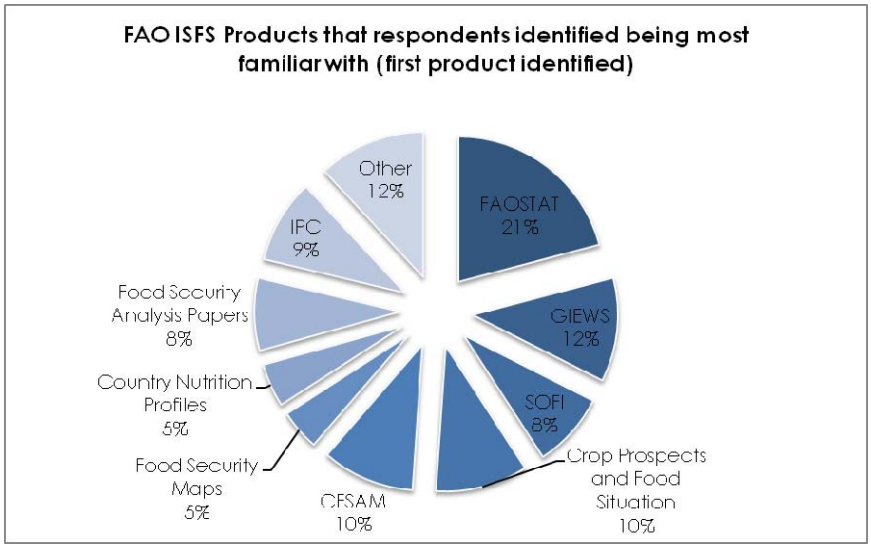
1.4 FAO ISFS Products and Initiatives

The respondents were requested to identify the three FAO ISFS products that they were most familiar with (if any) from the following list:

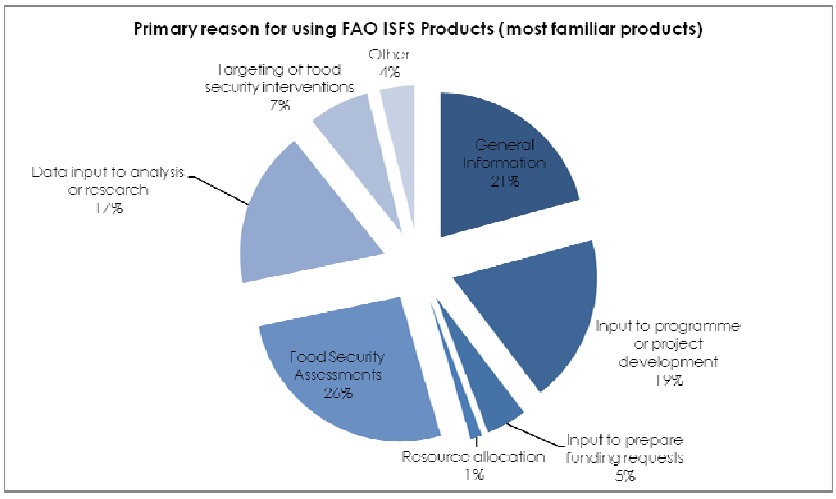
- **FAOSTAT**, online integrated database of statistics on agriculture, nutrition, fisheries, forestry, food aid, land use;
- **AGROCLIM,** online agro-climatic forecasting;
- **GIEWS**, Global Information and Early Warning System portal;
- **AgroMAPS,** Global Spatial Database of Agricultural Land-use Statistics;
- **Geonetwork,** portal with interactive maps, satellite imagery and related spatial database;
- **EMPRES**, Emergency prevention System for transboundary Animal and Plants Pests and Diseases) bulletins;
- **SOFI**, State of Food Insecurity in the World publication;
- **SOCA,** State of Agricultural Commodity markets publication;
- **Crop Prospects and Food Situation / Food Crops and Shortages / Food Supply Situation and Crop Prospects;**
- **Food Outlook,** Global Market Analysis publication;
- **Desert Locust Watch,** interactive maps, satellite imagery, and related information on desert locust development;
- **CFSAMs,** Crop and Food Supply Assessment Missions – joint with WFP;
- **Food Security maps,** hunger, dietary energy, nutrition, food trade;
- **Country Nutrition Profiles,** reviews of food security and nutrition status, including background analysis following FIVIMS approach;
- **Food Security Analysis Papers;**
- **IPC,** Integrated Food Security Phase classification based maps and reports;
- **National Food Security Bulletins;**

- **Other** the following were specified by respondents: food security balance sheets, CountryStat103, FIVIMS, Voluntary Guidelines for Right to Food Assessments104, and SOFA – State of Food and Agriculture.

52 percent of all the respondents indicated familiarity with some of these products; 43 percent indicated familiarity with two products, and 34 percent with three products.



Respondents were requested to rate the products they identified as being most familiar with according to the following qualifiers: Reliability, Timeliness, Accessible, Relevance, Urban coverage, Integration of Nutrition, Sex-disaggregated information, Synergies / Complementarities with other information sources, and Collaboration FAO / WFP.



[103] CountryStat is presented under a section on ISFS software packages in the survey. Considering that CountryStat still under development, FAO-HQ advised not to include the CountryStat in the list of FAO ISFS products to be included in the questionnaire.
[104] Similar to CountryStat, Right to Food Assessments are still an emerging FAO ISFS product, Right to Food Assessments were the most cited "other."

Rating of 12 FAO Products respondents were most familiar with
Rating was on a scale from 1 to 4
(1: not at all, 2: not much, 3: somewhat, 4: very much)

No of ratings [105]	Product	Overall average	Relative strongest qualifier (compared to other FAO rated products in this list)	Relative weakest qualifier (compared to other FAO rated products in this list)
141	**Food Security maps**	3.1	Sex-disaggregated data	Timeliness
72	**SOFI**	3.1	Reliability	Cooperation FAO / WFP
63	**IPC based maps and reports**	3.0	Synergy / complementarity + integration of nutrition	Reliability + Timeliness
71	**CFSAMs**	3.0	Cooperation FAO / WFP	Urban coverage + integration of nutrition
34	**Country Nutrition Profiles**	3.0	Sex-disaggregated data	Timeliness
33	**National Food Security Bulletins**	3.0	Urban Coverage	Synergies / Complementarity + Reliability
45	**Food Outlook**	2.9	Reliability	Sex-disaggregated data
74	**Crop Prospects and Food Situation / Food Crops Shortages / Food Supply Situation and Crop Prospects**	2.9	Collaboration FAO / WFP + Accessibility	Integration of nutrition
93	**GIEWS**	2.8	Reliability	Integration of nutrition
95	**FAOSTAT**	2.7	Accessibility	Collaboration FAO / WFP
13	**SOCA**	2.7	Urban coverage	Reliability
12	**Desert Locust Watch**	2.6	Timeliness + accessibility	Urban coverage

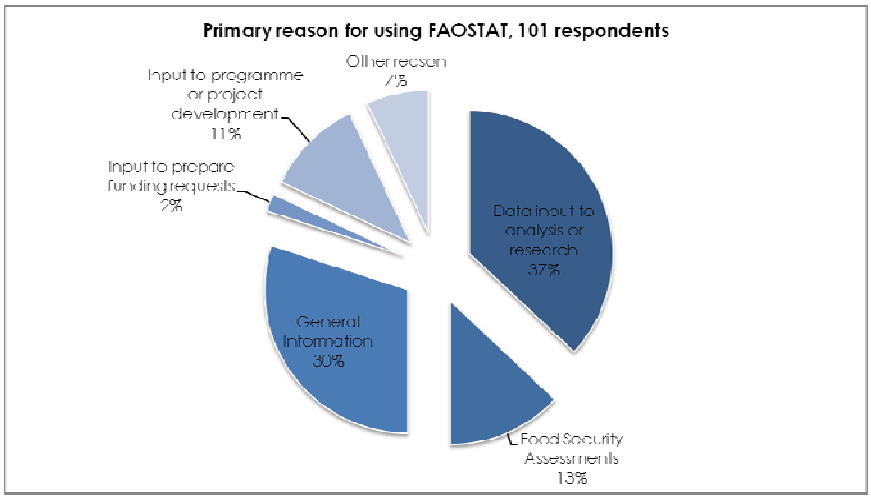
[105] The number of ratings is based on a combination of the three products respondents identified as being most familiar with.

Relative rating of different products for different qualifiers

	Product rated highest	Product rated lowest
Reliability	Food Outlook	SOCA
Timeliness	Food Outlook, CFSAM	Country Nutrition Profiles
Accessibility	SOFI	National Food Security Bulletins, IPC
Relevance	CFSAM, Food Outlook	SOCA
Urban coverage	SOCA	Desert Locus Watch, CFSAM
Integration of nutrition	IPC	Desert Locust Watch, CFSAM
Sex-disaggregated data	Country Nutrition Profiles	SOCA
Synergies / Complementarity	IPC	SOCA
Collaboration FAO / WFP	CFSAM	FAOStat

Other reasons for using FAO ISFS products identified by respondents include: disaster preparedness, meteorological information, teaching, and no accessible alternative information sources.

There is no significant difference between the reasons identified by users of FAO ISFS products compared to those identified by users of WFP ISFS products.

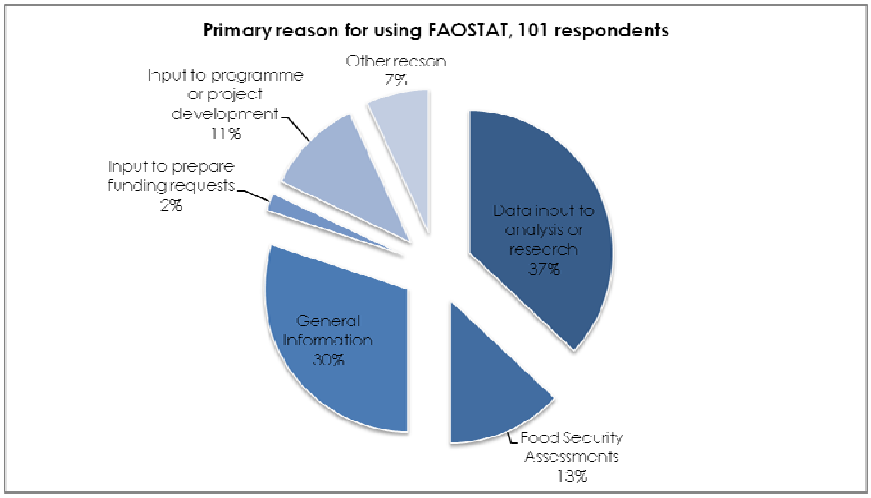


General Appreciation of FAO ISFS products that respondents are most familiar with

Qualifier	Very much	Somewhat	Not much	Not at all	Don't know
Reliable	48%	44%	7%	0%	1%
Timely	29%	52%	15%	3%	1%
Easily accessible user friendly	43%	45%	10%	1%	0%
Relevant to decisions / activities	43%	46%	9%	1%	1%
Also covers urban food security information	16%	30%	31%	14%	9%
Integrates nutrition aspects	24%	37%	24%	8%	7%
Presents sex-disaggregated information	6%	27%	31%	23%	13%
Unnecessarily duplicates other available information sources	5%	19%	32%	33%	11%
Demonstrates synergies/complementarity with other sources of info.	29%	46%	14%	3%	7%
Demonstrates collaboration between FAO and WFP	27%	29%	20%	8%	16%

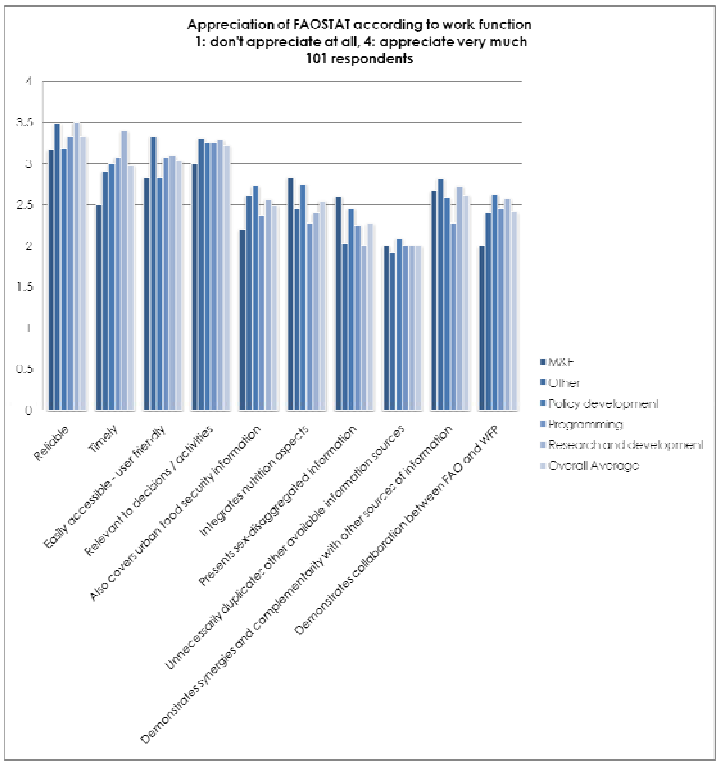
Overall, respondents rate the FAO ISFS products they are most familiar with relatively high although there are some concerns regarding sex-disaggregated information and integration of information for urban areas. It should be noted though that the ratings are based on the products that the respondents have chosen to use. The ratings do therefore not reflect the opinion of ISFS users who have chosen not to use the FAO ISFS products.

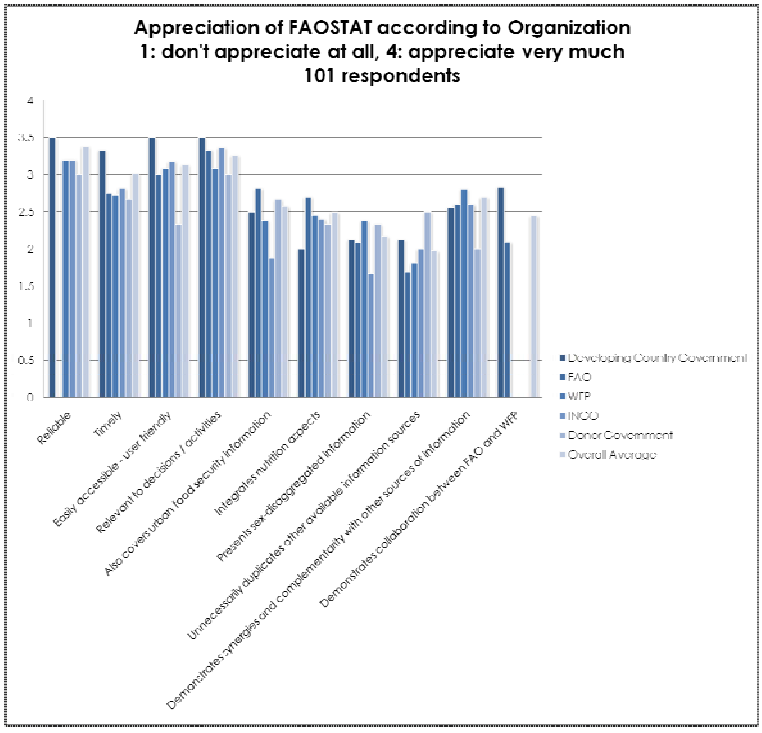
FAOSTAT. Respondents who identified FAOSTAT as the FAO ISFS product they were most familiar with follow the regional and organizational overall distribution of the survey.



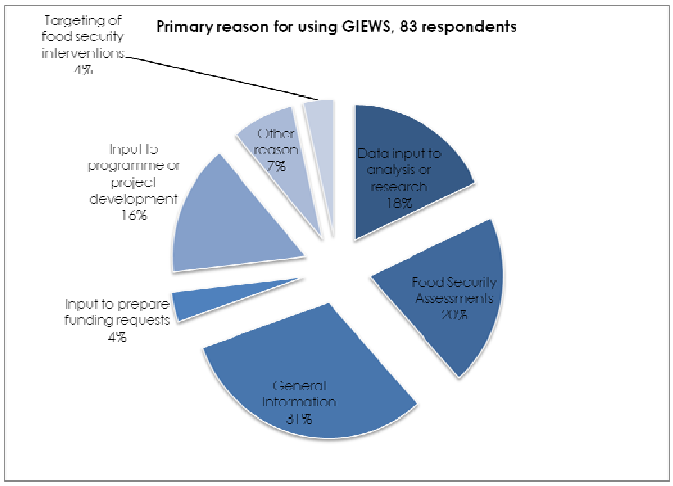
Compared to the average of all FAO ISFS products FAOSTAT is used less for food security assessments and more for general information and analysis and research. FAOSTAT is generally rated very well by the 101 users identifying FAOSTAT as the FAO ISFS product they are most familiar with and the product is seen as relevant to

food security decision-making. However, as for other ISFS products users identify some shortcomings in FAOSTAT with regard to nutrtion, sex-disaggregated data, and urban issues. There are no significant differences in the rating of FAOSTAT according to different work functions of the respondents. Neither is there any significant difference in the rating between respondents from different organizational settings.

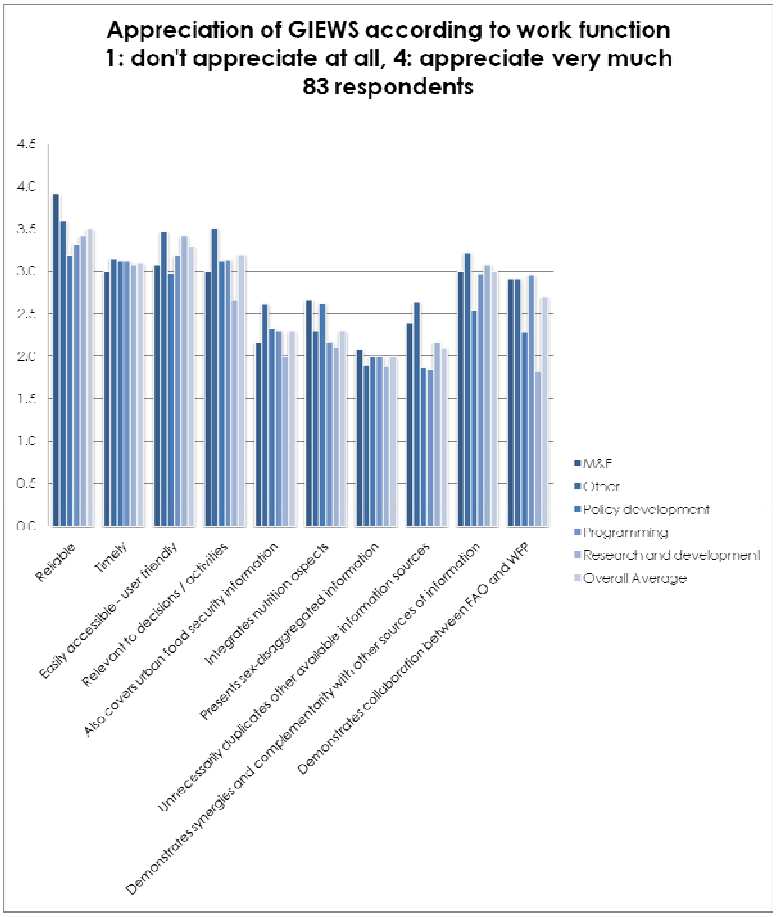




GIEWS. Respondents who identified GIEWS as the FAO ISFS product they were most familiar with follow the regional and organizational overall distribution of the survey.

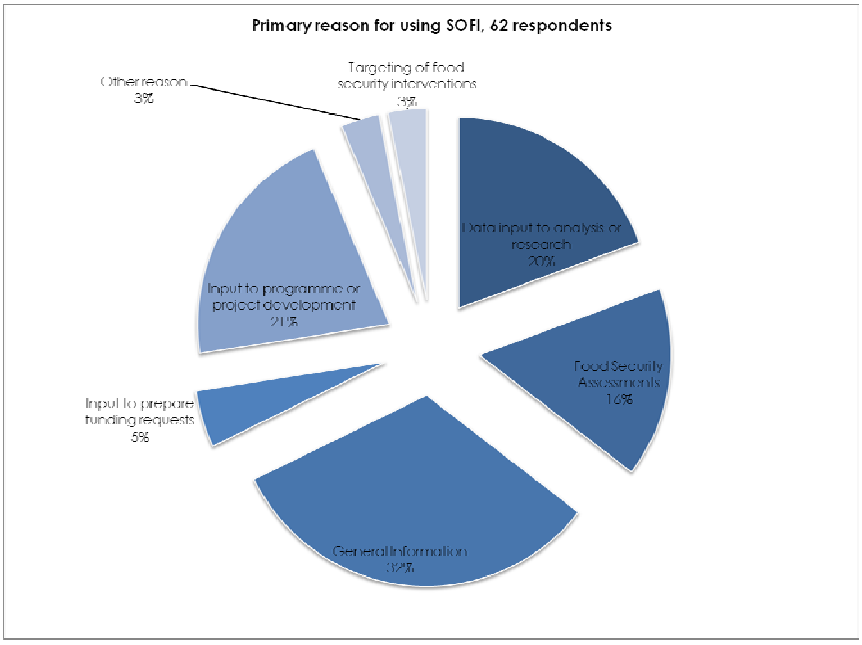


The primary reasons for using GIEWS are similar to the overall average of all the analyzed FAO ISFS products and initiatives: general information and analysis and specific food security assessments.



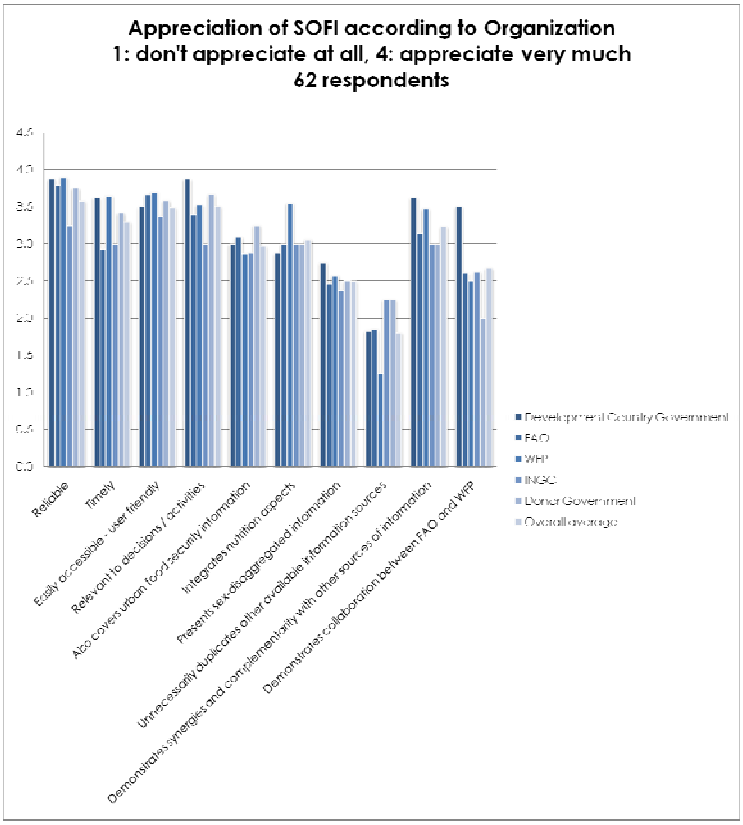
GIEWS is generally rated very well by the 83 users identifying GIEWS as the FAO ISFS product they are most familiar with and the product is seen as relevant to food security decision-making. However, as for other ISFS products users identify some shortcomings in GIEWS with regard to nutrition, sex-disaggregated data, and urban issues. There are no significant differences in the rating of GIEWS according to different work functions of the respondents. Neither is there any significant difference in the rating between respondents from different organizational settings.

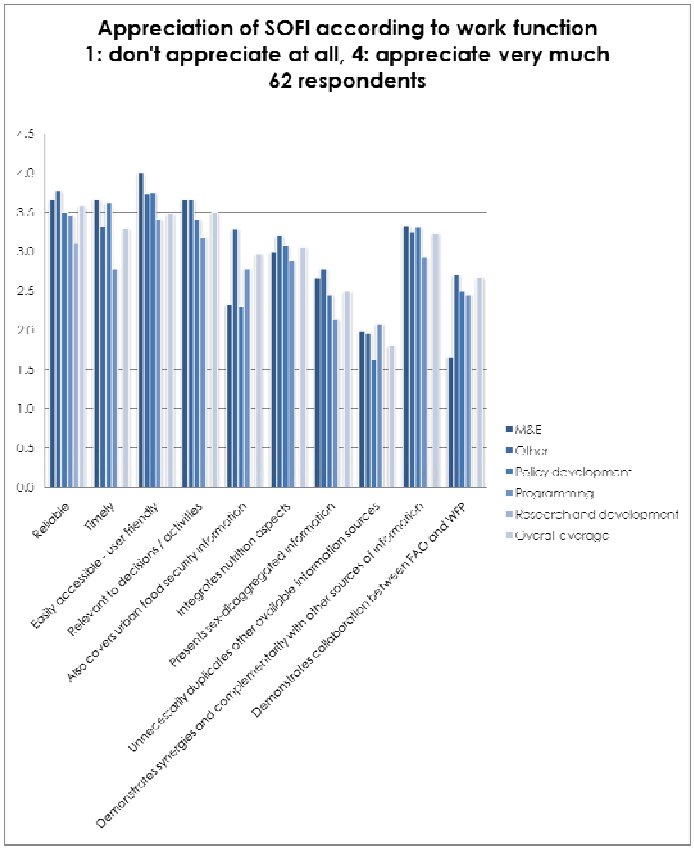
SOFI. Respondents who identified SOFI as the FAO ISFS product they were most familiar with have a larger group from OECD and Asian countries than the overall distribution of the survey. Likewise, these respondents represent to a larger degree UN agencies than is the case for the overall survey.



Compared to the overall average of all the analyzed FAO ISFS products and initiatives respondents identifying SOFI as one of the FAO ISFS products they are most familiar with, SOFI is used less for food security assessments and more for general information and analysis.

SOFI is generally rated very well by the 62 users identifying SOFI as the FAO ISFS product they are most familiar with and the product is seen as relevant to food security decision-making. Moreover, SOFI rated highest among FAO ISFS products for its accessibility. However, as for other ISFS products users identify some shortcomings in SOFI with regard to sex-disaggregated data while urban issues and nutrition information is considered to be relatively well represented in SOFI and better than in for instance FAOSTAT and GIEWS. There are no significant differences in the rating of GIEWS according to different work functions of the respondents. Neither is there any significant difference in the rating between respondents from different organizational settings.


Appreciation of SOFI according to Organization
1: don't appreciate at all, 4: appreciate very much
62 respondents
Reliable
Timely
Easily accessible - user friendly
Relevant to decisions / activities
Also covers urban food security information
Integrates nutrition aspects
Presents sex-disaggregated information
Unnecessarily duplicates other available information sources
Demonstrates synergies and complementarity with other sources of information
Demonstrates collaboration between FAO and WFP
Development Country Government
FAO
WFP
INGO
Donor Government
Overall average

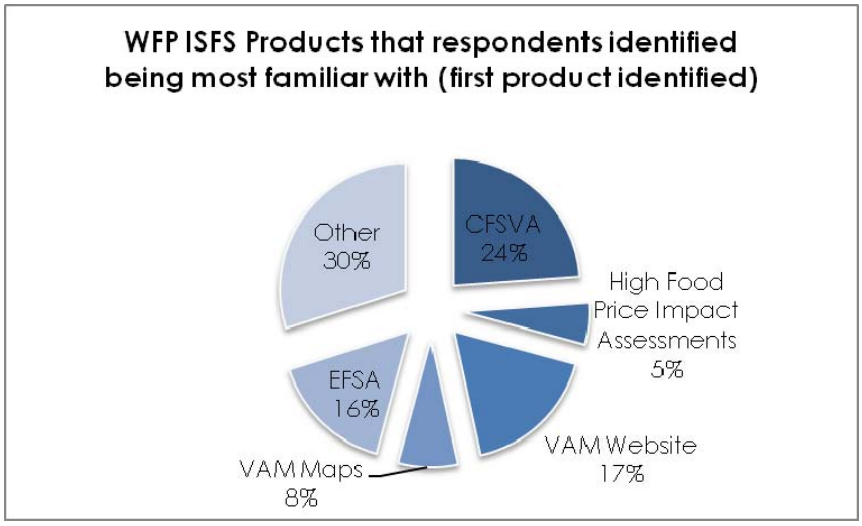

Appreciation of SOFI according to work function
1: don't appreciate at all, 4: appreciate very much
62 respondents
Reliable
Timely
Easily accessible - user friendly
Relevant to decisions / activities
Also covers urban food security information
Integrates nutrition aspects
Presents sex-disaggregated information
Unnecessarily duplicates other available information sources
Demonstrates synergies and complementarity with other sources of information
Demonstrates collaboration between FAO and WFP
M&E
Other
Policy development
Programming
Research and development
Overall average

1.5 WFP ISFS Products and Initiatives

The respondents were requested to identify the three WFP ISFS products that they were most familiar with (if any) from the following list:

- **CFSVA,** Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis;
- **VAM website,**Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping – a number of different ISFS functions;
- **VAM Maps,** Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping maps;
- **EFSA,** Emergency Food Security Assessments;
- **FSMS,** Food Security Monitoring Systems reports;
- **High Food Price Impact Assessments;**
- **Market Profiles;**
- **Market Monitoring Bulletins;**
- **Food Security Atlases;**
- **JAM**, Joint Assessment Missions, in collaboration with UNHCR;
- **CFSAM,**Crop and Food Supply Missions, jointly with FAO;
- **IPC** Integrated Food Security Emergency Phase Classification based maps and reports;
- **National Food Security Bulletins;**
- **Other** the following were identified by respondents: cooperation partner meetings, Community and Household Surveys106, VAM surveys, specific national surveys funded by WFP and undertaken by NGOs.

41 percent of all the respondents indicated familiarity with some of these products; 32 percent indicated familiarity with two products, and 27 percent with three products.



Respondents were requested to rate the products they identified as being most familiar with according to the following qualifiers: Reliability, Timeliness, Accessible, Relevance, Urban coverage, Integration of Nutrition, Sex-disaggregated information, Synergies / Complementarities with other information sources, and Collaboration FAO / WFP.

[106] In cooperation with INGO partners in Southern Africa, WFP has developed bi-annual Community and Household Surveillance that are used by WFP as a key monitoring tool in the region. Other food security stakeholders have shown high appreciation for the CHSs.

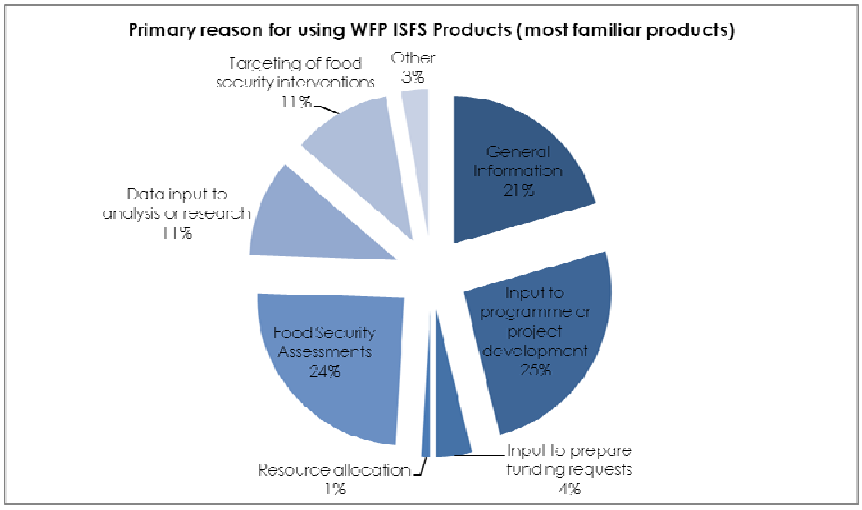
Rating of 12 WFP Products respondents were most familiar with.
Rating was on a scale from 1 to 4
(1: not at all, 2: not much, 3: somewhat, 3: very much)

No of ratings [107]	Product	Overall average	Relative strongest qualifier (compared to other WFP rated products in this list)	Relative weakest qualifier (compared to other WFP rated products in this list)
18	**IPC maps and reports**	3.3	Accessibility + Integration of nutrition + Synergy / Complementarity	Urban coverage
83	**VAM Website**	3.1	Reliability	Accessibility
27	**CFSAM**	3.1	Relevance + Timeliness + Cooperation FAO / WFP	Integration of nutrition + Sex-disaggregated data
92	**EFSA**	3.1	Relevance	Urban coverage
07	**CFSVA**	3.1	Sex-disaggregated data	Timeliness
24	**National Food Security Bulletins**	3.1	Urban coverage	Synergies / Complementarity +Reliability
31	**Food Security Atlases**	3.1	Integration of Nutrition	Timeliness + Relevance
50	**High Food Price Impact Assessments**	3.0	Reliability + Timeliness	Integration of nutrition + sex-disaggregated data
55	**VAM Maps**	3.0	Accessibility	Cooperation FAO / WFP
39	**FSMS**	3.0	Timeliness + Synergies / Complementarity + Cooperation FAO / WFP	Accessibility + Urban coverage
25	**JAM**	2.8	Sex-disaggregated data	Reliability + Accessibility + Urban coverage
29	**Market Profiles**	2.8	Urban coverage	Integration of nutrition + sex-disaggregated data + Synergies / complementarity

[107] The number of ratings is based on a combination of the three products respondents identified as being most familiar with.

Relative rating of different products for different qualifiers

	Product rated highest	Product rated lowest
Reliability	VAM Website, High Food Price Impact Assessments, CFSAM, EFSA	JAM
Timeliness	High Food Price Impact Assessments, CFSAM, EFSA	Food Security Atlases, CFSVA
Accessibility	IPC Maps and Reports	JAM
Relevance	CFSAM	Food Security Atlases
Urban coverage	High Food Price Impact Assessments	JAM
Integration of nutrition	IPC Maps and Reports	Market Profiles
Sex-disaggregated data	CFSA, VAM Website, JAM	Market Profiles
Synergies / Complementarity	IPC Maps and Reports	Market Profiles
Collaboration FAO / WFP	CFSAM	Market Profiles



Other reasons for using WFP ISFS products identified by respondents include: training and teaching, executive briefs, and general monitoring and early warning.

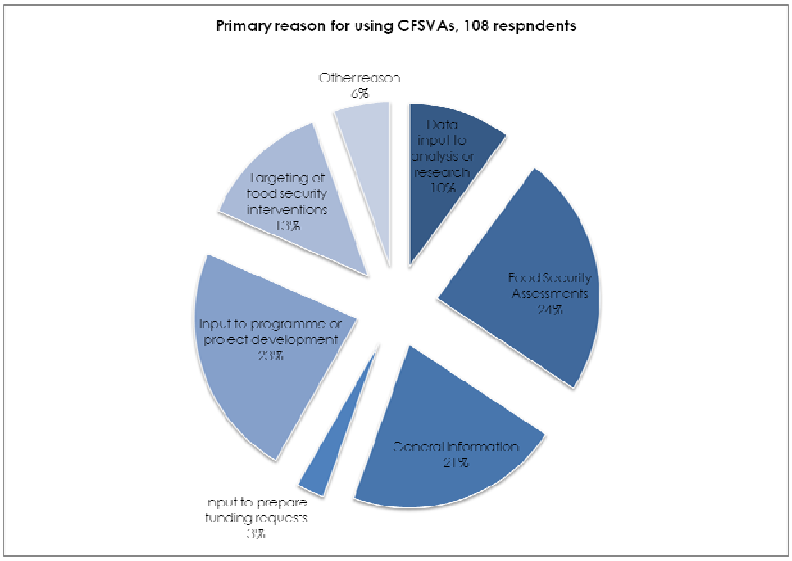
There is no significant difference between the reasons identified by users of WFP ISFS products compared to those identified by users of FAO ISFS products.

General Appreciation of WFP ISFS products that respondents are most familiar with

Qualifier	Very much	Somewhat	Not much	Not at all	Don't know
Reliable	47%	44%	5%	0%	4%
Timely	25%	55%	13%	2%	4%
Easily accessible - user friendly	39%	45%	14%	0%	2%
Relevant to decisions / activities	49%	41%	7%	0%	3%
Also covers urban food security information	18%	42%	27%	5%	9%
Integrates nutrition aspects	29%	48%	17%	1%	5%
Presents sex-disaggregated information	16%	41%	26%	8%	9%
Unnecessarily duplicates other available information sources	5%	21%	37%	26%	11%
Demonstrates synergies/complementarity with other sources of info.	30%	47%	14%	1%	8%
Demonstrates collaboration between FAO and WFP	21%	30%	26%	11%	12%

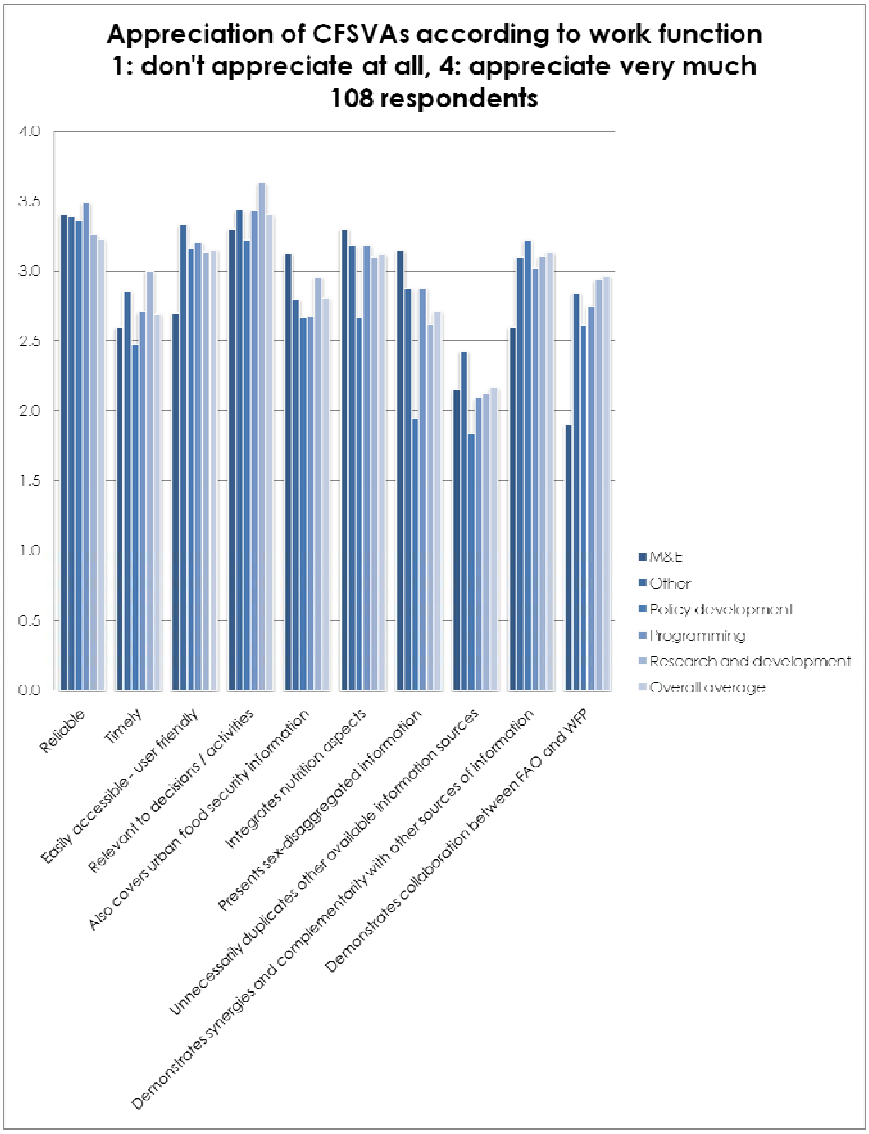
Overall, respondents rate the WFP ISFS products they are most familiar with relatively high although there are some concerns regarding sex-disaggregated information and integration of information for urban areas. It should be noted though that the ratings are based on the products that the respondents have chosen to use. The ratings do therefore not reflect the opinion of ISFS users who have chosen not to use the rated WFP ISFS products.

CFSVA. Respondents who identified CFSVAs as the WFP ISFS product they were most familiar with have a larger representation from OECD and fewer from Asian countries than the overall distribution of the survey. Moreover, this subset of respondents has a larger fraction of UN agencies than among the overall survey respondents.

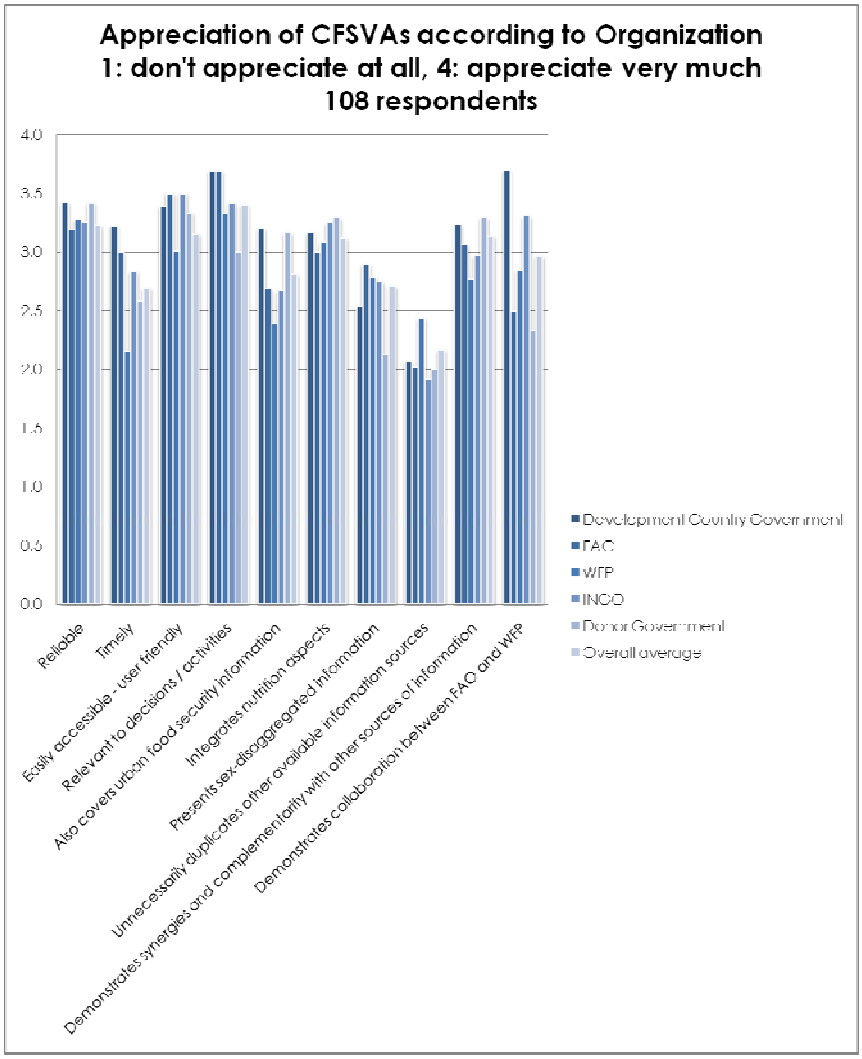


The distribution of reasons for using CFSVAs are similar for the overall reasons for using the different WFP ISFS products indentified in the survey.

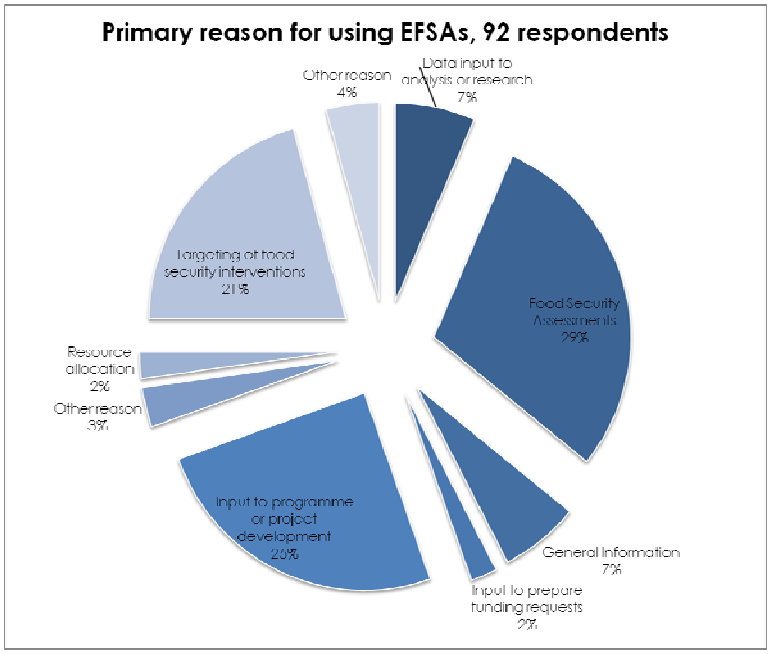
The respondents who indicated "other reasons" for using CFSVAs did not specific these reasons further.



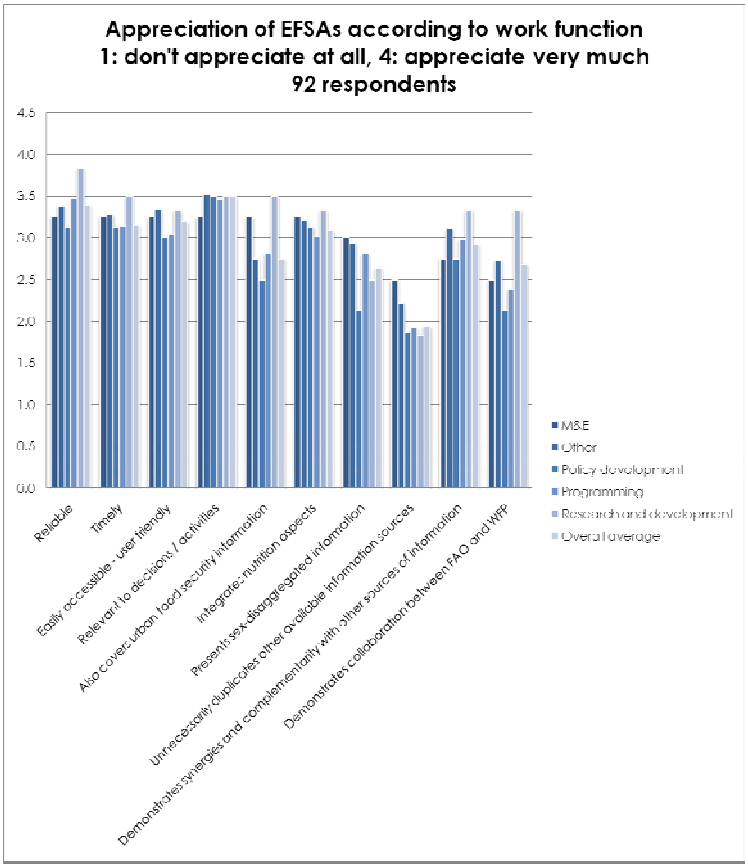
CFSVAs are generally rated very well by the 108 users identifying CFSVAs as the WFP ISFS product they are most familiar with and the product is seen as highly relevant to food security decision-making. Users are generally satisfied with CFSVAs' coverage of sex-disaggregated information as well as integration of nutirition and urban data. CFSVAs' weakest point is identified as the lack of timeliness. There are no significant differences in the rating of CFSVAs according to different work functions of the respondents. Neither is there any significant difference in the rating between respondents from different organizational settings.



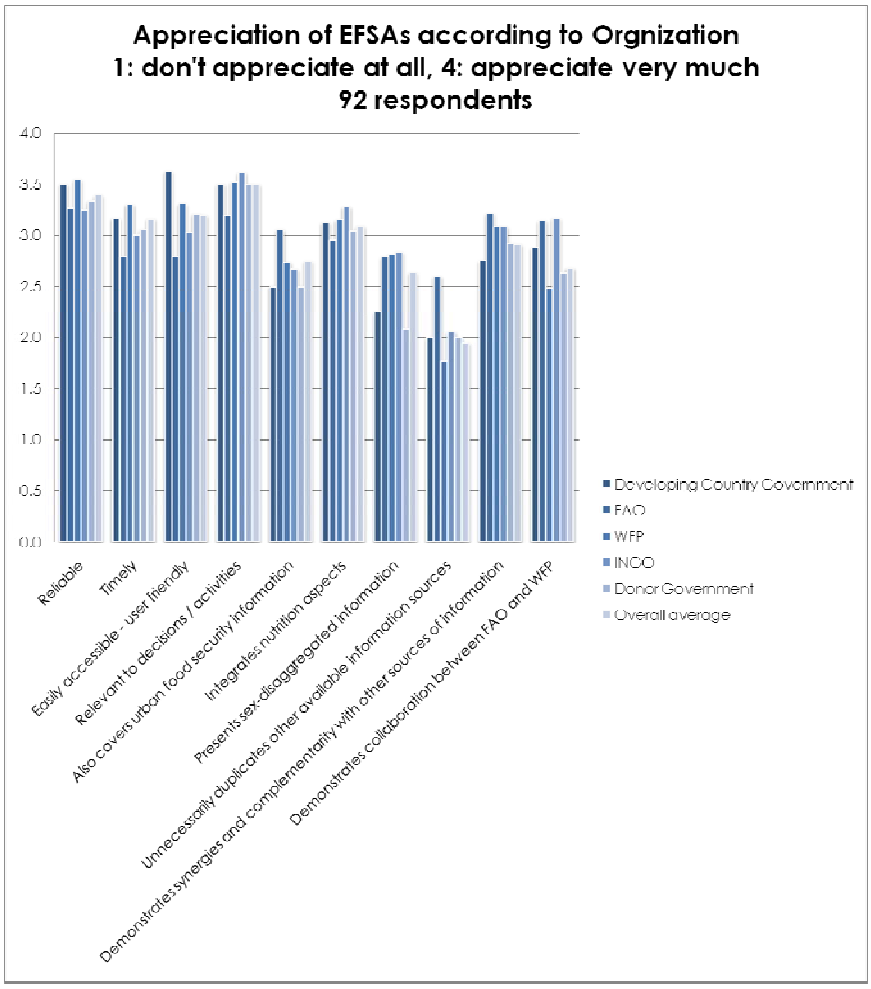
EFSAs. Respondents who identified EFSAs as the WFP ISFS product they were most familiar with have a similar geographical distribution as the overall survey. However, this subset of respondents has a larger fraction of UN agencies than the overall survey respondents and a relative lower group of INGOs, which might seem surprising.



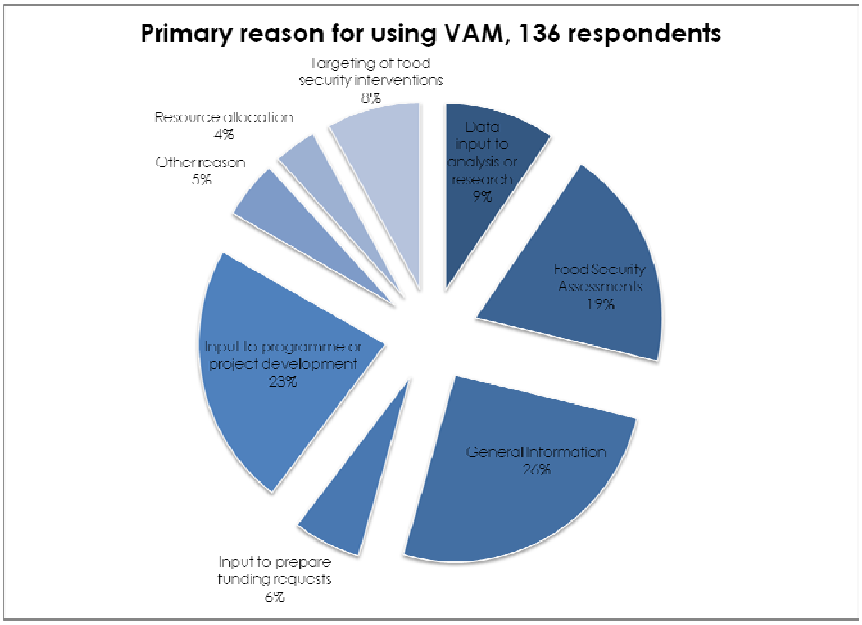
Compared to other FAO and WFP ISFS products EFSAs is the ISFS product used mostly for targeting of food security interventions while EFSAs are used very little for general information.

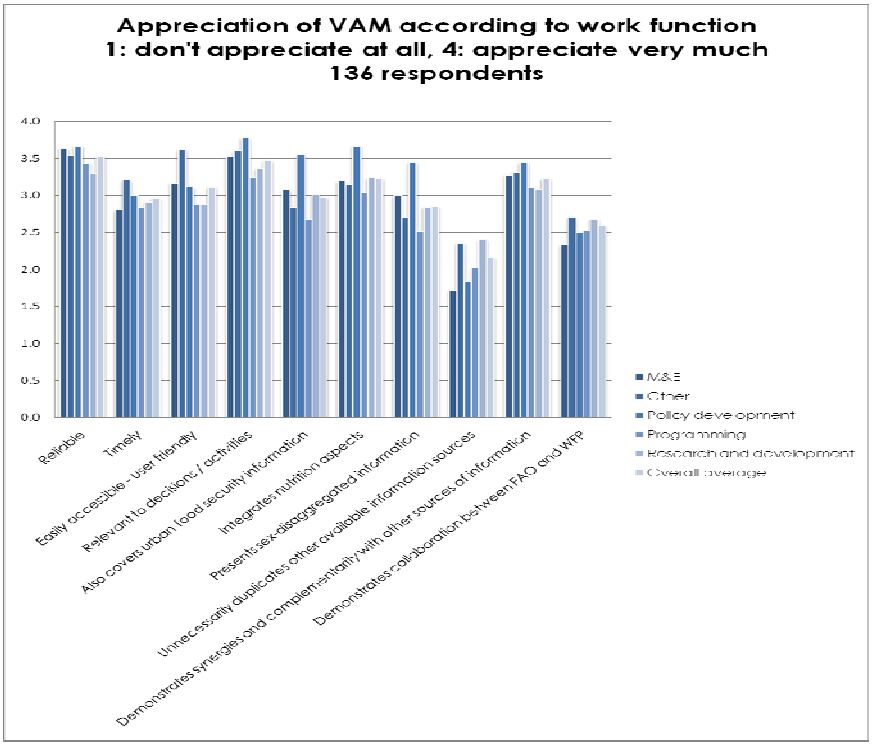


EFSAs are generally rated very well by the 92 users identifying EFSAs as the WFP ISFS product they are most familiar with and the product is seen as highly relevant to food security decision-making and the product is seen as timely. Users are generally satisfied with CFSVAs' coverage of sex-disaggregated information while lack of urban coverage is identified as a shortcoming by several users. There are no significant differences in the rating of EFSAs according to different work functions of the respondents. Neither is there any significant difference in the rating between respondents from different organizational settings.



VAM Website. Respondents who identified VAM website as the WFP ISFS product they were most familiar with have a similar geographical distribution as the overall survey. However, this subset of respondents has a smaller fraction of developing country governments than the overall survey.





The VAM Website is generally rated very well by the 136 users identifying itas the WFP ISFS product they are most familiar with and the product is seen as highly relevant to food security decision-making and the product is seen as timely. Users are generally satisfied with CFSVAs' coverage of sex-disaggregated information and nutrtion. The major shortcoming of the VAM website identified by users is its accessiblity. There are no significant differences in the rating of EFSAs according to different work functions of the respondents. Neither is there any significant difference in the rating between respondents from different organizational settings.

1.6 FAO and WFP Assessment Guidelines, Reference Works and Training Manuals

Respondents were presented major FAO and WFP assessment guidelines, reference works, and training materials. Overall, less than 20 percent of respondents indicted knowledge or use of any of these ISFS products.

Reasons for Using the Products

	General information	Capacity dev/training (as trainee)	Capacity dev /training (as trainer)	To carry out specific assessments or FSA	To set up an information system	Other reasons	% of all respondents
FAO FS Information Distance / E-Learning	32%	20%	31%	11%	4%	2%	18%
WFP Technical Guidance sheets for EFSAs	27%	9%	10%	51%	2%	2%	18%
EFSA Handbook	30%	6%	12%	48%	2%	2%	19%
FAO / WFP Technical Guidance for CFSAMs	42%	8%	6%	39%	4%	1%	13%
WFP Market Analysis Tools	35%	7%	12%	39%	7%	1%	13%
FIVIMS Handbook for Defining and Setting up a FSI & EWSs	34%	12%	21%	16%	13%	4%	11%
Making FIVIMS work for you: Tools and Tips	41%	14%	28%	10%	3%	3%	10%
IPC Technical Manual	32%	6%	12%	28%	13%	10%	16%
CM Box (Crop Monitoring Box)	53%	9%	9%	13%	9%	6%	5%
Other products	50%	10%	10%	15%	0%	15%	3%

Reason for using the products cont.

	Easy to access	Easy to understand	Relevant for work	Not useful	% of all respondents
FAO FS Information Distance / E-Learning	18%	13%	66%	3%	18%
WFP Technical Guidance sheets for EFSAs	9%	11%	78%	2%	18%
EFSA Handbook	11%	10%	72%	7%	19%
FAO / WFP Technical Guidance for CFSAMs	13%	15%	67%	5%	13%
WFP Market Analysis Tools	13%	19%	63%	5%	13%
FIVIMS Handbook for Defining and Setting up a FSI & EWSs	18%	10%	68%	4%	11%
Making FIVIMS work for you: Tools and Tips	22%	17%	50%	10%	10%
IPC Technical Manual	12%	12%	71%	5%	16%
CM Box (Crop Monitoring Box)	21%	15%	56%	9%	5%
Other products	32%	11%	37%	21%	3%

Work relevance and general information are major reasons for use of all the listed products.

Respondents identified the following other ISFS assessment tools and guidelines that they are using: Material in local language, HIV/ AIDS assessment tools, FAO chemical and micro-biological assessment tools, interactive atlases.

Respondents were also asked to make general comments on the products. Among the 31 comments and suggestions many suggest that the survey exercise has been a useful eye-opener to the many ISFS products available at both FAO and WFP, even for FAO and WFP staff members. Respondents therefore also ask for improved dissemination, including targeting, proper training, and regular follow-up. So while the products are generally available on FAO and WFP's websites many respondents that the navigation to the specific information is complicated with no obvious links. Furthermore, some complain about the difficult access through Internet, reflecting the reality of many parts of the world where high-speed Internet connection is still a dream. More specific suggestions include consolidation of the different guidelines and tools and development of regional tools.

1.7 FAO Food Security Data Management software that the organizations of the Respondent have been using

Respondents were presented major data management software for food security related analysis developed and disseminated by FAO. Only around 10 percent of respondents indicted knowledge or use of any of these ISFS products while several respondents indicated that they were not using the products because of lack of awareness.

Reason for Using the Products

	Easy to use	Relevant to my work	Compatible with other software used for FSA	Provides features not found elsewhere	Other reasons or Don't know	% of all respondents
CountrySTAT	33%	62%	15%	18%	10%	10%
GIEWS Workstation	32%	57%	15%	15%	19%	11%
KIDS (Key Indicator Data System)	15%	53%	18%	6%	30%	6%
GAUL (Global Administrative Unit Layers)	23%	46%	15%	18%	39%	7%
IPC software[108]	30%	68%	16%	23%	16%	12%
Other software	33%	33%	7%	8%	47%	5%

Respondents were requested to identify other software used for food security analysis. Few examples were mentioned; several mentioned standard statistical

[108] IPC maps and analysis are based on a set of protocols defining the software packages that can be applied, which will mainly be standard geographical information systems (GIS) software.

software such as SPSS and other free-of-charge software such as CSPRO used for analysis of census results and various GIS products. One respondent cited CERES, which was developed for English speaking countries with FAO funding for food intake analyses.

Reason for NOT using the products

	Difficult to Use	Not relevant to my work	Not compatible with other software used for FSA	Lacks features found elsewhere	Other reasons or Don't know	% of all respondents
CountrySTAT	15%	25%	10%	18%	52%	10%
GIEWS Workstation	14%	17%	8%	6%	67%	11%
KIDS	10%	14%	5%	0%	79%	6%
GAUL	13%	18%	5%	0%	70%	7%
IPC software	14%	17%	14%	8%	64%	12%
Other software	5%	9%	5%	0%	82%	5%

Relatively few respondents offer more details on other reasons for not using the listed software packages. Several of the respondents, though, mentioned the lack of knowledge about the packages or the non-availability at country- and sub-national levels as well as the non-availability of the software in some specific sectors. According to the respondents the non-availability of software reflects in some cases the lack of appropriate hardware.

1.8 Dissemination and Communication of Food Security Information

Respondents were presented major FAO and WFP means of dissemination of food security information. Accessibility was identified as the major reason for using specific products while the aspects such as quality of information compared to other means were rated lower. Particularly, the difficulties in accessing food security information through the two organizations' websites were identified as a major reason for not using those resources.

Reasons for using specific methods of dissemination

	Easy to access	Faster than other methods	Provides better/more information than other methods	Other	% of all respondents
FAO Website	83%	22%	32%	3%	31%
WFP Website	83%	18%	28%	5%	25%
FIVIMS Website	63%	16%	30%	7%	14%
FSIA Website	64%	20%	28%	7%	12%
FAO Press Releases	75%	17%	18%	7%	18%
WFP Press Releases	72%	15%	20%	11%	15%
FAO Conferences / meetings / workshops	52%	9%	41%	10%	16%

	Easy to access	Faster than other methods	Provides better/more information than other methods	Other	% of all respondents
WFP Conferences / meetings / workshops	52%	11%	41%	10%	15%
Printed publications	56%	14%	42%	10%	23%
Other means	35%	25%	25%	20%	3%

When requested about other means of dissemination respondents provide very general comments. Some comments, though, touches about the difficulties in navigating particularly FAO's website with the many different portals while one NGO representative find that FAO and WFP workshops only have limited NGO participation.

Reasons for NOT using Specific Methods of Dissemination

	Difficult to access	Slower than other methods	Provides less useful/less information than other methods	Other	% of all respondents
AO Website	43%	23%	20%	26%	6%
WFP Website	31%	16%	22%	34%	5%
FIVIMS Website	26%	15%	26%	36%	7%
FSIA Website	27%	19%	19%	35%	6%
FAO Press Releases	25%	13%	28%	34%	5%
WFP Press Releases	15%	12%	30%	42%	6%
FAO Conferences / meetings / workshops	46%	12%	13%	31%	7%
WFP Conferences / meetings / workshops	42%	13%	11%	34%	6%
Printed publications	43%	23%	11%	29%	6%
Other means	23%	15%	15%	46%	2%

Appreciation of the Usefulness of Specific Methods of Dissemination

	High	Medium	Low	Not useful	% of all respondents
FAO Website	59%	34%	6%	1%	29%
WFP Website	56%	34%	6%	4%	23%
FIVIMS Website	31%	44%	21%	4%	16%
FSIA Website	46%	36%	15%	5%	15%
FAO Press Releases	41%	36%	16%	6%	17%
WFP Press Releases	39%	40%	15%	7%	15%
FAO Conferences / meetings / workshops	40%	36%	22%	2%	18%
WFP Conferences / meetings / workshops	40%	37%	20%	3%	15%

	High	Medium	Low	Not useful	% of all respondents
Printed publications	53%	35%	11%	0%	19%
Other means	26%	37%	32%	5%	3%

Comments related to the perceived usefulness of different means of dissemination repeat comments from earlier sections of the questionnaire about the lack of knowledge about different ISFS products and means of dissemination and the difficulties in navigating particularly FAO's website. Likewise, the reality of limited and unreliable Internet access for many ISFS users should be taken into account when updating dissemination strategies. Moreover, several respondents call for more targeted dissemination stressing that different user groups use different means of communication. Some respondents state that some of FAO's so-called flagship publications such as SOFI and SOFA are difficult to obtain in many countries.

1.9 Technical and Operational Support to Food Security Information

Finally, respondents were requested to comment on a series of FAO and WFP's support ISFSs in forms of projects, programmes, workshops, expert advice, and general institutional and human capacity development.

Overall, around a quarter of all respondents answered this section and around 50 percent indicated that the support is of good quality and timely while relatively few found the support to be timely. Likewise few respondents indicated that the support will likely produce long-term changes.

General Appreciation of FAO and WFP provided technical assistance, advice, and capacity development

	Of good quality	Effective (achieves its objective)	Cost-effective (best use of resources)	Well targeted	% of all respondents
Expert advice by staff or consultants	61%	45%	16%	23%	26%
Training activities	47%	43%	18%	28%	25%
Projects to support capacity or institution development for FSI work	42%	46%	27%	30%	23%
Guidance on tools and methods	55%	41%	23%	20%	23%
Workshops conferences or other types of meetings	44%	43%	14%	33%	27%
Knowledge sharing (networking partnering)	45%	40%	27%	23%	25%
Material support (funds, computers and IT equipment, vehicles, human resources, etc.)	46%	38%	26%	25%	20%
Other	23%	31%	23%	15%	2%

General Appreciation of FAO and WFP Provided Technical Assistance, Advice, and Capacity development, cont.

	Timely	Relevant	Able to produce long-term change/impact	% of all respondents
Expert advice by staff or consultants	16%	47%	17%	26%
Training activities	12%	41%	25%	25%
Projects to support capacity or institution development for FSI work	13%	37%	31%	23%
Guidance on tools and methods	9%	41%	20%	23%
Workshops, conferences or other types of meetings	18%	43%	21%	27%
Knowledge sharing (networking, partnering)	18%	41%	22%	25%
Material support (funds, computers and IT equipment, vehicles, human resources, etc.)	17%	37%	23%	20%
Other	8%	23%	31%	2%

Overall, there are very few and not very specific comments to this section on appreciation of technical support. One comment refers to the usefulness of the support for the Right to Food initiative.

Identification of FAO and WFP provided technical assistance, advice, and capacity development Perceived as Ineffective by Respondents

Less than 10 percent of all respondents in the Survey identified ineffective aspects of FAO and WFP's support to ISFS capacity development, including development of users' capacity. The major concern identified was the lack of proper targeting of the support activities.

	Of poor quality	Not effective (did not achieve its objective)	Wasteful (poor use of resources)	Poorly targeted	% of all respondents
Expert advice by staff or consultants	24%	22%	16%	18%	9%
Training activities	10%	23%	13%	38%	8%
Projects to support capacity or institution development for FSI work	10%	25%	25%	25%	8%
Guidance on tools and methods	17%	22%	15%	34%	7%
Workshops, conferences or other types of meetings	10%	43%	25%	18%	7%
Knowledge sharing (networking, partnering)	17%	40%	14%	20%	6%

	Of poor quality	Not effective (did not achieve its objective)	Wasteful (poor use of resources)	Poorly targeted	% of all respondents
Material support (funds, computers and IT equipment, vehicles, human resources, etc.)	17%	35%	17%	33%	8%
Other	20%	10%	10%	20%	2%

Identification of FAO and WFP provided technical assistance, advice, and capacity development Perceived as Ineffective by Respondents, cont.

	Late or at an inap-propriate time	Not relevant	No long-term change/impact	% of all respondents
Expert advice by staff or consultants	27%	4%	20%	9%
Training activities	15%	8%	23%	8%
Projects to support capacity or institution development for FSI work	15%	8%	29%	8%
Guidance on tools and methods	17%	5%	7%	7%
Workshops, conferences or other types of meetings	23%	5%	18%	7%
Knowledge sharing (networking, partnering)	14%	11%	11%	6%
Material support (funds, computers and IT equipment, vehicles, human resources, etc.)	17%	7%	20%	8%
Other	0%	40%	10%	2%

Very few respondents provided specific comments on this section – and in fact very few respondents had any input regarding perceptions of ineffectiveness regarding technical support from FAO and WFP to strengthen ISFS and the use of ISFSs. One respondent requested more realistic budgets for support to the use of ISFS products.

Annex 2: Evaluation Matrix

Question / Sub question		Indicators	Data Collection, and Sources[a]	Key Findings
Relevance: Has the support of FAO / WFP[b] to ISFSs been relevant to needs and contexts (institutional, socio-economic, capacity)?				
1	Does the support provided by FAO / WFP respond to the short-term and long-term needs and gaps in FS information, including information disaggregated by sex, wealth, and other key factors for targeted response?	• Documented needs and / or gaps assessments • Coverage of ISFS functions in ISFS products • Coverage of ISFS information	• Products • Progress reports • Evaluation documents • Interviews • ISFS Products • Surveys	• Support responds to ST / LT needs • However, no overall assessment of ISFS needs at country level • Needs evolve over time – support reactive rather than proactive • Still gaps and needs not responded to sufficiently: urban, livestock, sex-disaggregated data, non-farm income incl. remittances, cross-border issues
2	Does the support provided by FAO / WFP respond to needs and gaps in information produced by ISFS functions[c] and activities[d]?	• Documented needs and / or gaps assessments • Coverage of ISFS functions in ISFS products • Coverage of ISFS information	• Products • Progress reports • Evaluation documents • Interviews • ISFS Products	• Baselines: FAO / WFP support responded to baseline needs; particularly CFSVAs and CHS in southern Africa • EW: Former FAO funded EW activities discontinued in many countries, EW on availability better developed than access, utilization and stability • Needs Assessments: traditionally focused on availability – last five years have seen increasing attention from FAO / WFP to integrated assessments, incl. methodology development and CD • Needs for monitoring of FS indicators poorly identified and support minimal with the exception of weather related monitoring of FS • Monitoring of response to food insecurity at country level is weak, particularly emergencies. WFP corporate monitoring of food aid and response in general effective. The cluster approach does not provide regular and systematic monitoring of interventions. Some positive new developments in that sense in RIASCO • Data management capacity is relatively weak in many countries, particularly FS analytical skills

Question / Sub question		Indicators	Data Collection, and Sources[a]	Key Findings
3	Are the FAO / WFP supported ISFSs coherent with national and / or regional food security policies and priorities?	• Documented context analysis	• Products • Progress reports • Interviews	• Yes, all products for ISFS support provide background context, including references national policies such as CCA / UNDAF, PRSPs and Food Security Strategies • In regions with regional organizations with a strong FS role, such as CILSS, SADC, and SICA, there is harmonization and integration. When no strong regional FS structure in place, limited effort from FAO / WFP to build regional capacity over the last 5 years
4	Is FAO / WFP ISFS support coherent with regional initiatives?	• Specific reference to regional initiatives in the products for the ISFS activities	• Products • Interviews	• Regional frameworks such as RVAC in SADC and the CILSS ISFS system ("SAP") is supported by both FAO and WFP; although FAO's direct support has been decreasing in SADC and CILSS. • The Regional Food Security and Nutrition Working Group (FSNWG), which meets regularly in Nairobi under the FAO leadership plays a key role in a region that does not have a strong intergovernmental body for FS coordination (IGAD is supposedly currently repositioning itself) • In LAC, the subregional intergovernmental body, SICA, in Central America is the only effective FS regional player. Limited FAO / WFP institutional support to SICA ISFS work • In response to the SG's special envoi, FAO / WFP prepared a road map of FS in the Horn of Africa, which included ISFS initiatives such as strengthened regional EWSs. However, the roadmap has never been implemented, partly because of differences between the two agencies
5	Are the FAO / WFP ISFS support activities consistent with and / or complementary with those of other national and regional partners?	• Documented analyses of FAO / WFP's comparative advantages	• Products • General documentation on ISFS products • Interviews • Surveys	• FAO and WFP are generally considered as critical ISFS players at national and regional levels and they play a key role in most regional and national settings; • Some limitations in some regions due to adequate regional presence, • Methodological differences still an issue in some countries such as Ethiopia and Kenya, e.g. HEA vs. more quantative assessment

Question / Sub question		Indicators	Data Collection, and Sources[a]	Key Findings
6	Has there been inclusion of stakeholders in planning and design processes of the ISFS support?	• Evidence of participation of stakeholder groups in the preparation and monitoring of the ISFS activities	• Products • ,Progress reports, Evaluation documents, Interviews	• ISFS support is largely HQ driven and often based on relatively standardized packages • National partners such as governments and other FS actors are normally consulted for the design of ISFS program and project activities, including focus group discussions • As FAO's ISFS support is more oriented towards capacity development, products will typically be based substantive in-country preparation
7	Do FAO / WFP promote ISFS flexibility and responsiveness to the changing context of food insecurity nationally, regionally, and globally?	• Documented plans for regular review / update of the support activities	• Products • Progress reports • Interviews	• While FAO / WFP support responds to national and regional needs, most is support is supply driven from HQ; e.g. IPC, Countrystat, CFSVA • Some examples, though, of adaptation to national conditions / requirements; e.g. no CFSVA in Ethiopia as baselines carried out though other systems • FAO / WFP have launched new initiatives to respond to changing contexts; latest the food price inflation • However, little evidence of proactive work to identify new or potential emerging issues and crises before they become mainstream • Some concern at country level regarding FAO's piloting of new initiatives without proper clearance at national level before
8	Is the FAO / WFP ISFS support aligned with the internal mandates and strategies of the two agencies?	• Specific reference to FAO / WFP mandates in the products for the ISFS activities	• Products • Interviews • Surveys	• Both agencies ISFS support is fully aligned with internal mandates and strategies

Question / Sub question		Indicators	Data Collection, and Sources[a]	Key Findings
9	Are FAO and WFP fully informed on ISFS support from the other agency and at all stages (conception, planning, resource mobilization, implementation)	• Evidence of communication between the two agencies	• Products • Surveys • Interviews	• The scattered nature of much ISFS support and the lack of overall ISFS strategies and business plans; particularly in FAO leads to difficulties in getting a full picture of all ISFS activities; not just among the agencies but also within, including between HQ and country level • Products do not fully recognize ISFS activities of the other agency • Many examples of normative ISFS work been developed by either FAO or WFP with other UN agencies and not involving the other (FAO or WFP) adequately • Coordination structures such as national FS interagency groups promote exchange of information but do not guarantee that all relevant information is shared • Exchange of information on ISFS activities personality and network based to a large degree; staff turn-over not conducive for full exchange of information
10	Does FAO / WFP ISFS support contribute to the different means/initiatives of improved donor harmonization and vice-versa, (e.g. UN Reform, Good Humanitarian Donorship; Donor groups at national level; Paris Declaration; Joint assessments)?	• Specific reference to UN reform / harmonization / coordination in the products for the ISFS activities • Use of ISFS products in UN harmonization / coordination documents such as UNDAF and Emergency appeals	• Products • UNDAF and other UN harmonization documents • Emergency appeals and other humanitarian harmonization documents	• Both agencies support joint needs assessments, including CFSAMs and JAMs, in line with the requirements from new harmonization initiatives • There is still a branding issue for many agency activities which in some countries prevent healthy cooperation • Large part of FAO / WFP ISFS support is based on extra-ordinary budgetary funding, which works against principles of predictable funding in for instance GHD and the Paris Declaration • The lack of a systematic "clearing-house" style function in FAO and WFP for ISFS support and which could have ensured that advantages of collaboration between the two agencies would be analyzed systematically for all new initiatives leads to many examples of both FAO and WFP ISFS activities undertaken without any involvement of the other agency 4

Question / Sub question		Indicators	Data Collection, and Sources[a]	Key Findings
EFFICIENCY: HOW ARE THE VARIOUS ACTIVITIES OF THE WFP/FAO SUPPORTED ISFSS PERFORMING? ARE THEY CONTRIBUTING EFFICIENTLY TO THE NEEDS/DEMANDS?				
1	Have there been synergies, complementarities, duplication, and/or contradiction between and within the two agencies' support to ISFS activities (including with regard to decentralization)?	• Documented analysis showing added value of joint support • Joint monitoring and reporting on ISFS support • Documented analysis of	• Comparison of ISFS supported activities undertaken jointly and separately • Products • Evaluation documents	• FAO and WFP play different roles regarding ISFS: o FAO is more oriented towards development and national institution development o WFP is more oriented towards emergency situations and technical capacity development is particularly to make FS activities happen • FAO's ISFS support involves a large number of different divisions and the ISFS activities are fragmented and to a large degree un-coordinated internally • FAO and WFP collaborates systematically on some key normative products such as CFSAM, IPC, EFSA, and SEAGA/Gender) while other products such as livelihood analysis does not include the other agency despite being prepared in partnership with other UN agencies • Very limited joint monitoring and reporting of ISFS support • Some examples of duplication observed during country visits: e.g. two versions of dietary diversity score and food consumption score in Cambodia
2	Do the management systems / structures of each organization support or inhibit the performance of FAO / WFP supported ISFSs?	• Role of ISFS activities in FAO and WFP's strategies • Role of ISFS activities in FAO / WFP's agreements on collaboration	• Interviews • Agency Strategies	• FAO's ISFS performance constrained by: oSilo structure of much of FAO's HQ activities oCoordination structure without authority, except for the FSIA, oExtra-budgetary nature of ISFS activities at country, regional, and HQ level leading to volatility of ISFS initiatives; even promising ones • WFP's ISFS activities are by and large concentrated around VAM, which provides for better coordination and as a regular programme activity ensures predictability

Question / Sub question		Indicators	Data Collection, and Sources[a]	Key Findings
3	Is the investment in ISFSs proportional to the decisions it seeks to influence?	• Relative investment in ISFS activities compared to the agencies' overall support to FS (global, regional, national, local levels)	• Products • Interviews	• Investments in ISFSs and general support to ISFS activities is very limited and seemingly out of proportion to the decisions it seeks to influence whether in terms of emergency response, food aid, or investments in activities to ensure long term food security
4	Is there optimal allocation of resources between activities and functions and are they cost-effective?	• Disaggregation of project budget and works of project technical staff	• Budgets in Products • Interviews	• Comparatively the FAO and WFP have allocated more resources for baselines and needs assessments than for general monitoring and EWS over the period evaluated • FAO used to allocate relatively more resources for food security EWS but based on extra budgetary funding, which is no longer available • Very limited – if any – resources are invested in monitoring of responses to food security information • Limited resources invested in systematic evaluation of efficiency and effectiveness of food security information
5	How much use is made of the normative products of FAO / WFP work in support of ISFS?	• References to FAO / WFP documents	• Interviews • Key development and humanitarian response documents such as national food security policies, PRSPs, etc., • Products • Surveys	• Many technical officers in government agencies, INGOs, and international organizations appreciate and use a number of FAO and WFP's global normative products; e.g. for use in context analyses and advocacy material) • Use and even awareness of some major products such as SOFI is limited at country level • Technical guidance material is generally appreciated and used, although a number of products such as the joint FAO / WFP SEAGA Emergency Assessment guide is remain unknown to a large group of intended users

Question / Sub question		Indicators	Data Collection, and Sources[a]	Key Findings
6	Is the location of the ISFS activities (line ministry, presidency, UN org., NGO, etc.) optimal (ISFS architectural structure)?	• Level of authority for FS related decisions of host institution	• Products • Interviews	• In many countries FS is still perceived as an emergency issue and ISFS coordination bodies will consequently be located within emergency related institutions with participation limited to emergency actors whether national or international • FS as an integrated concept requires active involvement of many different line ministries. However, most national ISFS coordination bodies do not have sufficient convening authority – although there are some exceptions such as Kenya • In the absence of an overall corporate ISFS support strategy, FAO's ISFS support is located in many different and poorly coordinated departments • Institutional setting of WFP ISFS support is more related to immediate functionality and retaliated to longer term strategic concerns • FAO's ISFS support is often concentrated to the Ministry of Agriculture limiting the application of an integrated FS concept – might explain why relatively well functioning EWS supported by FAO in the 80s / 90s have had problems continuing after the end of FAO's support
7	Do the external management systems / structures support or inhibit the performances of FAO / WFP supported ISFSs?	• Role of ISFS activities in the strategies and decision-making structures of the hosting institution	• Products • Interviews • ISFS reports	• Hosting institutions of national ISFSs influence performances: o When hosting institutions are emergency related, the FS debates remains limited to emergency with lack of integration of longer term perspectives and involvement of development actors, o When the ISFS is located in Ministry of Agriculture, FS analyses tend to be limited to availability and access o When the ISFS is located in health structures (particularly in LAC) FS analyses tend to be limited to nutritional aspects with little attention to availability and forecasts o Location of ISFSs in a line Ministries is seldom accompanied by adequate legal convening power to ensure full participation of all sectors o ISFS location is also important for allocation of special budget lines from the national budget, which would require location at a higher an more independent level

Question / Sub question		Indicators	Data Collection, and Sources[a]	Key Findings
8	Is the ISFS institutional placement and structure regularly reviewed / adapted?	• Changes in the institutional placement and structure	• ISFS reports • Interviews	• The organizational architecture of ISFS is often discussed at national levels with a general recognition of the limitations to the structures. However, very limited investment in coherent organizational analyses outlining strengths and weaknesses of different options • The continuous limited understanding of the FS concept among key decision-makers such as politicians is often a key barrier for adequate institutional ISFS location
9	Are the information products of the various ISFS functions timely, including for feeding into other ISFS functions?	• Documented analysis of information needs of various stakeholders • Regularity of information products	• Products • Progress reports • Evaluation documents • Interviews • Surveys	• Delays of some products especially surveys often reported • Delays often linked to government procedures or the production of overly long editing processes • When partners are involved in the whole information gathering, analysis, production/communication, preliminary results will often be used informally and for initial part of decision-making processes and other ISFS functions before the official release of products
10	Has a professional multi-media and multi-directional communication strategy been developed and has it been applied?	• ISFS Communication strategies (not necessarily as stand-alone)	• ISFS background documents (e.g. products, and progress reports) • Interviews	• Communication strategies normally take the form of general information dissemination with no prior analysis of potential and intended users as a basis for a targeted communication strategy • No evidence of use of professional communication specialists who would be able to package the information to different audiences and at the right time and ensuring appropriate follow-up (no salesmanship)
11	Are alternative means of communication being analyzed?	• ISFS Communication strategies (not necessarily as stand-alone	• ISFS background documents (e.g. products, and progress reports) • Interviews	• Increasing use of electronic communication for mass distribution of FS information but without appropriate recognition of access limitations for a number of key users • Some new examples of use of cell-phones for communication of FS information, particularly market information and weather forecast, which allow better information to national stakeholders at local level

Question / Sub question		Indicators	Data Collection, and Sources[a]	Key Findings
12	Is a process of iterative mappings of ISFS stakeholders of input sources being applied for the communication strategies?	• Changes in use of sources	• Reports • Interviews	• In the rare cases where there has been attempt to prepare a formal communication strategy it has been produced as a single event
13	How are capacity development activities being designed (by whom and for whom, on what and with what, how often)?	• Capacity development plans	• ISFS background documents (e.g. products and progress reports) • Interviews	• Capacity development supported in a fragmented / ad hoc with no evidence of comprehensive capacity needs assessments, including analysis of existing training resources and assessment of future CD requirements prior to CD support • WFP/FAO focus on training of individuals rather than capacity development of organisations • Limited analysis and use of national/regional training capacity (except use of Kwazulu Natal University in South Africa for SADC ISFS activities) • FSIA evaluation has identified distance learning identified as an efficient and appreciated way of reaching a large number of people with capacity development • ISFS CD is mainly supply driven • Design of CD activities is output focused with limited consideration to longer-term impact
14	Do the ISFSs apply a coherent vetting process among partners, and stakeholders?	• Documented evidence of vetting processes in ISFS procedures	• Products • ISFS background documents, • Interviews	• All non-global ISFS activities supported by FAO / WFP are carried out with government structures. The ISFS products will generally undergo a systematic vetting process by government partners • FAO / WFP ISFS support is predominantly involving partnerships. Moreover, both agencies increasingly support consensus building processes; e.g. through IPC

Question / Sub question		Indicators	Data Collection, and Sources[a]	Key Findings
15	Are relevant staff in FAO and WFP aware of existing ISFS initiatives / work by the two agencies?	• References to ISFS products	• Interviews • Surveys	• The scattered nature of much ISFS support and the lack of overall ISFS strategies and business plans; particularly in FAO leads to difficulties in getting a full picture of all ISFS activities; not just among the agencies but also within, including between HQ and country level • Products do not fully recognize ISFS activities of the other agency • Many examples of normative ISFS work been developed by either FAO or WFP with other UN agencies and not involving the other (FAO or WFP) adequately • Exchange of information on ISFS activities personality and network based to a large degree; staff turn-over not conducive for full exchange of information
16	Is there a culture of data sharing and efforts for synergy between and within FAO and WFP as well as between FAO and WFP and other partners?	• References to the other data from the other agency • Joint data repo-sitory • Open data access	• Agency docu-ments • Interviews • Progress reports • Outreach policy documents of the two agen-cies	• Relevant FAO / WFP staff members are normally on general distribution lists of HQ generated ISFS products • Similar situation at national levels • No systematic exchange of information between the two agencies on planned activities or new initiatives – although it seems to happen frequently it is generally based on personalities • Coordination bodies such as the IAWG standing committee and coordination committees in the field should in principle promote a more systematic exchange of information but so far these structures do not obligate partners to inform on planned and on-going initiatives

EFFECTIVENESS: TO WHAT EXTENT HAS THE OBJECTIVE OF PROMOTING USEFUL AND ACCESSIBLE ISFS PRODUCTS BEEN ATTAINED?				
1	Are users (intended, actual, and potential) aware of the ISFS products?	• References to ISFS products from different user groups	• Reports • Interviews • Surveys	• Intended users are generally aware of the key ISFS products; e.g. governments and key external partners in the case of national ISFSs • Little has been done to identify potential users though; hardly any evidence of comprehensive user analyses, • With regard to FAO and WFP's global products, major guidelines and methodologies are generally known, although there are a wide number of ISFS guidelines that are little known, including SEAGA guidelines for emergency assessments (joint FAO – WFP publication), livelihood assessments (FAO – ILO joint publication), Right to Food assessment and monitoring guidelines (FAO publication), • Global products such as SOFI are little known among potential users in development countries, apparently better knowledge in OECD countries • Geographically uneven awareness of general approaches such as IPC and FIVIMS • Dissemination through Internet limit awareness of a number of ISFS products; language is also a barrier, as is general recognition of the breath of products available particularly at www.fao.com • CFSVAs and markets studies are regularly cited in FS studies • At country level where CFSAMS have taking place, good awareness of targeted audience (donors)
2	Have the ISFSs influenced/informed decision-making or stimulated demands for information from decision-makers?	• Time and type of decisions coming from the various stakeholders and feedback received and documented.	• Interviews • Evaluation reports • Partners' annual reports • Surveys	• Multiple sources of information used by decision- makers • Multiple factors influence decision-making (Including but not limited to information) • At country levels information used as the basis for planning, targeting, appeals, fund raising/appeals, advocacy (e.g. increased development investment in agriculture), and referred to in strategies (PRSP, UNDAF, FS strategies) • WFP directive states that assessments must inform EMOPs and PRROs. Systematic verification that assessment findings/results are used in the document by VAM/OMXF. • FAO – no specific directive/procedure exists however, by tradition evidence based justification of interventions

3	What are the roles, structures, and distribution of tasks among partners?	• Sources used for the ISFS products • Origin of resources for the ISFS activities	• ISFS background documents (e.g. products and progress reports) • Interviews	• FAO / WFP expected to take ISFS leadership at global level and provide a key role in supporting governments and regional intergovernmental organizations in developing and maintaining ISFSs • No clear distribution of roles and responsibilities in supporting ISFSs between FAO and WFP – some informal expectations who will do what and when but lack of predictability of support the complementarity and cooperation of the two organizations are not exploited optimally, • INGOs collect and analyze ISFS data in their operational areas. The results are not systematically shared but rather considered as input for internal management, including planning and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)
4	Are all relevant partners engaged actively?	• Participation in ISFS mgt / steering • Key partners' perception of their role • Networking among different stakeholders	• Minutes of ISFS meetings • Interviews • Joint field missions and joint reporting with other partners	• Increasing but not systematic participation in ISFS of other UN agencies such as UNICEF, ILO, UNDP, WHO, UNHCR, OCHA • Limited, if any, participation of private sector and other civil society organizations, incl. Farmers associations • Many relevant line ministries / departments such as national women machineries do normally not participate in ISFS work • Limited, if any, participation of relevant national and regional training and research organizations
5	Do special organizational requirements from key partners (incl. potential) hamper effectiveness of the ISFSs?	• Communication and distribution practices / rules	• Interviews	• Official government clearances of products can slow down release of final food ISFS products and products – schism between immediate efficiency and national institutionalization process • Strong incentive to work in partnership in general can slow down processes and product release
6	Do the communication strategies ensure that all partners contributing to the ISFS will receive feedback (e.g. primary data generation)?	• Dissemination strategy	• ISFS reports • Interviews	• Limited evidence of communication strategies and coherent analyses and identification of relevant partners and their information needs and capacities • While traditional participants in national ISFSs such as government entities, INGOs, and UN organizations will receive feed-back, limited evidence of proper feedback of information to people and organisations at local levels who provide information • Information generated is generally not geared for decentralized dissemination; decline in rural radios has reduced market and early warning information for households and communities

7	How have the ISFS products contributed to the different means/initiatives of improved agency harmonization and vice-versa, (Rome based agencies, One UN, UNDAF, Paris Declaration, etc,)?	• References to ISFSs and ISFS products in MOUs, partner-ship agreements, etc	• Formal partner-ship documents • Annual reports • Interviews	• Recent Direction paper from FAO / WFP / IFAD include ISFS relevant activities for future work – but still very general, • Joint ISFS products/processes reinforce but do not necessarily generate joint response initiatives • Recent initiatives for pool funding (Sudan and DRC) to UN and partners workplan linked t joint ISFS assessments • One UN initiative in Tanzania has lead to increased joint focus on ISFS activities
8	Are formal analysis of comparative advantages between FAO and WFP always part of the agencies' ISFS support?	• Documented evidence of comparative analyses	• ISFS background documents • Interviews	• In principle, CCA / UNDAF process provides some basis for analysis of comparative advantages but the basis for the results is seldom clear. Moreover, ISFS activities are normally not explicitly part of the CCA / UNDAF • Comparative advantage analysis of FAO and WFP in Cambodia seems to the exception to the rule of lack of proper analyses of comparative advantages
9	Are the methods applied for generating the ISFS products documented for the users?	• Description of methodology as part of all ISFS products	• ISFS products • Interviews	• Most food security information generated with FAO / WFP support such as CFSVAs, SitReps, ESAs, and HEAs have special chapters explaining the methodology applied, • Clear attention to limits for use of data is not always provided, though
10	Are the ISFS products generated and dis-seminated based on users' calendar / critical event calendar?	• Documented evidence of calendar describing calendar of key us-ers' decision-making processes	• ISFS background documents • Interviews	• ISFS products generated according to seasonal calendar or crisis onset • Dissemination of information does not take decision making calendars of for instance donors into account; i.e. no specific targeted dissemination

11	Are WFP and FAO collaborating to strengthen the respective and joint credibility of their ISFS products?	• Coordination and harmonization of ISFS activities within the two agencies	• Strategies • Work plans • Interviews	• There are many positive examples of cooperation around ISFS activities, particularly on assessments while more limited on other issues such as capacity development • CFSAMs are the most organized and formal ISFS collaboration • Some new initiatives for collaboration around IPC have been positive in some cases but also challenging when the agencies promote IPC as their own initiative. Funding seems to be a part of this problem • Most collaboration still driven by personalities and on an ad hoc basis • Many non WFP/FAO stakeholders refer to relationship between FAO and WFP as often challenging and competitive • Generally no efforts of one agency to promote the ISFS products of the other although WFP sometimes contract FAO to prepare special ISFS work such as CFSVAs
12	Are ISFS products reaching all stakeholder groups, including advocacy groups?	• Distribution of ISFS products to multiple stakeholders • References to ISFS products in appeals, products, etc.	• Distribution lists of ISFS products • Resource mobilization documents • Proposals • Interviews	• Both organizations disseminate ISFS products to key FS stakeholders: Governments, donors, UN agencies, INGOs, media • Dissemination of ISFS products from ISFS supported by FAO / WFP generally follow same pattern • No targeted communication strategies and no systematic monitoring mechanisms to which information has reached which stakeholders, if the perception of the communication is received as intended, etc. • See Effectiveness 1 for more
13	What are the characteristics of ISFS products that have been utilized?	• Types of ISFS products quoted in FS related documents (policies, strategies, programmes, projects, appeals, etc.)	• FS related documents • Interviews • Surveys	• Strengths and weakness of current ISFS products according to the key set of qualifiers presented as attachment to this table

IMPACT: TO WHAT EXTENT HAS FOOD SECURITY INFORMATION PRODUCED BY FAO AND / WFP (DIRECTLY OR WITH PARTNERS) BEEN USED BY DECISION-MAKERS / USERS / INFLUENCERS AND FOR WHAT?				
1	Have ISFS products informed conceptualization and design of FS related policies, strategies, programmes, and projects, including targeting?	• Quotations of ISFS products • Timing of feeding programmes, safety nets, and other FS measures in relation to ISFS product availability • Targeting of FS measures	• FS related documents (programmes, projects, strategies, advocacy material) • Interviews • Surveys	• Multiple sources of information used by decision- makers • Evidence for concrete use of FSI for decision-making and design of policies, programmes, and projects most apparent for emergency and humanitarian situations • In development contexts, four FS elements recognized but necessarily presented as a FS issue • Multiple factors influence decision-making (Including but not limited to food security information) • At country levels information used as the basis for planning, targeting, appeals, fund raising/appeals, advocacy (e.g. increased development investment in agriculture), and referred to in strategies (PRSP, UNDAF, FS strategies) • WFP directive states that assessments must inform EMOPs and PRROs. Systematic verification that assessment findings/results are used in the document by VAM/OMXF. • FAO – no specific directive/procedure exists however, by tradition evidence based justification of interventions
2	Are ISFS products part of national overall planning processes, justification of budget, PRSP process?	• Quotations of ISFS products	• Overall planning documents • Interviews	• Increasing reference to FS components in PRSPs and similar planning process, including nutrition, and production levels
3	Has there been changes in national budgetary allocations to ISFS related activities?	• Importance of ISFS related activities at national level	• Overall planning documents • Interviews	• Budget lines for specific FS elements often dependent on line ministries and less transparent and traceable although many examples of specific budgets for instance for health and nutrition and increased food production • As part of ISFS support at national levels both FAO and WFP have advocated for budgetary allocations for ISFS activities • Greater tendency to have national budgetary allocations for rapid onset emergency related information systems than for comprehensive national ISFSs

4	Have ISFS findings and conclusions, e.g. early warning been followed?	• Calendar of FS interventions	• ISFS reports • Interviews • Surveys	• FSI is normally acted upon although not always with responses that the ISFS responsible would like to see. Several key examples, such as the GIEWS EW on locust threats in 2005 estimating that early containment would cost US$ 6 million. Despite repeated alerts there was no major intervention before 2006; WB estimated final cost to more than US$ 100 million • Similar with high malnutrition rates that have been recorded and documented for decades but not reacted upon in terms of FS interventions; e.g. in West and Southern Africa before major FS crises were declared by the mass media • Very limited direct response to FSI in terms of longer term investment addressing structural issues
5	Have there been positive changes in decision-making processes as a result of the ISFS support (e.g. towards evidence based decision-making)?	• Use of ISFS products in policies, strategies, and programmes	• FS related documents • Interviews • Surveys	• Increased emphasis on informed decision-making and reflected for instance in ever-increasing demand for more detailed and precise FSI • Initiatives such as SENAIP, FSIA, and special workshops and conferences on how to improve the quality of ISFS products such as CFSAMs witness of changed culture towards informed decision-making
6	Have positive experience within FAO and WFP from joint support to ISFSs led to other joint programmes or projects?	• Timeline for joint initiatives	• Interviews • Surveys	• Increased donor pressure for joint initiatives • Some HQ initiatives build on joint participation; e.g. FAO participated in SENAC advisory committee, which is generally seen as very positive. However, there is no similar structure for the FSIA • Several examples of joint workshops at HQ to solve methodological differences; e.g. on DDS • Most ISFS collaboration between the two agencies based on personalities; meaning that in principle positive experience have led to more collaboration – however, limited evidence, if any, that such collaboration has been institutionalized • One UN in Tanzania has had a positive impact on joint ISFS collaboration • As well as there are lack of overall organizational strategies for ISFS support, there is no overall strategy for joint ISFS work • FAO's limited capacity at country level is often cited as a reason for lack of cooperation. However, the limited capacity should in fact be a major argument for increased collaboration based on complementarity

7	What have FAO / WFP learned about strengthening the link between information and response/decision-making?	• Documented learning and best practices	• Interviews • Surveys	• No evidence of any model for understanding FS decision-making processes in ISFS related work; i.e. no evidence-based understanding of how and why FS related decisions are taken in different organizations and under different circumstances – and no evidence of proper communication strategies but rather on information dissemination, i.e. not attention to different decision-makers requesting different information and in different packages; e.g. some require more emphasis on market analysis for FSI to be useful for informed decision-making • Majority of ISFS products focus more on immediate output than on usefulness reflected in the limited monitoring of usefulness of ISFS products; and limited attention to usefulness criteria for different potential users when designing ISFS products • Initiatives such as FIVIMS, FSIA, and SENAIP which in principle seek to strengthen the links between FSI and decision-making have had different levels of success with SENAIP having been most successful. FSIA, which substitute the word "decision-making" with action has provided some improvement to FSI utility but has not advanced in understanding decision-making processes. Similar for FIVIMS
8	To what extent have FAO / WFP ISFS support enabled ISFSs to adapt to the changing context of food insecurity nationally, regionally, and globally?	• Documented learning and best practices	• Interviews • Surveys	• WFP/FAO ISFS support has allowed national ISFSs to adapt to changing FSI demand; e.g. food price hikes in 2007 / 08 have led to greater integration of urban issues in ISFSs. Still, demand for more emphasis on regional and global aspects of FS. Similarly, the post-election crisis in Kenya (2008) has led to integration of non-drylands in the national ISFS • FAO and WFP guidelines and normative tools have provided great support to national ISFSs to adapt to changing settings • Major challenge remains to be proactive instead of reactive; i.e. always be on the forefront of understanding emerging issues • New FAO / WFP supported initiatives such as IPC have increased attention to request for integrated analyses for complex crises

9	Are national and regional ISFSs showing proprietary responsibility for key foundational FS information products (baselines, early warning, need assessments, etc)?	• Documented national and regional plans and strategies involving ISFS functions • Budgetary allo-cations	• Interviews	• Regional organizations such as ASEAN/AFSIS, SICA, CILSS, and SADC as well as some national systems take responsibility for ISFS functions, including baselines, EW, and data management. However, they are not self-sufficient but depend on ongoing external financial and technical support including support from FAO / WFP. • National ISFSs in various countries such as Botswana, South Africa, and Namibia are mainly funded from national budgets but still function with input from partners including FAO and WFP
10	Have there been other unintended positive or negative outcomes of the ISFS support?	• Documented learning and best practices	• Interviews • Surveys	• Generally, it seems that national ISFSs have generated greater awareness of the importance of FSI • In Burkina FAO, WFP had originally planned to distribute urban vouchers through city schools, but in gathering ISFS data to support design and targeting of this distribution, they realized that no investment had been made in the education infrastructure in 10 years and that some older schools were not functioning while no provision had been made for schools in new neighbourhoods. The focus on urban areas has resulted in better information on other problems facing urban populations and hopefully improved urban investments in other social sectors • In Ethiopia, recent IMF studies on the food price inflation, which is higher in Ethiopia than in neighbouring countries, have led IMF and WB to speculate that supply side factors such as farmers having better access to marketing information and thus better negotiation power for higher prices might contribute to the rising food prices

SUSTAINABILITY: HAVE (NATIONAL/REGIONAL) CAPACITIES BEEN DEVELOPED / STRENGTHENED? HAVE THERE BEEN SUSTAINABLE BENEFITS?				
1	Is national, regional or global level capacity[e] development / strengthening an objective of the supported activity?	• Longer term objective of the ISFS	• Products • Interviews	• Individual and institutional CD is an explicitly objective in FAO ISFS support as documented in products • Initiatives such as FSIA has CD as an key objective • Individual and institutional CD for ISFSs is an explicit output in most WFP products, including PRROs • Increasingly specific WFP initiatives for CD on ISFSs at country and regional levels
2	Does the support adequately consider the inputs and other factors required for institutionalisation?	• Context and capacity assessments / analyses	• Products • Progress reports • Evaluation reports	• Specific capacity needs assessments are still limited although FAO projects such as SIFSIA / Sudan and SETSAN / Mozambique have dedicated special attention to capacity needs assessments • Several examples of thorough project preparatory activities for agricultural statistical projects which primarily focus on capacity needs • Institutitonalisation is predominantly understood as a process towards self-sustained (financially and technically) national systems in spite of recognition of the needs and interested for external actors to be part ISFSs. Moreover, ISFS support with the long term objective of instiutitonalisation / sustainability in terms of self-sustained national systems do not address the key challenge of brain drain from government institutions despite the fact that this is mentioned as a risk in most products • Another institutitonalisation challenge that remains in most countries in the organizational architecture of the ISFSs • Most of WFP's CD activities undertaken without proper capacity needs assessments. There are some exceptions though: Nicaragua, Madagascar, and Tanzania • Limited attention to integrating national / regional training institutions in long term CD plans. Some exceptions though; e.g. in Southern Africa

3	Has the support led to the creation, strengthening, modification, etc. of institutional entities (government or other)?	• Institutional architecture of the ISFS	• Products • Progress reports • Interviews • Surveys	• FAO / WFP ISFS support has been the prime driver for a number of national and regional ISFSs: FSAU, SETSAN, SIFSIA, SAPs, RVAC, CARD, etc.
4	Have FAO / WFP ISFS support assisted in the establishment of in-country or regional food security/early warning networks that may offer added continuing institutional capacity?	• Role of FAO / WFP support in the generation of ISFS functions • Evidence of ISFS functions continuing post WFP / FAO support • Evidence of FAO/WFP support for well functioning country or regional networks • Realistic exit strategy • Long-term strategies for the ISFSs	• Evaluation reports • ISFS progress reports • Interviews	• FAO / WFP ISFS support has supported the strengthening of regional institutions in support of national ISFSs, particularly RVAC in Southern Africa, CILSS in West Africa, AFSIS in Asia, and SICA in Central America • FAO support has supported establishment of special regional data management networks such as RDES / APCAS • FAO / WFP participate as partners in multi-stakeholder regional forums such as the Food Insecurity Prevention Network in West Africa
5	Has the FAO / WFP ISFS support considered the legal environment and legislative frameworks, legal status of entities; etc. in relation to sustainability of the ISFS functions?	• Existence of executive orders, legislative action relative to ISFS legal frameworks	• Products • Progress reports • Interviews • ISFS background documents	• FAO has supported the development of policies / strategies in various countries including development of legal framework for the national ISFS institutions
6	Is there new or increased capacity to undertake ISFS functions resulting from the FAO / WFP support?	• Partners increasingly involved and with increasing responsibility of ISFS activities	• Progress reports • Interviews	• FAO / WFP ISFS support has particularly focused on capacity development of individuals, which has not been matched by organizational capacity • no institutionalization of capacity development to ensure follow-up and maintenance and new capacity development

7	Has the FAO / WFP ISFS support generated lasting physical investments to the benefit of ISFS (e.g. computer and communication systems)?	• Viable physical ISFS infrastructure	• Progress reports • ISFS background documents • Interviews	• The most visible signs of long lasting physical FAO / WFP support is in the forms of normative guidelines such as the "green series" • New software such as CountryStat is like to be long-lasting investment too although it is not clear that there will be policy for long term support • Computers, incl. laptops are around but not very clear if they originate from FAO / WFP or other projects / programmes

[a] Products refer to project or programme documents outlining the specific ISFS activities. The term is used more broadly to cover any relevant planning documents and not just formal project / programme documents.

Progress reports refer to documents describing undertaken FAO / WFP ISFS activities.

Evaluation documents refer to both internal and external documents analyzing, reviewing, assessing, or evaluating undertakings in which FAO / WFP ISFS supported activities play a role.

Interviews refer to interviews undertaken by the Evaluation Team for the ISFS evaluation.

[b] FAO / WFP refers to separate WFP and FAO activities (i.e. can be in cooperation with other agencies) and / or activities undertaken jointly by the two agencies.

[c] ISFS functions are: development of baselines with focus on FS vulnerability, Early Warning, Needs Assessments, and Monitoring and Evaluation.

[d] Institutionalization refers to the process of increasing national / regional ownership (e.g. national governments) of the ISFS.

[e] Capacity refers here to soft capacity, i.e. of skills and knowledge as well as institutional capacity and not increased amounts of hardware (computers, cars, buildings).

Annex 3: Strengths and Challenges of Key ISFS Qualifiers

While different ISFS stakeholders have different quality requirements regarding ISFS products, functions, and overall systems and while these requirements are dynamic a number of key ISFS qualifiers can be identified that will define the usefulness of the ISFSs. The following list of qualifiers does not necessarily apply to all ISFSs or to all decision-makers. Rather, decision-making models are complex and will seek different qualifiers for different products at different times. The table summarizes the major findings of the Evaluation regarding strengths and challenges for key ISFS qualifiers.

Qualifier	Description of Qualifier	How are ISFSs Performing	
		Strengths	**Challenges**
Accessibility	ISFS products should be reachable / obtainable by different stakeholders; e.g. easily accessible websites or regular newsletters.	The ISFS information and support products (assessments, early warning, sitreps, technical guidelines, etc.) are normally easily accessible. In addition to posting on various relevant websites such as those of national Government Institutions, FAO and WFP corporate websites, and specific and relevant country office websites of the two organizations' ISFS products are disseminated through electronic mailing lists to targeted stakeholders.	Some key Food Security Information (FSI) users do not have easy and reliable Internet access. Electronic mailing lists are addressing a relatively limited number of user groups, excluding for instance private sector, many civil society organizations, etc. Distribution lists for hard copies is often very limited and although documents are normally available on demand many potential users are not aware of the availability of the different products. There is a need for identification of potential users and what would be their criteria for good accessibility. While the websites are generally recognized as important sources of information, many users have trouble navigating to the different FSO portals and much information remains unknown to a large group of users.

Qualifier	Description of Qualifier	How are ISFSs Performing	
		Strengths	**Challenges**
Comparability	Different datasets from the ISFSs should be internally as well as externally comparable, e.g. to allow trend analysis or for analysis of a specific point in time using data from different sources.	There has been an increasing focus on compatibility and comparability of data. WFP-VAM offers a suite of ISFS functions that are compatible. Similar with FAOSTAT – CountryStat.	Some users indicate that their institutions use other data management systems that are not necessarily compatible with FAO / WFP dataset. Methodological differences continue to challenge compatibility; particularly qualitative vs. quantitative assessments. Users identify some duplication among CountryStat and other integrated data management systems, particularly DevInfo. Lack of awareness / attention to comparability of dataset. Overall, users do not question comparability of different dataset; e.g. different sampling for access, availability, and utilization indicators; as well as different time lines.
Comprehensive Systems	ISFSs should cover all key elements of FS: availability, accessibility, utilization, and stability and therefore also include relevant data on a wide range of issues such as gender, urban issues, nutrition, income opportunities, health, etc.	Increasing focus on coverage of all FS elements as reflected in IPC particularly. Overall, improved integration of availability and accessibility. Both FAO and WFP have increased the integration of FS information for urban areas.	After some focus on sex-disaggregated data following Beijing 1995 conference, most FS data and information is not sex-disaggregated. Stability is often not referred to as key FS element; particularly within WFP. Still limited attention to nutrition and health aspects.
Consensus based	ISFS products reflect common judgment among key ISFS stakeholders such as INGOs, Governments institutions, and UN agencies regarding data interpreta-tion.	The IPC approach has been well-received for its consensus building approach. General recognition of the importance of consensus building	Most ISFS products are still mainly based on consultation requesting for instance comments on draft analyses while proper consensus building with full participation of key stakeholders in the analysis is still challenging. A major challenge for ensuring improved consensus based ISFS products is organizations that take the full leadership to facilitate the consensus based approach.

Qualifier	Description of Qualifier	How are ISFSs Performing	
		Strengths	**Challenges**
Credibility	The information should be considered trustworthy based on factors such as known expertise of the institution disseminating the information, data collection and analyses practices, and independency of the systems.	FAO data are generally considered as credible. In spite of some perceptions to the contrary, there is an increasing recognition of credibility of WFP data reflected in the wide use of the data. WFP seeks to involve a number of other stakeholders in the final dissemination of products to increase credibility.	The old perception of WFP as being biased towards inflated needs assessments continue and need more attention from the organization.
Independency	ISFSs should be independent of the specific interests of any FS stake-holders. To improve independency consensus based ISFSs are often preferred by ISFS users.	Both FAO and WFP generally organize assessments and FS analyses based on cooperation with key stakeholders.	Maintaining independency while promoting national ownership can be challenge. It is therefore important that both national multi-stakeholder ISFS platforms be established / strengthened with shared responsibility / participation of all major stakeholder groups.
Innovativeness	ISFSs should offer improved approaches to perform key ISFS activities and functions, e.g. new analytical procedures, greater integration of different data sets, or alternative dissemination channels.	Both organizations have invested substantially in methodological / conceptual development par-ticularly through FIVIMS, FSIA, and SENAIP.	ISFS methodological / conceptual development undertaken by FAO and WFP seems to be reactive. It will be necessary to put more emphasis on proactive adaptive research.

Qualifier	Description of Qualifier	How are ISFSs Performing	
		Strengths	**Challenges**
Methodological Soundness	ISFS data management methods should be considered reliable, including data collection and analysis and the degree to which data management follows generally accepted protocols and procedures for instance for sampling methods.	The general technical principles of FAO / WFP supported ISFS products are recognized as sound by all authorities.	The indicator frameworks used for the different ISFSs are biased towards emergency decision-making and presents a challenge for being applied in development contexts. A major future challenge is to ensure that continuous data inventories will take place to ensure use of existing relevant data-set, including DevInfo and CWIQs
Relevance	ISFS products should respond to FS stakeholder needs and be consistent with stakeholders' decision-making capacities and practices.	FAO / WFP ISFS support is generally relevant to needs for strengthened ISFSs. ISFS products from systems such as VAM and GIEWS are relevant to key ISFS stakeholders: national authorities, and international partners.	A large part of products generated from FAO / WFP supported ISFSs is based on standardized methods and approaches developed at HQ with limited flexibility to adapt to national and regional contexts. Need for greater attention to iterative assessments of needs for ISFS support combined with analyses of the comparative advantages for FAO and WFP for providing the support.
Representativity	ISFS products based on sampling should reflect characteristics of a larger group; e.g. a household might be representative for a larger group of households sharing the same livelihood system.	In areas with relative homogenous livelihood systems the food security information generated by the ISFSs is representative; particularly in rural areas.	Still need for greater attention to urban areas. Need for more analysis of level of representativity of ISFS generated food security information.

Qualifier	Description of Qualifier	How are ISFSs Performing	
		Strengths	**Challenges**
Responsiveness	ISFSs key functions and products should be easily adaptable to needs as expressed implicitly or explicitly by key stakeholders. Responsive ISFSs will therefore include participatory design and / or regular user surveys among intended, actual, and potential users. Moreover, responsive ISFSs will require a certain flexibility to adapt to needs.	FAO project support to national ISFSs typically based on substantial project preparation with national stakeholder consultations. Both FAO and WFP have shown great responsiveness to the need for special ISFS products in response to the 2007 / 08 food price inflation.	A large part of ISFSs supported by FAO / WFP are based on methods and approaches developed at HQ which limit responsiveness to local and national demands and contexts. Systematic user surveys have not been institutionalized. Challenge to find a balance between adaptation of ISFSs to local / national contexts and the overall need for comparability across nations as well as the greater cost-effectiveness for development of standardized methods and approaches.
Timeliness	There should be concordance between the time that information is communicated to potential users and their timeline of key decisions. Moreover, the timing of ISFS analyses should reflect timing of availability of information; e.g. timing of crop assessments compared to timing of overall FS assessments.	Emergency assessments generally undertaken in a timely manner. CFSAMs follow regular schedule dictated by the cropping season. Publication of global ISFS products such as SOFI generally follows a predictable timeline thereby facilitating the usefulness for potential users.	Systematic identification of the timelines for availability of key information and the timelines for decision-making processes among targeted users of ISFS products is still lacking. The timeliness presents a major challenge for the usefulness of the ISFSs
Transparent Systems	ISFS users should have knowledge about basic features of the ISFSs, including data confidence levels, credibility, representativeness, level of independence, and that the information is verifiable.	FAO / WFP supported ISFS products generally provide information on confidence levels and sources of information and ISFS processes are generally well documented.	The exact role of different partners is not always clearly identified and logos are often used without true participation. The time of data collection is not always clearly indicated but often indicated as the time of data publishing.

Annex 4: List of Key Evaluations, Reviews, and Assessments

Analyzed for the Preparation of the Joint FAO / WFP ISFS Evaluation

Evaluation title	Date	Team	Type of Evaluation	Evaluation objective
External Assessment and Strategic Planning Exercise (EASP) For the Interagency Working Group, Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems (FIVIMS) Multi-Ccountry	Apr-04	Alex F. McCalla. Nancy Mock	Independent Review of Initiative	To assess the extent to which the FIVIMS Initiative has met its original objectives as derived from the 1996 World Food Summit (WFS) and as stated by its guiding principles. To identify strengths, weaknesses and new opportunities for the development and implementation of information systems that measure food insecurity and vulnerability at global, regional and at country levels, through a careful assessment that focuses on key institutional, political, technical and financial dimensions. To contribute to a strategic vision to the year 2015, linking it to the longer term goals of the WFS and the Millennium Project, and to help develop a strategic plan for the next five years, defining verifiable objectives, identifying priority areas of work, as well as appropriate institutional arrangements and responsibilities, and resource needs.
Evaluation of the WFP Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessment Implementation Plan Multi-Country	Oct-07	Nick Maunder, Barry Riley, Nathan Morrow	End of Project Evaluation	To provide accountability for the expenditure of public funds and to provide guidance on the competencies and procedures to be mainstreamed in the budget for the 2008-2009 biennium. Evaluation assessed the progress made to improving the utility, credibility, transparency and quality of the ENAs undertaken in WFP.
EC/FAO Mid-Term Review of the EC-FAO Cooperation Programme 1999 to Sup-port Food Security Multi-Country	Jul-03	Etienne Bartholome, Stephane Flasse, Rachel Bedouin	Mid term Evaluation	Assess the overall results achieved under the programme an to provide guidance for the development of a possible EC/FAO Programme 2004

Evaluation title	Date	Team	Type of Evaluation	Evaluation objective
Joint Evaluation Mission by the EC and FAO: Support to the Food Security Analysis Unit Project, Somalia OSRO/SOM/306/EC	Oct-05	Rachel Bedouin, Nigel Nicholson, Carlos Tarazona	End of Project Evaluation	To provide the EC and FAO with an assessment of the project's achievements and constraints, and to make recommendations for the way forward after project completion.
Report of the Final Evaluation Mission OSRO/SOM/003/USA: FAO Nutrition Surveillance in Somalia	Apr-03	Margaret McEwan	Final Evaluation	Not stated. TOR not available.
FAO Support to the Coordination Structure for Food Security Information System Activities of the SETSAN (Food Security and Nutrition Secretariat), Mozambique UTF/Moz/071/Moz	Nov 06	Tullia Aiazzi, Gabriele Muzio (EC), Jacinto Da Graca (Govt of Mozambique)	Tripartite Final Evaluation	To conduct an evaluation of the SETSAN and contribution of UTF project activities and achievements to date. As the project will be drawing to a close in 2007, the purpose of the evaluation will be to provide recommendations to all parties (Govt, FAO and EC) on further steps necessary to consolidate progress and ensure achievement of objectives to the end of the project as well as to guide the government in its strategic longer term planning for SETSAN
Strengthening and Expansion of the National Food Information System of Eritrea (GCPS/ERI/002/ITA)	Oct-04	Dr Ghiorgis Tecle, Gvt of Eritrea, Mr Michele Ieradi, Gvt of Italy, and Ms Tullia Aiazzi, FAO PBEE and TL	Tripartite Mid-Term Evaluation Mission	Intended outputs were the assessment of the Project's strengths and weaknesses, and the formulation of recommendations for the future.

FAO Support to the Food Security Department in Angola (Phase II) GSA/MINADER GCPS/ANG/027/EC	Apr-06	Carmen Lahoz	Final Evaluation	a) to provide the European Commission, FAO and the GOA with an assessment of the project's achievements during the implementation period, b) to make recommendations to the three parties involved on the further steps necessary to consolidate progress and ensure achievement of the objectives c) to identify any further need for external assistance and make specific proposals as to the future orientation of the GSA, needs for institutional strengthening in the GSA and its partners and an immediate work plan for the GSA.
Evaluation of Strengthening National Food Security Information System In Vietnam (GCP/VIE/024/ITA)	Nov-03	Bernd Bultemeier, FAO PBEE TL,Ha Huy Khoi, Govt of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam Luigi Fabbris, Govt of Italy	Final Evaluation	Evaluation focuses mainly on the current phase of the project in order to provide recommendations on possible changes in the orientation of the project as well as on further steps necessary to consolidate progress and ensure achievement of objectives.
Independent Evaluation of FAO-Netherlands (Phase II) Programme (FNPP) Multi-Country *Theme 1 (Food Security), Entity 1 (assessment of food security and nutrition in emergencies)*	Dec-07	Martin Piñeiro (Argentina) Team Leader, James Gasana (Rwanda), Kay Muir-Leresche (South Africa), Robert Moore, FAO Evaluation Service	Final Evaluation	The purposes of the evaluation were to: i) provide ac-countability to the donor on the effectiveness of FAO's policy assistance to developing countries provided under the FNPP and its working methods at country level (emphasis put on sustainable outcomes); and ii) draw lessons and issues from programme implementation and, if warranted, make recommendations for further assistance under the FNPP.
GCP/RAS/170/JPN ASIA FIVIMS PROJECT Evaluation Report	May-03	Masa Kato, FAO Evaluation Service – team leader, and Chua Piak Chwee - consultant Malaysia	Final Evaluation	The terms of reference for the evaluation called for in-depth assessment of the technical quality of approaches and methodologies developed by the project, including their relevance and applicability through the pilot experience in the five selected countries, as well as drawing issues and lessons and providing suggestions for the second phase.

Evaluation title	Date	Team	Type of Evaluation	Evaluation objective
Evaluation of FAO Capacity development. Support to SADC Remote Sensing Unit for Early Warning for Food Security and Advancement of Agricultural and Rangeland Monitoring GCP/RAF/351/EC	Mar-03	Bernd Bultemeier, FAO Evaluation Service, Gray Munthali, (SADC) Etienne Bartholomé, JRC/EC	Final Evaluation	An independent and objective assessment of the implementation results of the project, including proposals for any necessary changes in the project design and implementation approach of the project.
Programa Regional de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional para Centroamerica (Presanca) FAO Component	Nov 07	Marcelo Palermo, Thomas Pijnenburg, Jorge Munoz Edward Salas	Mid term evaluation	Evaluar los avances, a nivel de indicadores, en el logro de los resultados y su orientación al logro del objetivo específico propuesto por el Programa, identificando los elementos clave que aportan al cumplimiento de los resultados y los que apuntan a la sostenibilidad del mismo, encaminando la estrategia de intervención a la consolidación de los procesos y a la preparación de la etapa de transferencia.
Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA): An External Review of WFP Guidance and Practice Multi-Country	May-06	Dvlpt info Serv. International - Dr. Nancy Mock, Nathan Morrow, Sabrina Aguiari, Xudong Chen, Sophie Chotard, Yingge Lin, Adam Papendieck and Dr. Donald Rose.	An internal review (cover says external, pg 3 says internal) commissioned by WFP and funded under SENAC	to assess the adequacy of normative guidance for the CFSVA activities and how well CFSVA reports in 2004 and 2005 compared to the guidance.

Evaluation title	Date	Team	Type of Evaluation	Evaluation objective
A review of emergency food security assessment practice in Ethiopia	May 06	Nicholas Haan, Nisar Majid and James Darcy (ODI)	ODI review commissioned by WFP	a meta-analysis of emergency needs assessment in Ethiopia. This study reviews the practice of Emergency Needs Assessment (ENA) in Ethiopia as it relates to food security. It is meant to inform efforts by the World Food Programme (WFP) to improve ENA practice globally. It considers the question of overall rigor in needs estimation, and explores the ability of assessments to analyze the role of markets, non-food response options, chronic and transitory needs and the impact of food aid.
A review of the links between needs assessment and decision-making in response to food crises Multi-Country	May 2007	James Darcy Stephen Anderson Nisar Majid (ODI)	ODI Review commissioned by WFP	The study reviewed the main factors behind decision-making and the extent to which this is informed by needs analysis (preface). It asks whether emergency needs assessments (ENA) are providing the analysis required for timely, appropriate, proportionate and effective responses to food crises – and considers the extent to which they actually inform organizational response decisions.

Annex 5: Definitions used for the Evaluation

Accessibility	The extent to which different ISFS products can be reached / obtained by different stakeholders; e.g. easily accessible websites or regular newsletters.
Activity	Actions taken or work performed through which inputs, such as funds, technical assistance and other types of resources are mobilized to produce specific outputs.
Capacity Development / Building / Strengthening	The process by which individuals, groups, organizations, institutions and countries develop, enhance and organize their systems, resources and knowledge, all reflected in their abilities, individually and collectively, to perform functions, solve problems and achieve objectives. Capacity development and Capacity building are often used as synonymous. UNDP[109] suggests that Capacity development is more comprehensive in terms of covering different stages, including capacity building and strengthening. The Evaluation is primarily using Capacity Development although recognizing that the term Capacity Building has a broader meaning for some divisions; e.g. FAO's Division for Outreach and Capacity Building.
Coherence	The extent to which policies of different actors are complementary or contradictory.
Comparability	The degree to which different data-sets can be used collectively for decision-making whether for trend analysis or for analysis of a specific point in time using data from different sources. Factors influencing the comparability include sampling and analytical techniques.
Comprehensive	Comprehensive ISFSs refer to systems covering all key elements of FS: availability, accessibility, utilization, and stability.
Consensus	Refers to FSI that reflects common judgment among key ISFS stakeholders such as INGOs, Governments institutions, and UN agencies regarding data interpretation.
Coordination	The process of systematically analyzing a situation, developing relevant information, and informing appropriate command authority of viable alternatives for selection of the most effective combination of available resources to meet specific objectives
Credibility	The degree to which information is considered trustworthy based on factors such as known expertise of the institution disseminating the information, data collection and analyses practices, methodological soundness, and independence vis-à-vis stakeholders' specific interests.
Effectiveness	The extent to which the intervention's objectives were achieved.
Efficiency	A measure of how economically resources / inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results.

[109] UNDP (2009) "Frequently Asked Questions: The UNDP Approach to Supporting Capacity Development" United Nations Development Programme, New York.

Evaluability	Extent to which an activity or a programme can be evaluated in a reliable and credible fashion. Evaluability assessments refer to early reviews of basic parameters to ascertain whether the design of activities / projects / programmes properly allows for later evaluations including verifiable outputs and outcomes and applied processes.
Harmonization	The process through which two or more parties apply consistency in their procedures, rules, and regulations for specific activities.
Impact	Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by an intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. These effects can be economic, socio-cultural, institutional, organizational, political, environmental, technical, or of other types.
Independence	The degree to which FSI is not linked to the interest of a specific stakeholder or stakeholders. Independence of FSI is closely linked to the information's credibility.
Information System for Food Security	Series of interrelated activities for may include one of the following functions: Normative Guidance, Data Generation, Data Cleaning and Storage Data Analysis, and Communication in order to provide to provide one or several of the following major functions: Baselines, Early Warning, Needs Assessments, and / or Monitoring and Evaluation.
Innovative	Innovative ISFSs refer to systems offering new approaches to perform key ISFS activities and functions, e.g. new analytical procedures, greater integration of different data sets, or alternative dissemination channels.
Methodological Soundness	Refers to the reliability of ISFS data management methods, including data collection and analysis and the degree to which data management follows generally accepted protocols and procedures for instance for sampling methods. Moreover, methodological soundness is closely linked to characteristics such as comparability and credibility.
Objective	Precise and concrete target of an intervention such as a specific activity, a project, a programme, or a policy.
Outcome	The likely effects of different levels of ISFSs: the intended immediate outcome is informed FS decisions which is the likely effect of ISFS products, the intended intermediate outcome is effective FS policies, programmes and practices which is the likely effect of informed FS decisions, and the intended final outcome is FS as the likely effect of appropriate FS policies, programmes, and practices.
Output	The products and services resulting from the completion of activities typically as part of a project or programme.
Relevance	The extent to which the objectives of an intervention are consistent with stakeholders' requirements.
Representativeness	The extent to which a certain sample shares characteristics of a larger group; e.g. a household might be representative for a larger group of households sharing the same livelihood system.

Responsive	Responsive ISFSs refer to systems adapting key functions to needs as expressed implicitly or explicitly by key stakeholders. Responsive ISFSs will therefore include participatory design and / or regular user surveys among intended, actual, and potential users. Moreover, responsive ISFSs will require a certain flexibility to adapt to needs.
Stakeholders	Agencies, organizations, groups, or individuals who have a direct or indirect role and interest in the objectives and implementation of a programme or project and its evaluation. In participatory evaluation, stakeholders assume an increased role in the evaluation process as question-makers, evaluation planners, data gatherers, and problem solvers.
Synergy	The effect of simultaneous joint action (s) of separate parties, which together, have greater total effect than the sum of their individual effects.
Timeliness	For this Evaluation timeliness refers to 1/The concordance between the time information is obtained by potential users and their critical path e.g. timing of key FS decisions and 2/the concordance between the availability of information and the timing of data analysis, e.g. timing of crop assessments compared to timing of overall FS assessments.
Transparency	Refers to ISFSs where users will have knowledge about basic features of the ISFSs, including data confidence levels, credibility, representativeness, level of independence, and that the information is verifiable.

Annex 6: Terms of Reference

1. Background

1.1 Global Hunger and the Demand for and Use of Information on Food Security

While information systems in the field of food security existed for a long time, the World Food Summit in 1996, which prompted member states to make strong commitments to reduce hunger, is considered a milestone in this field. To achieve this goal, a plan of action was designed that reflected the need for (i) the development of national food insecurity and vulnerability information systems (FIVIMS[110]) in the context of chronic food insecurity and vulnerability (ii) an improved understanding of vulnerability to emergency situations, (iii) promoting international cooperation towards the effective use of information generated for the targeting of interventions, and (iv) the global monitoring of established targets.

However, ten years later data on hunger and malnutrition indicate that **there is still a critical global problem of food insecurity**. The 2006 meeting of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) assessed the current situation and expressed concerns that, at the present rate of progress, the 1996 World Food Summit goal of halving the number of the world's hungry by 2015 would not be attained, although some progress has been registered against the Millennium Development Goal number 1 on hunger, which measures the reduction in the prevalence of under-nutrition. Asian countries such as India and China still have large numbers of people who are undernourished and deprived of the right to adequate food – while a large portion of the sub-Saharan African population faces acute and chronic under-nutrition, specifically in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Burundi, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Liberia, Sierra Leone.[111]

Today specific global threats to food security include the HIV/AIDS pandemic, climate change, increasing demand for food (for human and animal consumption as well as for bio-fuel production) and economic factors such as escalating fuel and commodity prices and currency volatility – all of which have important consequences for household availability, access to and utilization of food. Global, regional and country-specific information and analysis of the effects of these factors on households is needed to ensure appropriate policy and programmematic measures are taken to reduce the negative impact of these factors on the worlds hungry. The role of early warning systems and the mandate of the CFS in monitoring and analyzing global supply of and demand for basic stuffs and food aid requirements and trends, the state of stocks in exporting and importing countries and issues relating to physical and economic access to food and other food security-related aspects of poverty eradication has never been more important.

Specific recommendations made at the CFS 2006 to tackle the root causes of food insecurity in the most food insecure countries over the short and long term called for Governments to develop capacity and institutions for better planning, coordination, implementation and monitoring of food security programmes, including the collection of disaggregated data by gender and age; and to improve early warning and disaster preparedness mechanisms integrated into national development plans.

[110] Food insecurity and vulnerability information and mapping systems
[111] State of World Food Insecurity 2006.

The Context and Institutional Environment: information system work related to food security typically includes baseline vulnerability and hunger assessment, early warning, emergency needs assessment, programme monitoring and programme/impact evaluation112 but this varies significantly from country to country in response to political, natural, and developmental specificities. Some countries have highly developed information and statistical systems, and may have done significant work on profiling livelihood patterns and vulnerability. In these countries, there is a high level of technical competence within government to manage information and feed information and analysis into policy and planning processes. In such contexts baseline information and analysis in the areas of food security may serve development planning objectives and can serve as a strong analytical backdrop against which current information can be compared when disasters strike. In other countries, existing information systems may be incomplete and/or unreliable and the national human and financial resource base weak. Under an emergency scenario, information systems need to be quickly and effectively mounted (often by the international community) and consensus reached on what information to collect, where, and how. Analysis in such instances typically informs the humanitarian response and may be used in advocacy and fundraising efforts. Over the past two decades, both WFP and FAO have been involved in developing a number of ISFS tools and methods, in managing food security information, and in assisting (funding, capacity development, technical support) regional and national governments to establish and maintain such information systems. Several well-known frameworks describe the causal pathway leading to food insecurity and malnutrition (see annex 1 and information systems collect and analyze data as a function of these variables).

International Cooperation: A number of development and assistance partners have been involved in setting up information systems for food security over the past decades. Some of this work has been coordinated under the umbrella of FAO-led FIVIMS113 initiative, while more recent efforts to achieve technical consensus and standards (specifically in the area of IS tools, methods, and analysis) have revolved around initiatives and projects such as WFPs SENAIP114, USAIDs' Food Aid and Nutrition Technical Assistance (FANTA), FAO's recently launched Food Security and Nutrition Forum, the Integrated Humanitarian Phase Classification (IPC), SPHERE115, SMART116 and the Inter-Agency Steering Committee (IASC).

While these efforts are all commendable, there is general criticism that much of the current ISFS work globally remains uncoordinated and lacks a common forum.117 Although both the (former) Inter-Agency Working Group on FIVIMS (IAWG-FIVIMS) and the SENAC Advisory Group have provided an important platform for a community of practice to discuss key technical methodological and institutional issues, significant duplication of effort exists and fierce competition is evident in the promotion of agency owned tools and methods. Within the UN system, ISFS are developed by various agencies according to their specificities. Within the recently launched cluster approach for working in emergencies, for example, information gathering is a responsibility shared across all clusters with overall responsibility for consolidating this information under the OCHA Humanitarian Coordinator.

In terms of FAO and WFP collaboration in the area of information systems for food security, the two agencies (together with International Fund for Agricultural

[112] Humanitarian Information Systems and Emergencies in the Greater Horn of Africa: Logical Components and Logical Linkages. Daniel Maxwell and Ben Watkins. Disasters, 2003, 27(1): 72-90.
[113] FIVIMS – Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information Mapping System
[114] SENAC - Project To Strengthen Emergency Needs Assessment Capacity
[115] SPHERE Project: Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response
[116] Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions (SMART) Initiative.
[117] WFP SENAIP Evaluation 2007.

Development [IFAD]) have provided leadership in establishing "food security theme groups" at country level118. A recent report by WFP119 highlights other achievements in cooperation such as: co-funding of a technical post with FAO within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and support to national Vulnerability Assessment Committees in that region to strengthen and institutionalize vulnerability and livelihood analysis, food security monitoring and emergency preparedness; collaborative needs assessments and food security analysis under the SENAC and within the framework of IPC. The most longstanding cooperation between the two agencies involves leading and participating in 10-30 joint Crop and Food Supply Assessment Missions (CFSAMs)120 annually.

Global Monitoring of Hunger Targets: Member States attending the 1996 World Food Summit set a clear goal – to halve the number of hungry people by 2015. To track progress in achieving this goal, Member States determined that the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) "is responsible for monitoring, evaluating and consulting on the international food security situation. It analyzes food needs, assesses availability and monitors and disseminates information on stock levels. The CFS also recommends policies to ensure adequate cereal supplies and food security surveillance that monitor current and prospective food supply/demand situations." The CFS is charged with monitoring the implementation of the WFS Plan of Action. A key document associated with WFS progress tracking is the State of Food Insecurity in the World (SOFI) which is produced annually under the FIVIMS programme led by the FAO Economic and Social Department.

In 2000, the commitment to reduce hunger was strengthened within the context of the United Nations Millennium Summit which resulted in the establishment of the Millennium Development Goals the first of which is to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. In 2005, the Millennium Project produced a major report on "Halving Hunger: It Can Be Done". This thorough analysis of the global challenge to reducing hunger highlighted the need for vulnerability analysis and strengthened accurate data collection, monitoring and evaluation by multi-stakeholder independent bodies at local and regional levels and benchmarking of progress by UN agencies and the CFS. Progress tracking is reflected in annual country and global level MDG reports.

1.2 Definitions

The evaluation will use a holistic definition of food security as defined at the WFS in 1996, as quoted below, and as described within the most commonly used frameworks (annex 1).

> *"Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life."*

As part of its analytical framework, the evaluation recognizes that the underlying causes of food insecurity and malnutrition are related to lack of (i) adequate food availability, (ii) reasonable social and economic means of access to food and (iii) appropriate utilisation of food. Nutrition information is considered a key element of food security information, since improved nutritional status of individual is the ultimate goal of any food security intervention.

An **Information System**, for the purpose of this evaluation, refers to **a series of inter-related activities for generating, analysing, storing, and**

[118] Significant country level examples of collaboration encountered during preparatory work include Bhutan, Mozambique, Liberia, Ethiopia, and DRC.
[119] WFP/EB.2/2007/12-C
[120] Since 2002, there have been 107 joint missions at the request of member states.

disseminating information to decision makers and other users. The causal pathway/logic model representing the linkages between activities, objectives and goal is presented in Figure 1 on page 7.

An information system for food security may include one or several of the following components121: baseline vulnerability and poverty assessment; early warning; emergency needs assessment; and programme monitoring and programme/impact evaluation. Associated information products typically include reports, maps, websites, presentations and other communication material targeting decision makers and other users (e.g. media, advocacy groups and academia).

1.3 ISFS Related Policies, Strategies and Key Guidance

For both WFP and FAO, key common events and documents that provide a framework for their ISFS work include the World Food Conference 1974, the World Food Summit 1996 and its commitments, and the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) proceedings which provide analysis of the global context and recommendations by member states for development and emergency partners alike. Guidance on information systems for food security (theoretical framework, indicators, setting up national information systems, and related background papers) have been developed by both agencies and can be found on their websites.

The FAO Strategic Framework 2000-2015 and Medium Term Plan 2006-2011 (including FIVIMS programme entity) clearly articulate an important commitment, at strategic and corporate levels, to reducing food security. FAO's mandate includes the collection, analysis, interpretation and dissemination of information related to nutrition, food and agriculture. A number of FAO departments contribute to this body of work.122 Related to this mandate is FAOs work in:

- developing normative tools, methods and guidelines to support decision and policy making;
- supporting governments in establishing national food security information systems (fivims);
- forecasting and early warning services, and
- the production of global statistical summaries and public goods related to monitoring of WFS achievements such as State of World Food Insecurity (SOFI).

Vulnerability analysis and mapping (VAM) was initiated in WFP in the mid-nineties. At the beginning the system had close ties with the FAO early warning system and with FEWSNET. In the first WFP strategic plan,[123] VAM is presented as an information system to support WFP's decision-making on targeting and programming. The system was established with close links to other related facilities including FAO's (see paragraph 24 of WFP's strategic and financial plan 1998-2001). This position continues to be so in the Strategic Plan for 2006-2009,[124] where VAM is an integral part of WFP's first strategic objective with the aim to improve knowledge of pre-crisis food security and vulnerability conditions to ensure effective interventions. In addition to VAM, WFP has undertaken efforts to strengthen its emergency needs assessments. These assessments aim to determine whether food assistance is needed in an emergency situation and help design the necessary response.

[121] Humanitarian Information Systems and Emergencies in the Greater Horn of Africa: Logical Components and Logical Linkages. Daniel Maxwell and Ben Watkins. Disasters, 2003, 27(1): 72-90
[122] While a primary role is played by the Economic and Social Development Department (specifically ESAF, ESSG and ESTG), other departments include AG, KC, TC, and NR.
[123] Strategic and Financial Plan, 1998-2001, WFP/EB.A/97/4-A, April 1997.
[124] Strategic Plan 2006-2009, WFP/EB.A/2005/5-A/Rev.1, June 2005.

There is increasing momentum within the context of UN Reform and One-UN initiatives to create greater synergies between UN agencies to capitalize on agency strengths while reducing duplication and improving coordination. The UN is strongly behind the Millennium Development Goals – the first of which, the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, should drive UN joint collaboration around food security and nutrition information systems work. The bodies responsible for strategic governance of FAO, WFP and IFAD have indicated that they would like to see more systematic collaboration in particular amongst the Rome based triad - and it is within this context that it was suggested during the May 2007 FAO Programme Committee meeting that the organizations jointly undertake an independent evaluation of their work in ISFS.

1.4 Stakeholder Analysis

Primary stakeholders in ISFS work are those who use the information that systems generate for decision making. These users include governments, donors, multilateral agencies and operational partners, and management and operationally-focussed staff and divisions within FAO and WFP. Some ISFS have tried to influence private sector and even individual behaviour. Food security information is also produced as a global public good, accessible to a less defined user group that may or may not use the information for immediate decision-making or advocacy. These stakeholders have diverse information needs and include academia and civil society organizations amongst others. The types, frequency, level of disaggregation of information and degree of analysis needed are highly dependant on the specific user group. The interest of these user stakeholders in the evaluation described here centres around findings and recommendation regarding the usefulness of information that is produced by ISFS and the extent to which it is actually used.

A second stakeholder group in ISFS work (and for this evaluation) include organizations that have been particularly active in the design, implementation and funding of information systems for food security including, but are not limited to, NGOs (FEWSNET, Save the Children, CARE, OXFAM, World Vision), regional bodies (SADC, CILSS, AU, ASEAN), consortia and specific initiatives/projects (FANTA, RHVP, SPHERE, SMART, Alliance Against Hunger, JRC/MARS), academic institutions (ODI, IDS, Tufts, Michigan State University, Wageningen), donor agencies (EC, DFID and USAID), other UN agencies (UNICEF, WHO, UNHCR, UNDP, OCHA, IFAD, UNDP) and technically focussed services and staff within FAO and WFP.

These two stakeholder groups at the corporate level might not always be separate, i.e. many of the agencies and organizations would be simultaneously producers and users of food security information.

In addition to these stakeholders in ISFS, FAO and WFP Managements and their respective governing bodies (Programme Committee and Executive Board) are key stakeholders in the evaluation. They decide on policy directions, strategies, and resources for ISFS work within the two organizations. They expressed an interest in having a better understanding of the comparative advantage that each agency has and how best to achieve optimal synergy between the agencies' work in ISFS to ensure complementarities and avoid unnecessary duplication. Recommendations should help to shape a renewed vision for ISFS work and partnerships between the two Rome-based agencies.

1. Reason for the evaluation

Rationale

Over the past decade, FAO and WFP have supported the establishment and, when possible, institutionalization of information systems for food security at global, regional and national levels. Financial resources that have been directed towards this area of work during this ten year period total over 200 million US$ and all signs indicate that this will continue to be an important and potentially growing area of their global programmes

While specific projects and programmes have been reviewed125, the area of work as a major strategic theme has not been independently evaluated. The FAO Programme Committee, during its June 2007 meeting, requested that this work be evaluated and strongly supported the idea that it be undertaken jointly with WFP. Thus, in the context of UN Reform and the Paris Declaration, and in the spirit of working towards the realization of greater synergies, efficiencies and sustainable impact within the UN system, a joint evaluation of this common area of activity is deemed warranted.

Purpose and Objectives

Evaluation has the dual function of accountability and learning. The purpose of evaluation is to determine the degree of success and failure of an ongoing or past undertaking (accountability) to learn from these experiences to continuously improve performance and outcomes (learning). These principles apply equally to this evaluation.

The objectives of the evaluation are to measure the extent to which FAO and WFP have individually and collectively contributed to improved ISFSs and in how far the various information systems have, in turn, contributed to improved decision-making. In addition, it is expected that the evaluation findings will lead to conclusions and recommendations useful for future normative, operational and organizational strategies for global, regional and national ISFSs of both organizations and their related collaboration strategy.

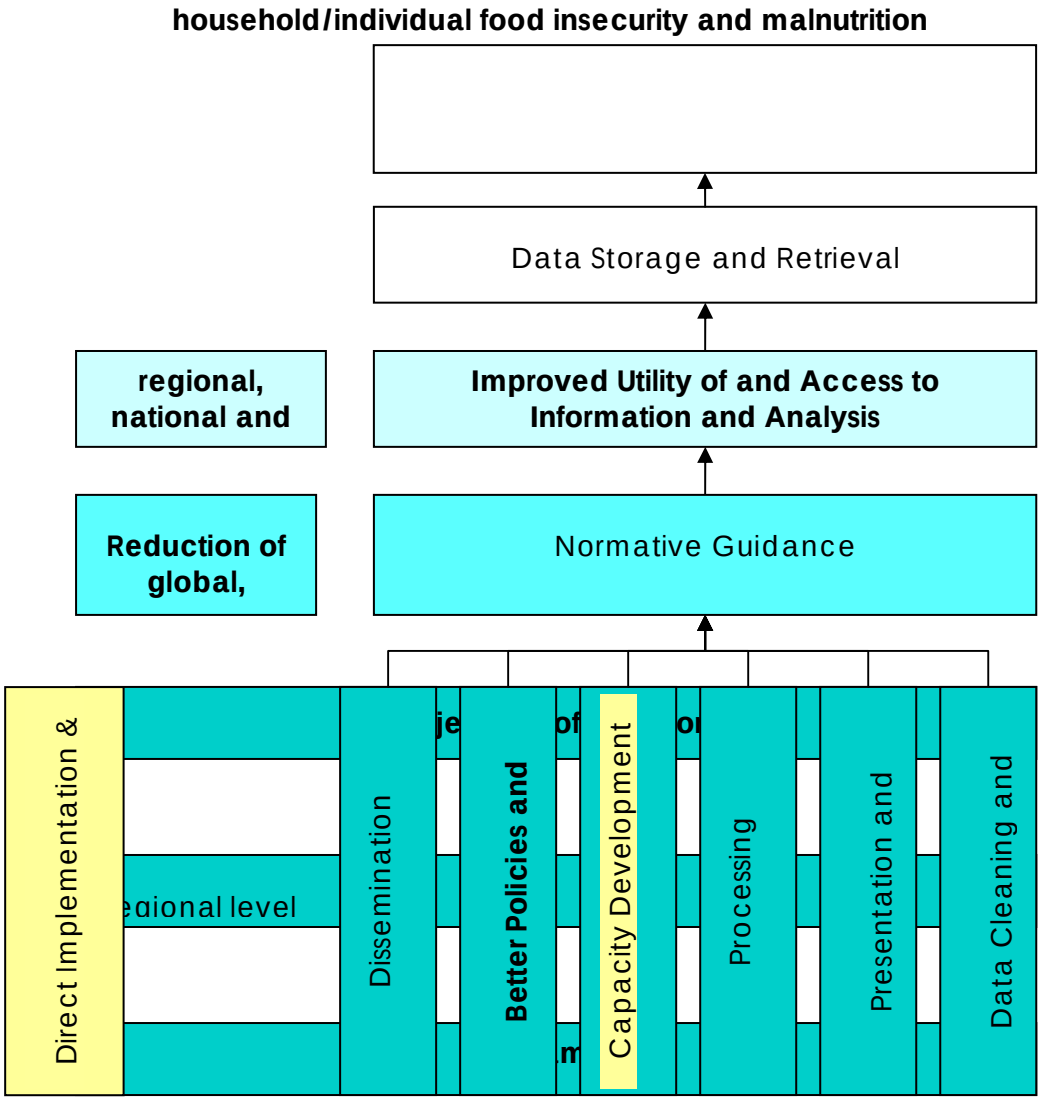
3. Scope of the evaluation

3.1 Substantive Scope of the Evaluation

The various ISFS activities undertaken globally by the two organizations are not conceived as a consolidated programme, nor does a logic model exist that explains the goals of collective ISFS (though some efforts have been made, in particular in the context of FIVIMS). However, a common assumption is that improved information and better analysis of food insecurity, malnutrition and vulnerability within the context of recurrent disasters/emergencies and hunger reduction goals at global, regional, national and sub-national level should lead to more appropriate decisions and effective actions. These should support: better

[125] Most recently, WFP has undertaken an independent evaluation of the SENAC and is currently in the process of evaluating it capacity building work. FAO has undertaken an assessment of early warning systems in sub Saharan Africa, an evaluation of emergency work (including FSIS) in the Horn of Africa, supported the 2005 evaluation of FIVIMS and is planning an evaluation of FAO's work in statistics. The recent Independent External Evaluation of FAO has made specific recommendations related to FSIS work.

targeting of interventions, policy measures and programmes, improved efficiency in the allocation of public resources, more effective coordination and collaboration among multiple stakeholders, and effective monitoring of progress towards achieving national food security, hunger reduction and nutritional related development goals and targets.



Source: Evaluation Services FAO and WFP on the basis of literature review

Figure 1 provides a simplified logic model to illustrate the objectives and goals of ISFS work in general. The model is necessary for the evaluation to define what will be evaluated, i.e. whether FAO and WFP's FS information work has resulted in national systems or global monitoring of food security and nutrition and vulnerability and/or ensured that credible, accurate, current, timely, useful value-added information is provided for decision-making. The evaluation may also aim to assess whether decision-making is better informed as a result of improved information and analysis (see corresponding evaluation question in para 0), but will not assess whether policies or programmes are more efficient and effective as a result of these decisions or if food insecurity and malnutrition have decreased. The reason for limiting the evaluation's focus in this way is that the number and influence of other factors than information to achieving improved policies and programmes or to reducing food insecurity is such that an attribution

to IS related activities would be difficult to establish. However, where independent information exists suggestive of such impacts, case studies will be prepared to enrich the evaluation findings. Within this framework the evaluation will focus on the specific objectives of each ISFS reviewed. Indeed each organisation having a specific mandate, it will impact on the objectives of each organizations work in this area, its users and specific activities undertaken.

Improved utility implies that a certain number of interrelated principles are at work. Independence is vital for impartiality which together with transparency of processes and quality and consistency of information contributes to improved credibility. Credibility resulting from a transparent and impartial information system along side with timeliness, and intentionality (system set up with the intention of use of information), ensure improved utility.

The focus of the evaluation will be at systems level rather than on individual tools, as illustrated by the bottom row of the Logic Model containing the activities which comprise an Information System as defined in paragraph 0. Assessment of specific tools will only be carried out insofar as this can contribute to an understanding of the efficiency of the system. Annex 1 describes the two main frameworks that underlie the two organizations ISFS work. Annex 2 provides an overview of FAO and WFP's main food security and nutrition information tools/methods and products. Annex 3 provides a preliminary view of FAO and WFP services involved in ISFS work.

The evaluation will include all work undertaken by the two organizations which contributes substantively to Information Systems work in support of improved food security. Hence, ISFS components need to be clearly identified at the onset of the evaluation. Due to the existence of a significant number of IS-related project and programme evaluations conducted over the past years,126 one of the most important tasks of the evaluation team will be to prepare a synthesis of the findings, conclusions and recommendations from this work. New information gathering and review will be necessary to fill the evaluation gaps i.e. for important areas of work that have not yet been evaluated. The overall approach is explained in section 5.1 below. The evaluation will review and assess policies and strategies, normative work and guidance materials, programmes and operations as appropriate for the IS in question. The evaluation will clearly differentiate between the review of joint WFP/FAO experiences and that of individual agency work.

It has been decided for practical reasons to limit the evaluation to a review of FAO and WFP IS work, including an analysis of the mandates and comparative advantages of each of the agencies. While other UN agencies (particularly UNICEF, OCHA, UNHCR and UNDP) will play an important role in the evaluation as stakeholders who generate and/or use food security information, this evaluation will not include their work or that of other key partners. This choice might limit to some extent conclusions to be made about relative quality of FAO and WFP work compared with competitors, but otherwise the scope of the evaluation would become unmanageable. Best practices will be identified wherever possible to facilitate comparisons of the organizations work against recognized standards.

[126] Annex 5 lists the independent evaluations of both organizations FSIS work already completed.

3.2 Temporal and Geographic Boundaries

The evaluation will examine FAO and WFP ISFS work over the past 6-10 years at global, regional, national and sub national levels in both development and emergency contexts across all regions where such work is being undertaken and will pay specific attention to evaluate results achieved by projects/programmes/activities of historic or future importance.

To select regions and countries to be visited by the evaluation teams, the following selection criteria is suggested:

- degree of food insecurity and malnutrition;
- level of investment made in ISFS work by the agencies;
- typology of ISFS in context;
- regional representativeness and
- Level of WFP/FAO collaboration in ISFS work.

3.3 Evaluability assessment

The challenges to evaluability of FAO and WFP's work in ISFS include the need for: (a) a generic ISFS logic model which can be used whatever the IS considered in order not to impose one framework developed in a specific context on all ISs reviewed; (b) a clear description of ISFS situation before or at the start of developing or improving information systems that can be used as reference point to determine or measure change; (c) a clear statement of intended outcomes of ISFS work, i.e. the desired changes that should be observable once implementation is under way or completed; (d) a set of clearly defined and appropriate indicators with which to measure changes; and (e) a defined timeframe by which ISFS outcomes should be occurring.

To address these potential limitations to evaluability, the evaluation

- Suggests a logic model that can place ISFS in an overall framework (see Figure 1 above);
- Will use existing documentation, secondary data, and recall of key stakeholders to reconstruct baseline information on the existence and form of ISFS at the outset (the late 1990s);
- Use the WFS96 and Plan of Action as a basis for determining the intended outcomes of ISFS work, as reflected in Figure 1, in addition to the other dimensions that ISFS work should aspire to, i.e. to produce credible, accurate and current information that is timely and useful to decision-making and has a value-added. These generic statements of intended outcomes will be compared with those stated in the designs of specific ISFS work that is evaluated;
- Identify whether any of the ISFS work included indicators to measure change, or in their absence develop appropriate indicators for doing so;
- Identify whether the IS defined target dates for completion or milestones when outcomes should be measurable and in the absence of such timeframes determine how these could be established. The timeframe for achieving the desired change is also referenced to the CFS which indicated that a 10 year review of CFS achievements be undertaken. The target for reducing hunger is 2015 thus 2007/8 represents a mid-way mark for benchmarking progress, updating approaches based on a reanalysis of the current context, and defining lessons learned that can further improve agency efforts.

4. Key issues / key evaluation questions

Based on the Logic Model presented in Figure 1 above, and linked to WFS96 Plan of Action and priorities, the evaluation will centre its questions around the following key issues:

The ultimate goal of an ISFS is to contribute to the reduction of food insecurity and malnutrition, in both emergency and development contexts. This is achieved by providing timely quality information and analysis to decision makers to inform programme and policy formulation. Thus a first key question to be answered by this evaluation is *"**to what extent has food security information produced by WFP and FAO (directly and in collaboration with partners) been used by decision-makers and other users/influencers) and for what purposes?**"*[127] Decision makers include government, donors, NGOs and operational decision makers within the two organizations respectively. Other users include academia and civil society who may use ISFS or influencing and advocacy.

A second question is "***To what extent has the utility and accessibility of information and analysis improved?***" This question will assess how the various interrelated principles of information (as described in para 0) led to improved utility of information and analysis. In this context, analysis of user/decision-maker perceptions will be critical. Linkages and mechanisms between information and analysis and decision making should be fully explored. The evaluation will also assess how ISFS are responding to dramatic changes in information needs when sudden/unexpected issues. In particular, how have FAO and WFP ISFS work contributed to the agencies' ability to predict and respond to the current crisis due to soaring global food prices?

The evaluation will look at the availability and quality of normative tools, methods, and guidance related to the collection, analysis and dissemination of food security information to answer a third question: **"*What are the performances of the various components of the ISFS? Are they contributing efficiently to the results achieved?*"** To address this question the evaluation will, among others, review the capacities of both organisations at various levels (global to field) in order to define potential comparative advantages and complementarity in setting up systems, providing technical assistance and maintaining the systems at national and local levels.

As mentioned above, the regional and country and field contexts in which FAO and WFP work may be one of the principal determinants of the approach128 taken to IS work in any one location. Commitments made by donors and the UN within the context of the Paris Declaration emphasize strengthening government systems for monitoring progress against development targets (including hunger). As part of the UN system, FAO in particular has a strong mandate to support governments in developing capacity of nationally owned systems and institutions129. In emergencies and where governments are non-existent (i.e. Somalia) or very weak, this is not always possible. Therefore a final essential question for the evaluation to answer is *"**has the approach to ISFS work been appropriate to the political, institutional and contextual settings in which FAO and WFP have worked? In which circumstances have national capacities been developed? Have there been sustainable benefits**?"*

[127] Evaluation and monitoring: Who needs information and why do they need it? Habicht JP. 2000 Food and Nutrition Bulletin 2000; 211: 87-90.

[128] FAO and WFP have applied a variety of approaches over the past 6-10 years including the direct management of FSIS systems, support and financing of NGO forums, support and financing of government institutions, etc.

[129] The UN Development Group commissioned a review in 2007 to look at how UN effectiveness could be enhanced to support capacity development in the context of UN member states affirmation that this should represents a priority area for the UN within the reform.

A cross cutting issue to be examined under each of the main questions highlighted above is the "***extent to which FAO and WFP have optimized the impact of their work in ISFS – within their respective organizations, creating synergies and efficiencies within and between the two agencies (optimizing comparative advantages and reducing duplication and costs), and as a result of collaboration with other institutions"*.** Mechanisms and tools in use for achieving intra and inter organizational integration and consolidation will be examined. The evaluation will review current global efforts to establish platforms for reaching consensus on food security tools and methods. One of the most long term FAO-WFP collaboration in the field of ISFS is the joint crop and food supply assessment missions (CFSAM). These will be particularly looked at in each evaluation question.

In addition the evaluation will, in each evaluation question as appropriate, pay a particular attention on gender dimension, such as, for instance, gender-disaggregated data collected within the information system and attention provided to the gender dimension in data analysis.

5. Evaluation design

5.1 Overall approach

The evaluation approach includes two phases: The first phase will mainly consist of a synthesis of all previous evaluation works undertaken in this field by both institutions (including the SENAIP, FIVIMS and many other evaluations). This will allow for the consolidation of findings based on OECD criteria as well as the identification of evaluation gaps to be tackled during the second phase. The review of all evaluations will be based on an evaluation matrix to be developed at the onset of the evaluation and agreed about with WFP and FAO. During this phase the evaluation team will also have to, according to transparent criteria, select the main IS it will analyze as well as the countries to be visited during the second phase. A workshop will be organized before finalization of the report to discuss with main stakeholders and a small expert panel the main findings identified through the synthesis and specify clearly the hypotheses/issues to be checked/pursued during the second phase. At the end of the first phase the evaluation team leader will produce a report. The second phase will include stakeholder interviews, field visits, surveys and other tools to fill the gaps and further explore the issues identified in the first phase, the second phase will end with the evaluation report which will be discussed with main stakeholders and the same panel of experts prior to its finalization.

The evaluation will distinguish between joint FAO/WFP ISFS work and that undertaken individually by each agency. It will also take carefully into consideration the differences and appropriateness of the objectives and mandate of each organization when analyzing the IS, as well as the specific stakeholders these IS are meant to inform.

The evaluation will use OECD/DAC evaluation criteria. These will be reflected in the evaluation matrix. The evaluation will adopt a participatory approach whenever possible, seeking and sharing opinions and feed back with stakeholders at different points in time of the process.

5.2 Evaluation Tools and Methods

The evaluation will use a wide range of quantitative and qualitative tools and methods, including stakeholder consultation through workshops and semi-structured interviews; check lists; surveys; desk study to gather all relevant background information; field visits. It will consist of:

- Synthesis of existing evaluations relevant to ISFS;

- A review of literature and documentation of ISFS outside the review of FAO and WFP to identify, if possible, good practice;
- A desk review of existing background information on the selected IS projects and programmes, which will provide insights into the design and performance (in as much as this is reported) of IS and the basis for designing instruments for further in-depth analysis during the evaluation;
- Some descriptive analysis in the form of citation and website traffic analysis will be undertaken principally to examine relative130 use of WFP and FAO global IS products;
- Focus group discussions will be convened with staff of FAO and WFP who have been involved in IS activities at various levels to collect information on notable uses of food security information and analysis;
- A web-based survey of IS users will be undertaken to measure user perceptions of the quality and usefulness of WFP and FAO food security information and analysis and to gather suggestions for improvement. Attention will be paid not to replicate recent WFP survey. The results of the survey will be complemented and enriched by regional and country-level user interviews during the fieldwork;
- Fieldwork, i.e. visits to a select number of countries to learn from partners in the countries about their perspectives and concerns, and to analyze and assess results at country level. The fieldwork will, when possible, include impact studies131 to underpin the assessment of the usefulness and use of ISFS for decision makers and other users. Fieldwork will result in country case studies;
- An in-depth review involving interviews with WFP and FAO senior staff/managers and institutional analysis will be undertaken to look at organizational and strategic issues related to how WFP and FAO work internally, with each other, and externally with partners. This review will examine the quality and quantity of work done collaboratively, its impact, and make suggestions for increasing synergy and effectiveness within and between organizations.
- A tracer study of individuals trained by FAO and/or WFP in tools and techniques for ISFS data gathering and analysis will be undertaken to establish the extent to which knowledge and skills were acquired and are being used. This survey will be complemented by a review of the quality of the training materials used and institutional partners involved in capacity development activities of the two organizations.
- Stakeholder consultations will be undertaken within the two organizations, with an expert panel (external reviewers), and with a group of associated UN and other multilateral organizations, donors, non-governmental organizations, etc.

In addition if additional resources become available, the evaluation will also conduct the following activities:

- Expert reviews of the ISFS tools, methods and products produced will be undertaken and possibly thematic case studies developed. The themes for these case studies will be identified during the inception phase of the evaluation and specified in the Inception Report
- Thematic/impact studies in support of the main evaluation work.

[130] Citation and website analysis have limitations in measuring absolute user uptake of FAO and WFP products or in providing qualitative information on how FAO and WFP products are being used. However, relative frequency of use across various products may provide some contribution to the overall analysis when triangulated with other more specific information.

[131] For key projects, involved staff may be asked to keep prospective FSIS impact logs over several months prior to the field missions by the evaluation team which can subsequently be verified during user-stakeholder interviews.

The evaluation will be exposed to a quality assurance process that will entail internal review by both Offices of evaluation. It will draw on the Evaluation Quality Assurance System of WFP based on the UNEG Norms and Standards. It also envisages the engagement of external expert panel and a workshop with UN partners. Evaluators are expected to follow the code of conduct as summarized in Annex 6.

5.3 Phases and deliverables

Phase 0: preparation

Provisional timing	Activity	Deliverable
September 07 April 08	• Preparation of TOR for the evaluation; • Preparatory gathering of documents; • Identification of evaluation team	TOR Incl job description for Evaluation team

Phase 1: Inception phase and synthesis of past evaluations

May-August 08	• Briefing/orientation with the Team Leader. • Meetings with key WFP and FAO stakeholders • Development of evaluation matrix (to be agreed about with evaluation managers prior to synthesis of evaluations) • Synthesis and literature review. • Web and citation analysis. • Mapping of activities • Evaluation gaps • Guidelines for second phase (including selection criteria for field visits, checklists) • Draft phase 1 report	Evaluation matrix Phase 1 report draft
Sept. 08	• Share with internal stakeholders for comments	
Oct 08	• Expert panel meeting to discuss the draft report • Finalisation of first phase report	Final phase 1 report

Phase 2: Field phase

Nov. 08	• Preparation and execution of a questionnaire survey of ISFS users. • HQ staff interviews and focus groups completed.	Sub report on global users and uses of ISFS information and analysis.
Nov 08 Jan 09	• Interviews with key donor with government and non-government institutions/agencies, partners, researchers, etc. • Country case studies	Country notes and interviews notes internal to the evaluation team

Phase 3: Evaluation report phase

February 09	• Internal evaluation team debriefing in Rome with FAO and WFP stakeholders • Preparation of the Evaluation Report, including, as needed, return discussions with staff from the various divisions involved in FSN and EW Information.	Report
March 09	• Share report for comments	Matrix of comments (prepared by evaluation managers)
April 09	• Report redrafting • Share reports with Panel of experts and UN panel	Second draft of the report
May 09	• UN Panel workshop. • 2nd Expert Panel Workshop to discuss the draft Conclusions and Recommendations of the Synthesis Report. The Panel's input will be sought for the formulation and finalisation of the main evaluation recommendations. • Finalisation of the report Discussion of final Synthesis Report with the relevant units in FAO and WFP and preparation of the Management Responses	Proceeds of the Workshops Final evaluation report and EB summary report Management Responses
September 09	Presentation of the report to the FAO Programme Committee	
October 09	Presentation of the report to the WFP Executive Board	

The phase 1 inception report will be as concise as possible and will include the following:

- Front page, table of content, acronyms;
- Introduction;
- Subject of the evaluation (background information, description of evaluation subject, logic model, stakeholder analysis);
- Evaluation focus (scope, mapping of activities, constraints identified);
- Evaluation questions and evaluation matrix;
- Evaluation design (methodology, data collection strategy, quality assurance);
- Organisation of the evaluation (role and responsibilities, timeline, communications and deliverables);

Annexes

- TOR;
- List of people met;
- Presentation of evaluation synthesis findings according to evaluation matrix;
- Technical notes including questionnaires, checklists and other as appropriate;

The final evaluation report will be as concise as possible, focusing on conclusions and recommendations and include an executive summary. Supporting data and analysis should be annexed to the report when considered essential for future reference. The draft evaluation report should be delivered for FAO and WFP comments by 30 November 2008.

The report will include:

- Title page, list of contents, acronyms list;
- Executive Summary;
- Introduction;
- Context;
- Evaluation Methodology;
- Findings;
- Conclusions;
- Recommendations;
- Annexes: Bibliography, TOR, Timetable, List of Interviewees, Evaluation material/instruments, maps and other appendices as appropriate;

All material collected in the undertaking of the evaluation (in paper and/electronic format) should be submitted to the evaluation services prior to the conclusion of the evaluation contract.

6. Organisation of the evaluation

6.1 Expertise required

Evaluation Team (4) – significant experience in managing and conducting complex evaluations (multi-country and multi-stakeholder), excellent knowledge of ISFS (information/tools/methods/etc.) for emergency and development contexts, and in national level monitoring systems (early warning, poverty monitoring, sectoral monitoring, etc.). Team members should speak and write well in English as well as having at least one other language (Arabic, French, Spanish, Portuguese). The consultants will be independent and impartial, abide by the Code of Conduct for evaluators (see annex 6) and declare any conflict of interest they may have. In case of the latter, the evaluation managers (FAO

Evaluation Service and WFP Office of Evaluation) will determine how the conflict of interest shall be managed.

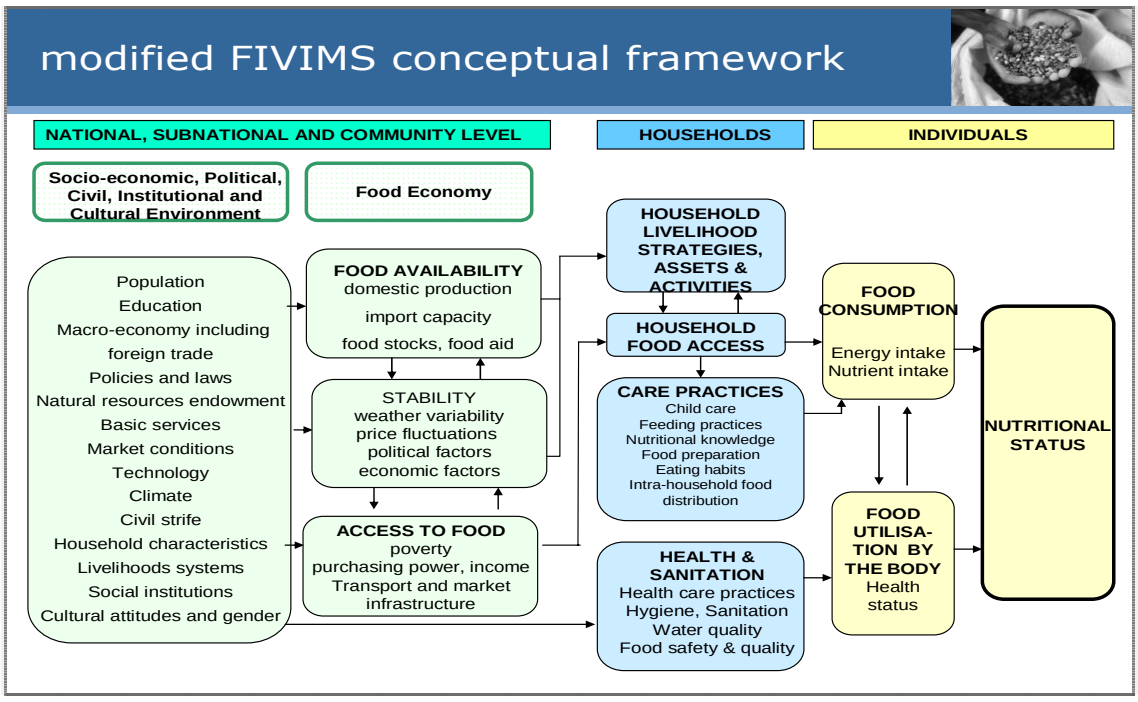
Expert Panel (4-6) – technical experts drawn from academia, civil society, government and private sector with specific expertise in ISFS and extensive experience in the implementation of ISFS projects/programmes and/ good knowledge of such systems as important users of information products.

UN Partners Workshop (6-8) – individuals coming from IFAD, WB, WHO, UNICEF, UNDP, OCHA, UNHCR, and other interested UN agencies who are either a) involved technically in areas related to ISFS or b) are focal points for UN "Acting as One", or c) are evaluation specialists within their agencies are requested to participate.

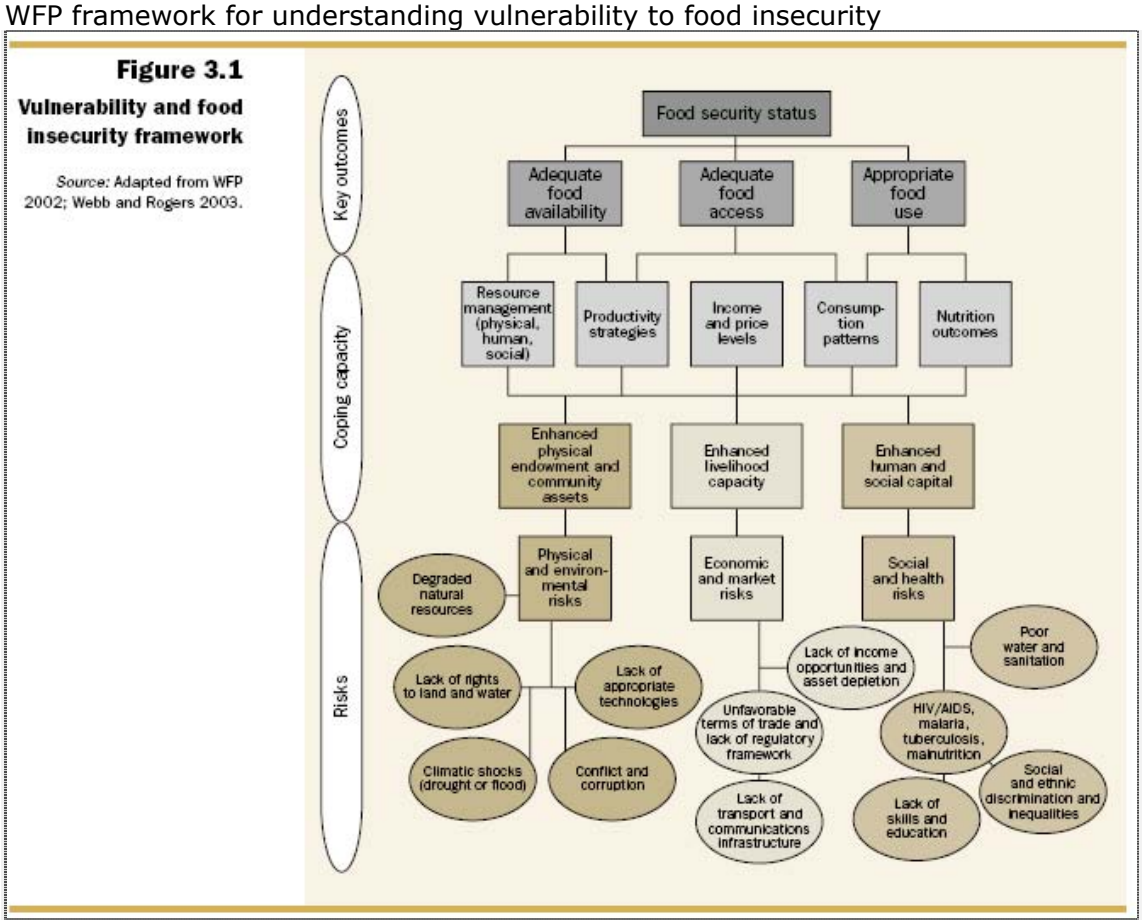
6.2 Roles and responsibilities of WFP/FAO in the evaluation process

The evaluation will be jointly managed by an evaluation manager from each organization. Resources persons will be indicated to provide the managers and eventually the evaluation team leader with additional support. The Team Leader will report to the two evaluation managers collectively. No evaluation material will be distributed either within the organizations or externally before such documents are cleared by the two managers. All written communications (including emails) addressed to the evaluation team will have first to be agreed about by both evaluation managers. The Heads of Evaluation for the two agencies will provide strategic orientation/direction and on a punctual basis for decisions to be taken as critical junctures. A detailed evaluation process map will be provided to the evaluation team at the start of the evaluation process and will guide all parties. The evaluation managers will take part in the evaluation as team members (potentially alternating on field missions and other activities).

Annex 1: Analytical and Conceptual Frameworks Commonly Used



WFP framework for understanding vulnerability to food insecurity



Annex 2. Inventory of FAO and WFP tools and methods and analytical products.

	FAO Led	WFP led	Joint FAO/WFP
IS Components			
1. Baseline FSN vulnerability and poverty assessment	GAUL, GIEWS Workstation, CountryStat, SUA and FBS, DES, LAT, ALIVE Information Tool, Country Nutrition Profiles, KIDS, Geonetwork, SOFI publications, FSN Atlas, ESA websites.	CFSVAs Food security atlases Nutrition Surveys CVA	FIVIMS Market analysis studies IASC
2. Early Warning	IPC Development, Crop Monitoring Box, GIEWS-EW Reports, Avian Flu and Locust EW systems.	FSMS CHS Nutrinet SATCA web Crisis monitoring EPWEB	IPC Multi-Country Roll-Out HEWS
3. Emergency Needs Assessments	HFIAS	EFSAs	CFSAMs Vulnerability Assessments (RVAC)
4. Programme monitoring and evaluation		Community and Household Surveys (CHS)	
Support activities			
5. Capacity development	Country and regional technical assistance projects/fivims, Distance Learning[132], Training on ISFS Products, Food Security and Nutrition Statistics Module, Crop Forecasting Training and Agro- meteorology, Household Budget Survey based FSN analysis.	SENAC learning programme Mainstreamed Capacity Development activities Learning depository	

Note: Some tools/methods are used within more than one ISFS component.

[132] Topics: Food Security Information Systems and Networks, Reporting Food Security Information, Availability Assessment and Analysis, Baseline Food Security Assessments, Collaboration and Advocacy Techniques, Livelihoods Assessment and Analysis, Nutritional Status Assessment and Analysis

Annex 3. Inventory of FAO and WFP services/dept/divisions/programme entities involved in ISFS work.

The FAO programmes with the strongest links to ISFS work[133] include:

- 3B Food and Agriculture Policy (FIVIMS/A01, Food Security Policy Analysis and Monitoring of the WFS Goals and MDGs/P05).;
- 3H Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture (GIEWS)/P05.;

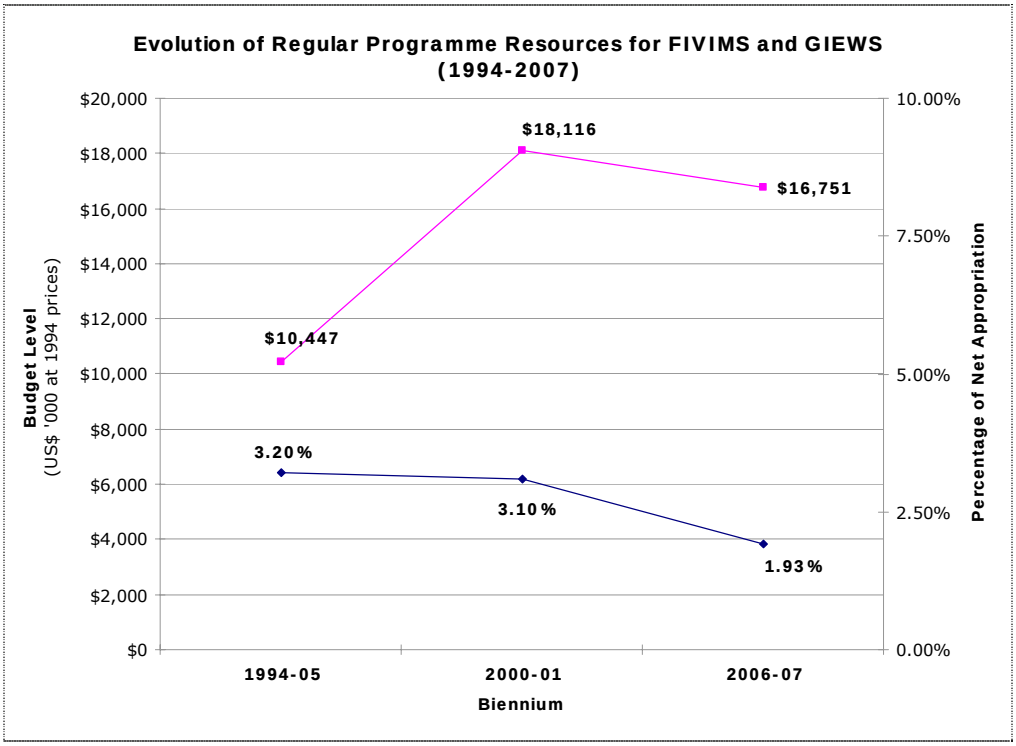
Making contributions to ISFS work (information collection and analysis) within FAO are the following programme areas:

- 2B/P01 Global livestock information and knowledge system;.
- 2C/P04 Empress early warning and vulnerability assessment associated with crop diseases;.
- 2D/A05 Household food security, nutrition and livelihoods;
- 2H/P04 Fisheries and Aquaculture Information, Statistics, Economics and Policy;
- 2K/P02 Land and water knowledge management, information systems, databases and statistics;.
- 3D Agriculture Information and Statistics (FAOSTAT/CountryStat and related support for national surveys and statistics and capacity building);.
- 3C Trade and Markets (Global socioeconomic analysis and market assessment of agricultural products and impact on food security/P06);
- 3E Right to Food/A01, World Food Day//S02, and International Alliance Against Hunger/S03 – role of ISFS users undertaking food and nutrition security related advocacy;
- 3H Knowledge exchange and capacity building – providing tools for disseminating ISFS and for capacity building in ISFS at country level;.
- D4 Emergency and post crisis management/S02 as developers of instruments and users of information for operations;.
- 4C Food security, poverty reduction and other development cooperation programmes/P01 Management and Coordination - SPFS/NPFS/RPFS/SSC/pro-poor small projects.

FAOs' current portfolio of food security information system projects and programmes financed with extra-budgetary funding[134] include Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia, Chad, DRC, the Caribbean, Central America, Asia FIVIMS and the EC/FAO Food Security Information for Action (global). In addition, large investments have been made over the past 10-15 years in ISFS in Mozambique, Namibia, Angola, and Zambia, at regional level in IGAD and in Southern Africa/SADC. The development of the GIEWS Workstation and food security and poverty mapping work have also benefited from donor voluntary contributions. Work undertaken by FAO in the area of ISFS in the 80's and 90's was significant and was notable for its focus on traditional early warning activities including remote sensing and crop forecasting.

[133] FAO Regular programme budget to these three programme entities for the biannual period08/09 total approximately 13 million US$.

[134] Total current extra budgetary funding for FSIS work within FAO US$ 1 million or an avg 14.5 million/year)



In WFP ISFS work is led by the Food Security Analysis Service at Headquarter. It is hosting until mid year the SENAC project evaluated in 2007. Regional bureaus are staffed with food security analysts and country offices benefit from VAM experts. In addition there are specific projects such as support to VAC in Southern Africa or SATCAWEB in Latin America.

Annex 4: FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Missions 2002-2007

2002 Ghana Swaziland Malawi Mozambique Zimbabwe Lesotho Zambia Angola Afghanistan Tajikistan Korea, DPR Eritrea Korea, DPR Sudan (Southern) Mali Niger Mauritania Burkina Faso Senegal Chad Cape Verde The Gambia Guinea-Bissau Ethiopia Sudan (Northern)

2003 Senegal Mauritania Mali The Gambia Cape Verde Malati East Timor Zimbabwe Zambia Lesotho Mozambique Swaziland Angola Iraq Afghanistan Korea, DPR Chad Sudan (southern) Niger Burkina Faso Mali Guinea-Bissau The Gambia Eritrea Cape Verde Mauritania Senegal Ethiopia Sudan (northern) Côte d'Ivoire

2004 Sri Lanka Malawi Zimbabwe Mozambique Swaziland Lesotho Angola Afghanistan Korea, DPR Mali Haiti Niger Guinea-Bissau Chad The Gambia Sudan (Southern) Mauritania Burkina Faso Senegal Cape Verde Ethiopia Eritrea

2005 Indonesia (Aceh Province & Nias Island) Malawi Mozambique Swaziland Zambia Lesotho Sudan Southern) Niger Indonesia (Aceh Province & Nias Island) Sudan (Northern) Ethiopia

2006 Sudan Great Lakes(Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania) Angola Mongolia Sudan (Southern) Nigeria Northern) Sudan (Northern) Ethiopia Madagascar

2007 Timor-Leste Nepal Swaziland Bolivia Lesotho Zimbabwe Sudan (Southern) Uganda Ethiopia

Annex 5: Acronyms and Definitions

ALIVE	Partnership for Livestock Development, Poverty Alleviation and Sustainable Growth
AU	African Union
CFS	Committee on World Food Security
CFSAM	Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission
CFSVA	Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment
CHS	Community Household Survey
CILSS	Comite Permanente Inter-Etats de Lutte Contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel
DAC	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development – Development Cooperation Directorate
DDS	Dietary Diversity Score
DES	Dietary Energy Supply (per capita availability of food for human consumption)
DFID	Department for International Development, UK
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ENA	Emergency Needs Assessments
ESAF	Food Security and Agricultural Projects Analysis Service, FAO
ESSG	Global Statistics Service, FAO
ESTG	Global Information and Early Warning Service, FAO
EW	Early Warning
FANTA	Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FBS	Food Balance Sheets
FEWSNET	Famine Early Warning System Network
FHH	Female Headed Household
FIVIMS	Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information Mapping Systems
FNPP	FAO Netherlands Partnership Programme
FSAU	Food Security Analysis Unit, Somalia
FSIA	EC/FAO Food Security Information for Action Programme
FSMS	Food Security Monitoring System
FSN	Food Security and Nutrition
GAUL	Global Administrative Unit Layers
GIEWS	Global Information and Early Warning System
HFIAS	Household Food Insecurity and Access Scale
HOA	Horn of Africa
IASC	Inter-Agency Steering Committee
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IDS	Institute for Development Studies
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IGAD	Inter Governmental Authority on Development
IPC	Integrated Phase Classification
IS	Information System
ISFS	Information System for Food Security
JRC MARS	Joint Research Centre (EC) – Crop Monitoring for Food Security
KIDS/KIMS	Key Indicator Database/Mapping Systems (FAO software systems)
LAT	Livelihood Assessment Tool
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MSU	Michigan State University
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPFS	National Programme for Food Security (FAO-promoted)
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OFDA	Office for Foreign Disaster Assistance, USA.
RHVP	Regional Hunger and Vulnerability Programme (DFID)
RPFS	Regional Programme for Food Security (FAO-promoted)
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SCUK	Save the Children UK
SENAIP	Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessment Implementation Plan
SETSAN	Secretariado Tecnico de Seguranca Alimentare e Nutricao, Mocambique
SMART	Standard Monitoring and Assessment in Relief and Transitions
SPFS	Special Programme for Food Security (FAO programme)
SPHERE	Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response
SOFI	State of Food Insecurity in the World
SUA	Supply Utilization Accounts
TCE	Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division, FAO
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VAM	Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping
WFP	World Food Programme
WFS	World Food Summit (1996)
WHO	World Health Organization

Annex 6: Code of Conduct

The conduct of evaluators in the UN system should be beyond reproach at all times. Any deficiency in their professional conduct may undermine the integrity of the evaluation. The following code of conduct is the (draft) agreed among the UN Evaluation Group, which sets norms and standards for the profession within the UN System.

Independence
Evaluators shall ensure that independence of judgement is maintained and that evaluation findings and recommendations are independently presented.

Impartiality
Evaluators shall operate in an impartial and unbiased manner and give a balanced presentation of strengths and weaknesses of the policy, programme, project or organizational unit being evaluated.

Conflict of Interest
Evaluators are required to disclose in writing any past experience, of themselves or their immediate family, which may give rise to a potential conflict of interest, and to deal honestly in resolving any conflict of interest which may arise. Before undertaking evaluation work within the UN system, each evaluator will complete a declaration of interest form (see Annex 1b).

Honesty and Integrity
Evaluators shall show honesty and integrity in their own behaviour, negotiating honestly the evaluation costs, tasks, limitations, scope of results likely to be obtained, while accurately presenting their procedures, data and findings and highlighting any limitations or uncertainties of interpretation within the evaluation.

Competence
Evaluators shall accurately represent their level of skills and knowledge and work only within the limits of their professional training and abilities in evaluation, declining assignments for which they do not have the skills and experience to complete successfully.

Accountability
Evaluators are accountable for the completion of the agreed evaluation deliverables within the timeframe and budget agreed, while operating in a cost effective manner.

Obligations to Participants
Evaluators shall respect and protect the rights and welfare of human subjects and communities, in accordance with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other human rights conventions. Evaluators shall respect differences in culture, local customs, religious beliefs and practices, personal interaction, gender roles, disability, age and ethnicity, while using evaluation instruments appropriate to the cultural setting. Evaluators shall ensure prospective participants are treated as autonomous agents, free to choose whether to participate in the evaluation, while ensuring that the relatively powerless are represented. Evaluators shall make themselves aware of and comply with legal codes (whether international or national) governing, for example, interviewing children and young people.

Confidentiality
Evaluators shall respect people's right to provide information in confidence and make participants aware of the scope and limits of confidentiality, while ensuring that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source.

Avoidance of Harm
Evaluators shall act to minimise risks and harms to, and burdens on, those participating in the evaluation, without compromising the integrity of the evaluation findings.

Accuracy, Completeness and Reliability
Evaluators have an obligation to ensure that evaluation reports and presentations are accurate, complete and reliable. Evaluators shall explicitly justify judgements, findings and conclusions and show their underlying rationale, so that stakeholders are in a position to assess them.

Transparency
Evaluators shall clearly communicate to stakeholders the purpose of the evaluation, the criteria applied and the intended use of findings. Evaluators shall ensure that stakeholders have a say in shaping the evaluation and shall ensure that all documentation is readily available to and understood by stakeholders.

Omissions and wrongdoing
Where evaluators find evidence of wrong-doing or unethical conduct, they are obliged to report it to the proper oversight authority.

End of TOR

Annex 7: Resource Persons Interviewed

FAO

Ghanem, Hafez (ESDD)	Assistant Director General, Economic and Social Devt. Dept.
Hemrich, Guenter (ESDP)	Assistant to Mr. Ghanem
Stamoulis, Kostas (ESAD)	Director, Agricultural Development Economics Division
Josserand, Henri (ESTG)	Chief, GIEWS Unit
Ahmed, Shukri (ESTG)	Senior Economist, FS AssessmenVEW, Africa/Asia/NE Group
Grita, Fabio (ESTG)	Information Systems Analyst
Gunjal, Kisan (ESTG)	Food Emergency Officer
Latham, John (NRCE)	Environment Officer (Ceo-Spatial Systems)
Gennari, Pietro (ESSD)	Director, Statistics Division
Marshall, David (ESSG)	Chief, Global Statistics Service
Sibrian, Ricardo (ESSG)	Senior Statistician, Food Security Indicators
Som, Hiek (ESSS)	Chief, Country Statistics Service -
Keita, Naman (ESSS)	Senior Statistician, National Statistics Systems$_1$
Caprazli, Kafkas (ESSS)	CountrySTAT Manager
Smulders, Mark (ESAF)	Coordinator, FIVIMS
Alinovi, Luca (ESAF)	Coordinator, EC/FAO Food Sec. Information for Action Prgm
Russo, Luca (ESAF)	Food Security Analyst, EC/FAO Programme
Trine, Francojse (ESAF)	Food Security Analyst, EC/FAO Programme
McGuire, Mark (ESAF)	Food Security Economist
Thomas, Laurent (TCED)	Director, Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division
Gascon, Jean-François (TCEO)	Emergency Liaison and Operations Officer
Vinet, Rodrigue (TCES	Senior Emergency Operations Officer
Glinni, Ariella (TCES	Emergency Operations Officer
Jacqueson, Patrick (TCER)	Programme Officer, Rehabilitation and Humanitarian Policies
Trenchard, Richard (TCER)	Programme Officer, Rehabilitation and Humanitarian Policies
Marsland, Neil (TCER	Programme Officer, Rehabilitation and Humanitarian Policies
Boutrif, Ezzeddine (AGND)	Director, Nutrition Division
Burlingame, Barbara (AGNA)	Senior Nutrrtion Assessment Officer
Dop, MarieClaude (AGNA)	Nutrition Information Officer
Thompson, Brian (AGNA)	Senior Community Nutrition and Livelihoods Officer
Egal, Florence (AGNP)	Nutrition Planning Officer
Rudgard, Stephen (KCEF)	Chief, WAICENT Outreach and Capacity Building Branch
Nadeau, Andrew (KCEF)	Information Management Specialist, Outreach
Petracchi, Cristina (KCEF)	Information Management Specialist
Stephan Baas	Development Rural Officer, Climate Change and Bioenergy Division
Mariam Ahmed	Project Team Leader, United Nations Coordination

Tim Frankenberger	Team Leader, Evaluation of EC/FAO Food Security Information for Action project

WFP – HQ ROME	
Joyce Luma	Chief OMXF - Food Security Analysis Service
Jan Delbaere	Dty Chief OMXF
Agnes Dhur	Sr. Programme Officer, OMXF
Wanja Kaaria	Food Security Analyst, OMXF
Kathryn Ogden	Food Security Analyst, OMXF
Valerie Ceylon	Programme Advisor, OMXF
CarolineChaumont	Programme Officer, OMXF
Valerie Guarnieri	Director, OMX – Programme design and support Division
Issa Sanongo	Programme Advisor, OMXF
Alzira Ferreira	Dty Director REG Government and donor relation Division
Monica Marshall	Sr. Donor Relations Officer, REP Private donor relation Division
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Annex 8: Bibliography

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Acronyms

AFSIS	Asian Food Security Information System
ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations
AU	African Union
CCA	Common Country Assessments
CFSAM	Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission
CFSVA	Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis
CHS	Community and Household Surveillance
CILSS	Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel
CountryStat	Country statistical information system for food and agriculture
DevInfo	Database system for human development monitoring
EC	European Commission
EFSA	Emergency Food Security Assessment
ESAF	Food Security and Agricultural Projects Analysis Service
EWS	Early Warning System found only other refs i.e. FEWSNET
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FAOSTAT	FAO Statistical database system
FEWS NET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
FIVIMS	Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems
FSAU	Food Security Analysis Unit
FSIA	Food Security Information for Action
FSMS	Food Security Monitoring System
GIEWS	Global Information and Early Warning System
HQ	Head Quarters
IAWG	Inter-Agency Working Group
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
INGO	International Non Government Organization
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
ISFS	Information System on Food Security
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
NGO	Non Government Organization
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OMXF	Food Security Analysis Service
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
PRRO	Protracted Relief and Rehabilitation Operation
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
REACH	End Child Hunger and Nutrition Initiative
RVAC	Regional Vulnerability Assessment Comittee
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAP	Early Warning System
SENAC	Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessments Capacity
SETSAN	Technical Secretariat for Food Security and Nutrition
SISA	Food Security Information System
SISVAN	Food and Nutrition Surveillance System Network
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Fund for Children
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAC	Vulnerability Assessment Committee
VAM	Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping
WFP	World Food Programme
WFS	World Food Summit
WHO	World Health Organisation

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