

**ACF INTERNATIONAL NETWORK**  
**POLICY PAPER**  
**FOOD SECURITY & LIVELIHOODS**





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## ACRONYMS

<b>ACF-IN</b>	Action Contre La Faim International Network
<b>ASPI</b>	Agro-Sylvo-Pastoral Interventions
<b>CBI</b>	Cash-Based Interventions
<b>DAC</b>	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
<b>DRR</b>	Disaster Risk Reduction
<b>FAI</b>	Food Aid Interventions
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organisation
<b>IGA</b>	Income Generating Activities
<b>MDG</b>	Millennium Development Goals
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme

# Introduction

Action contre la Faim International Network (ACF-IN) food security and livelihood departments have always worked within the mandate of ACF-IN. However, a policy per se has never been established. Considering the increasingly complex situations in which ACF-IN food security and livelihoods interventions are implemented, as well as the multiplicity of responses and the increasing size and duration of interventions, the food security and livelihood department considered it essential to provide a formal statement of its commitment, values and activities.

The ACF-IN food security and livelihood department has three goals for this policy document:

1. A specific statement of principles or guiding actions that imply clear commitment by the organisation;
2. A statement of values or intent that provides a basis for consistent decision-making and resource allocation;
3. A definite method or course of action selected to guide and determine present and future decisions.

The ACF-IN food security and livelihood policy was developed with these three goals in mind. The first chapter provides an introduction to the current global situation, the second highlights the principles to be followed, and the third focuses on the conceptual frameworks governing ACF-IN's work. The fourth chapter describes the aims of ACF-IN food security and livelihood interventions, the fifth develops the specific modalities to food security and livelihood interventions, and the sixth describes the types of food security and livelihood interventions ACF-IN provides.

## Global Food Security and Livelihood Context

*"Hunger is undignified.*

*Hunger is injustice.*

*It is humbling to be reminded that hunger has a human face, that every day millions of people are forced to make heartbreaking choices about who in their family eats and who does not.*

*The right to food is a matter of social justice and human dignity."*

*Hunger Watch Report 2007-2008*

During the World Food Summit in 1996, Heads of States committed their countries to cutting the number of undernourished people in half before 2015<sup>1</sup>. This goal was reiterated in 2000 with the formulation of the Millennium Development Goals. Specifically, MDG-1 set a goal of halving the proportion of people in the world suffering from hunger by 2015.

Nevertheless, the number of hungry people in the world continues to rise. More than a billion people suffer from extreme poverty, and there had been estimates of 854 million undernourished people worldwide in 2006, 820 million of them in developing countries<sup>2</sup>. Recent high food prices further aggravated food insecurity. Latest revised FAO estimates show that the number of undernourished people increased by 75 million over the 2003-05 period. Hence, the global number of undernourished people in 2007 is now estimated at 923 million<sup>3</sup>.

In addition, over 250 million people in average are affected each year by natural disasters<sup>4</sup>, which leave a large majority of them food insecure. The effects of climate change may further increase these figures. Finally, 45 million people affected by conflicts and war are also in need of humanitarian assistance<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Rome Declaration on World Food Security, 1996, signed by 185 Heads of States.

<sup>2</sup> FAO: The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2006. Rome, FAO, 2006

<sup>3</sup> FAO, Committee on World Food Security 34th Session. Assessment of the world food security and nutrition situation, 2008.

<sup>4</sup> International Federation of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent Societies: World Disasters Report, 2007. The figure gives the average of people affected between 1997 and 2006.

<sup>5</sup> [http://ochaonline.un.org/webpage.asp?Nav=\\_humanissues\\_en&Site=\\_humanissues](http://ochaonline.un.org/webpage.asp?Nav=_humanissues_en&Site=_humanissues)





The causes of food insecurity are complex and multi-dimensional, and include man-made disasters, natural disasters, and other ongoing stressors. Often, combinations of factors will strike a specific population simultaneously. Modern food security crises are also increasingly related to accessibility, rather than availability, of food. Moreover, it is widely acknowledged that dependency upon markets has increased over the last 20 years, and price fluctuations are therefore a critical issue for food security in both urban and rural contexts. Current soaring food and fuel prices (July 2008) have added unprecedented additional pressure on household food security and livelihoods.

National and international policies affecting agricultural development, respect for the environment, fair competition, and access to global as well as local markets also have a major impact on food security. People affected by these policies have the right, and should have the ability, to participate in policy formulation and decision making to address food insecurity.

Pandemics like HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis, which combined kill more than six million people each year, also have a devastating impact on food security and livelihoods. Other important considerations include continuing urbanization, the resulting need for economic development, and the effects of conflict. Steps must also be taken to reduce threats from climate change and environmental degradation. The impact of biofuels on local production and world food security urgently requires further research, followed by concrete action.

The ACF-IN food security and livelihood policy has been developed with all these factors in mind. The complexity of the problem of hunger, and of current global challenges, requires a broad, holistic approach to tackling the manifold causes of food and livelihood insecurity.

## Principles of ACF-IN Food Security and Livelihood Interventions

ACF-IN, a professional NGO that has specialised in the fight against hunger since 1979, defends the fundamental rights of vulnerable populations at risk of food insecurity and malnutrition.

ACF-IN follows the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (1994), and recognises and promotes respect for international humanitarian law and human rights. In addition, ACF-IN food security and livelihood programming follows the organisation's Global Strategy and principles, which are laid out in the ACF-IN Charter<sup>6</sup> and the ACF-IN Technical Policy<sup>7</sup>.

ACF-IN is a supporter of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG)<sup>8</sup>. Our food security and livelihood programmes are particularly in line with MDG-1, which articulates the goal of cutting poverty and hunger in half by 2015, using 1990 rates as a benchmark. Food security and livelihood programmes also contribute to MDG-7, which calls for the integration of sustainable development principles into country policies and programmes, with the ultimate goal of reversing the loss of environmental resources.

ACF-IN food security and livelihood departments prioritise interventions that save lives while preserving and restoring the food security and livelihoods of affected populations. Programmes contribute to the protection of populations by advocating for, and promoting, international and national policies that promote equity and socio-economic development. The ultimate aim of ACF-IN food security and livelihood interventions is to allow populations to live in dignity, without dependence on external assistance. Interventions are founded on the fact that the right to food is a basic human right, and thus fundamental and universal (See box above and Annex 3).

<sup>6</sup> Key principles in the ACF-IN charter are independence, neutrality, non discrimination, free and direct access to victims, professionalism, and transparency. See Annex 1.

<sup>7</sup> ACF-IN Technical Policy 2007

<sup>8</sup> See Annex 2.

### Right to Food

The right to food was formally recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations in 1948, and more specifically by Article 25: “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family, including food, clothing, housing...” .

The right has since been reaffirmed: 156 countries have ratified the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which explicitly requires signatory states to legislate for the right to adequate nutrition.

The right to food was further elaborated at the 1996 World Food Summit, where 185 nations ratified the Rome Declaration on World Food Security. In 2004, FAO Council adopted the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security.

ACF-IN food security and livelihood interventions also integrate the concept of food sovereignty: “the right of people to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agricultural systems”.<sup>9</sup> This concept takes for granted that people, communities, and countries have the right to define their own agricultural, labour, fishing, livestock, food and land policies, which are ecologically, socially, economically and culturally appropriate to their unique circumstances. This strong emphasis on local systems and economies, potentially providing food security to the local population, is a key contribution of the food sovereignty concept.

## Conceptual Approach of ACF-IN Food Security and Livelihood Interventions

### Defining food security and livelihoods

For a long time, the conceptual framework used for ACF-IN food security analyses and interventions has been an adaptation of UNICEF’s conceptual malnutrition framework. The increasing complexity of the global food security situation, as well as improved analysis and comprehension, has impelled ACF-IN to broaden this initial focus on food security to encompass overall livelihood security, integrating food security programming and analysis into a more far-reaching sustainable livelihoods framework. ACF-IN programmes now also aim to integrate the concept of disaster risk reduction (DRR)<sup>10</sup>.

#### Definitions

- Food security

Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. FAO, 2002

- Livelihood

A livelihood comprises the capabilities, comprised of assets (including both material and social resources) and activities used by a household for means of living. A households’ livelihood is secure, when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks, and maintain or enhance its capabilities and productive asset base. Chambers and Conway, 1992

- Disaster risk reduction

The systematic development and application of policies, strategies and practices to minimize vulnerability, hazard and the unfolding of disaster impacts throughout a society, in the broad context of sustainable development. UN/ISDR, United Nations, 2004

<sup>9</sup> "Statement on Peoples' Food Sovereignty" by Via Campesina et al., <http://www.foodsovereignty.org>

<sup>10</sup> ACF-IN is currently in the process of developing a DRR policy that outlines the concept and the operational approach in more detail.

## Conceptual framework of malnutrition

Nutritional causal analysis, the foundation of ACF-IN interventions, considers immediate, underlying and basic causes of malnutrition. This analysis includes different technical elements (water-related, food-related, culture-related, etc.) that can influence the nutritional status of an individual. This integrated analysis can be represented through the conceptual framework of malnutrition, illustrated in Figure 1.

The framework represents an analytical process that establishes the clear interaction between various causes of malnutrition.

All ACF-IN interventions are embedded within this conceptual framework, which provides a structure that helps to optimise resource allocations, ensure sector coherence, and favour efficiency toward achievement of objectives, outputs, impact and beneficiary satisfaction. Consequently ACF-IN field activities are characterised by an integrated approach encompassing interventions in nutrition, health, water and sanitation, and food security and livelihoods, in order to address the spectrum of underlying causes of malnutrition.

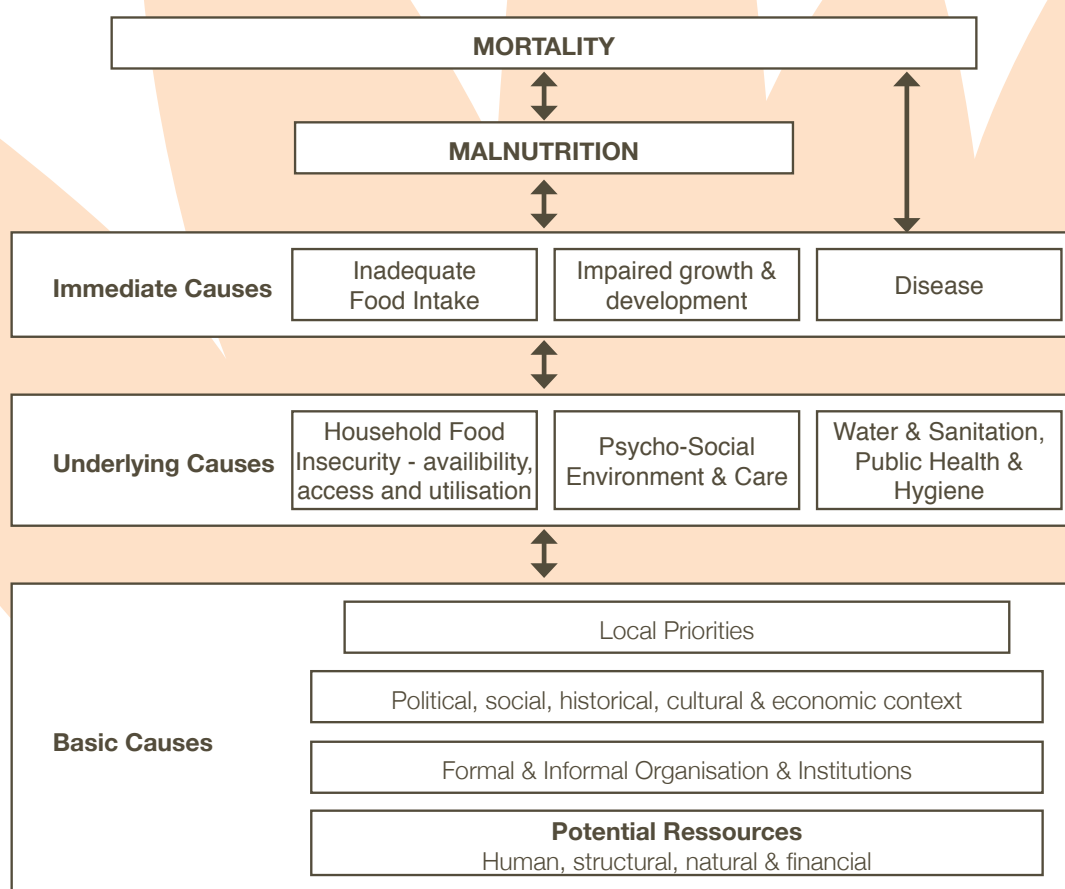


Figure 1: Conceptual framework of malnutrition (adapted from Unicef, 1996)

## Sustainable livelihoods framework

The sustainable livelihoods framework (Figure 2) focuses on the strengths and assets that people own to ensure their food security and livelihoods. These are represented by five key categories of capital that people can draw from to achieve positive livelihood outcomes such as increased income and well being, improved food security, etc.<sup>11</sup> The sustainable livelihoods framework portrays food security and livelihoods as a cyclical process, as opposed to the linear process depicted by the conceptual malnutrition framework. It also adds the notion of vulnerability<sup>12</sup> and integrates the concept of disaster risk reduction. It is a practical tool that outlines a holistic approach to the design and monitoring of food security and livelihood interventions. Within this framework, ACF-IN food security and livelihood programmes focus mainly on strengthening the identified livelihood assets (and the five key categories of capital) and influencing the policies and actions of structures including government and private sectors, in order to reduce vulnerabilities and achieve the targeted livelihood outcomes. It is important, however, to note that ACF-IN interventions have limited ability to impact established factors, such as laws, policies, culture and institutions, or to change natural conditions such as floods, drought, etc.

<sup>11</sup> This framework was developed by DFID in the 1990's. A number of new versions have been created since then, but all encompass largely the same elements. One of the revised versions integrates a sixth category of capital, political capital, which is an important asset particularly in conflict situations (Collinson, 2003).

<sup>12</sup> In relation to hazards and disasters, the concept of vulnerability links the relationship that people have with their environment to social forces and institutions, assets and the cultural values that sustain and contest them. It is commonly defined as the equation: Vulnerability = Risk x Capacity to cope, or resilience.



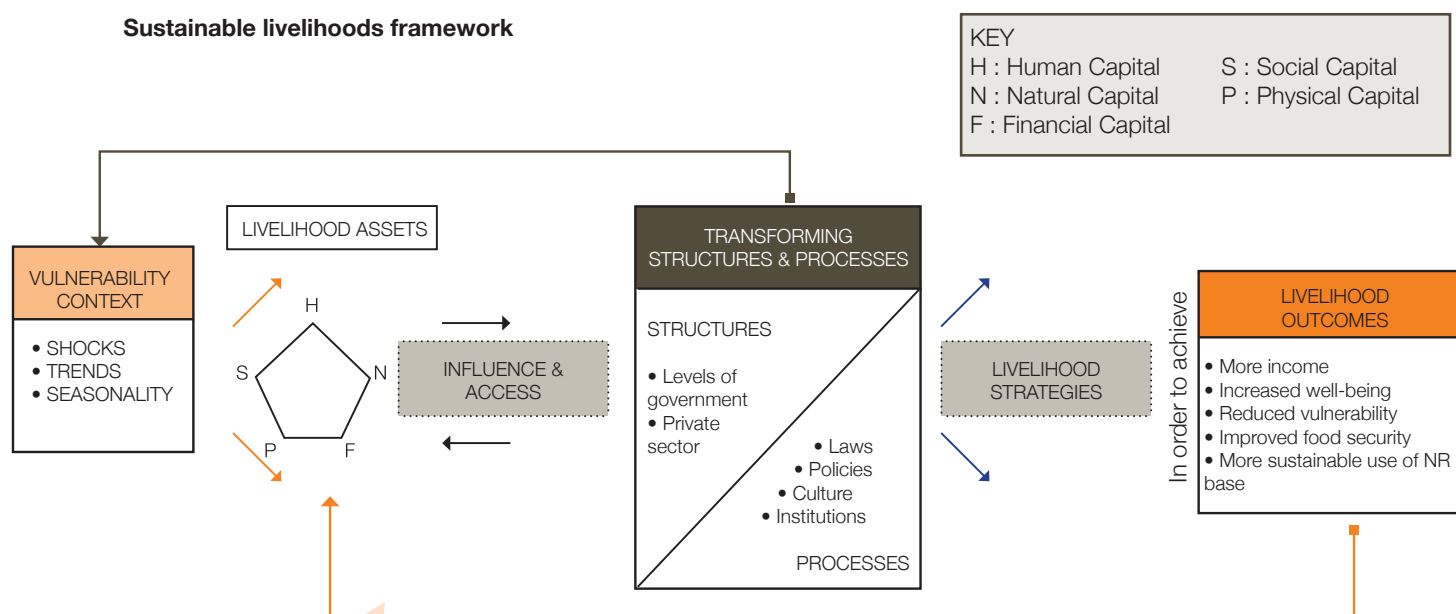


Figure 2: Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (DFID, 1996)

The interplay of malnutrition, food security and livelihoods, based on the above two frameworks, is illustrated in Figure 3, which highlights acute malnutrition as one potential negative livelihood outcome<sup>13</sup>. The Figure also conceptualises the theoretical scope of ACF-IN food security and livelihood interventions, in line with the organisation's overall strategy focusing on malnutrition. The adoption of a livelihoods approach allows a broader vision of food security programming, as food security is only one factor that contributes to a specific livelihood outcome. Other factors include health, water and sanitation, as well as contextual factors that influence people's way of living and livelihood strategies. This analysis demonstrates how acute malnutrition can be the result from a situation where livelihood assets as well as transforming factors and processes are unbalanced, and the lack of one aspect cannot be compensated by the strength of another. This imbalance can negatively influence livelihood outcomes and become an underlying cause of malnutrition.

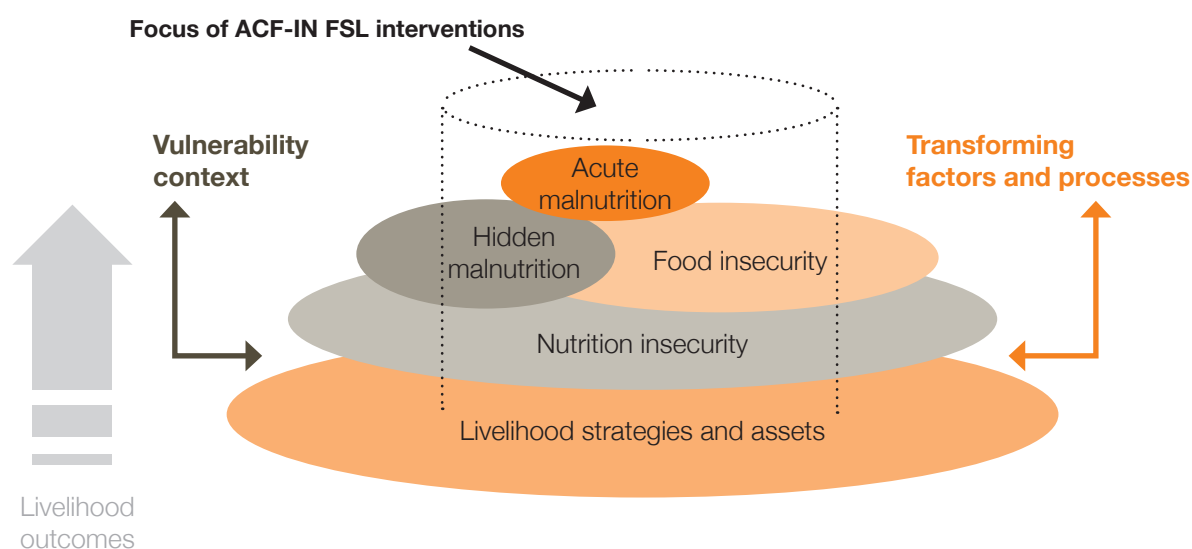


Figure 3: Acute malnutrition as a negative livelihood outcome (adapted from IFPRI, 2004)<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Note that even if livelihood outcomes are often perceived as positive, this is not always the case.

<sup>14</sup> Nutrition security is considered a wider concept than food security, which is based on the concept of availability, access, and utilisation of food. A household has achieved nutrition security when it has secure access to food coupled with a sanitary environment, adequate health services, and knowledgeable care to ensure a healthy life for all household members (IFPRI, 2004).



Vulnerability, risk and capacity to cope (influenced by the strength of livelihood assets) are thus the key concepts that define a potential livelihood outcome and a household's food security, and thus the need for a potential ACF-IN intervention. In pragmatic terms, they can be translated into the analysis of:

- The likelihood and severity of a shock or ongoing stress, such as conflict, abnormal weather patterns, changes in household budgets, harvest failures, etc., and the impact of these shocks or stressors on the population.
- Coping mechanisms or strategies that households are likely to adopt when faced with a crisis, and the effectiveness and sustainability of these strategies.
- Changes in external factors (transforming factors, structures and processes or vulnerability context) that are likely to impact outcomes after a shock or ongoing stress, such as market fluctuation.

The exact type of intervention can be defined only through detailed analysis of the context in which the programme will operate, using participatory approaches and respecting the modalities defined in chapter 5.

## Goals of ACF-IN Food Security and Livelihood Interventions

The overall goal of ACF-IN's interventions is **to save lives in crisis situations, and preserve and reinforce the livelihoods of vulnerable populations during or after shocks, and in ongoing stress situations.**

ACF-IN's **food security and livelihood approach** to achieving this goal, implies that analyses and interventions not only address household food access and availability, but focus more broadly on household productivity. This approach requires a consideration of the wider economic and social context as well as the household's capacity to prepare for, cope with, and recover from, shocks. The search for sustainable solutions to hunger is the core of ACF-IN interventions.

To meet its goals in the fight against hunger, ACF-IN food security and livelihood teams have defined six objectives:

### • Objective 1 – Ensure appropriate analysis and response

ACF-IN's primary motive is to appropriately address the needs of suffering populations. Therefore, programme teams should thoroughly analyse a situation before defining an intervention. ACF-IN avoids standard or "default" responses, and ensures that programme design is aligned with identified needs and specific local contexts.

The "*Do no harm*" principle is followed throughout all stages of programme design, facilitating a dynamic and holistic approach<sup>15</sup>. ACF-IN analyses anticipates possible developments by highlighting opportunities and threats in addition to providing a snapshot of the current situation. Local stakeholders and populations are encouraged to participate in this analysis.

### • Objective 2 - Respond to immediate needs

In life-threatening situations, ACF-IN ensures that the minimum needs for survival, such as sufficient nutritious food, drinking water and shelter, are met. ACFIN's response to disaster situations is guided by *The Sphere Project*, which defines minimum humanitarian standards in disaster response.<sup>16</sup>. Under these guidelines, the emphasis is on meeting urgent survival needs for people affected by natural and man-made disasters, while protecting their basic human right to life with dignity.

ACF-IN food security and livelihood teams meet these needs in cooperation with other technical ACF-IN teams, including water and sanitation, hygiene promotion, nutrition, health and mental health. ACF-IN also considers early recovery interventions during and immediately after emergencies, to be a key element in efforts to support peoples' self-sufficiency and protect their livelihoods.

<sup>15</sup> See Annex 4

<sup>16</sup> See Annex 5

### • Objective 3 – Promote self-sufficiency and socio-economic development

ACF-IN helps vulnerable populations achieve self-sufficiency and food security through food production and/or income generating activities. While life-saving interventions are a priority, ACF-IN is also involved in mid- and long-term interventions, which provide the population with tools and improved technical capacities that will enable autonomous and sustainable access to, and availability of, sufficient and nutritious food, in a manner that follows local priorities.

### • Objective 4 – Encourage national and international policy change

ACF-IN's solid experience in technical interventions that respond to the needs of suffering populations, as well as a track record for continuous analysis and assessment, provide ACF-IN with a legitimate voice in policy debates at national and international levels. Advocacy efforts are directed toward donors, states and other relevant actors to promote policies and practices that minimise the negative impacts of disasters on affected populations. ACF-IN prioritises advocacy for changes that will have an immediate positive impact on the livelihood outcomes of affected populations.

### • Objective 5 – Innovate and ensure professionalism

The global situation is changing rapidly and radically. Fast-changing environmental and economic conditions present humanitarian actors' biggest challenge. ACF-IN has pledged to remain informed of the latest developments and changes, and to contribute to the identification of appropriate and effective responses.

ACF-IN's ability to meet this challenge will depend upon innovative programming, research and capitalisation. ACF-IN continuously reviews its applied research programmes, interventions and positions against changing priorities and needs, integrating learning and development in its domain of humanitarian work.

ACF-IN is dedicated to ensuring effective food security and livelihood programmes, designed and implemented by national and international experts in the relevant technical fields. Ongoing training and capacity building, as well as sharing of information in publications, provide ongoing information exchange to and from staff in the field, where interventions are researched, adapted and implemented. ACF-IN food security and livelihood teams are committed to working with other actors and institutions to increase programme impact and to respond to evolving needs in a timely and appropriate manner.

## Modalities of ACF-IN Food Security and Livelihood Interventions

In addition to ensuring that programmes achieve a substantial, measurable impact for beneficiary populations, ACF-IN also, to the best of its ability, dedicates resources to projects that optimise the ratio of input to quality of project output. Overarching issues of importance, such as gender equality, environmental sustainability and protection, good governance, prevention of HIV/AIDS, and rights of marginalised groups, are integrated into all projects and initiatives. ACF-IN also supports external independent evaluations to further and independently improve the quality of food security and livelihood interventions.

### OECD criteria

All ACF-IN food security and livelihood interventions are developed in accordance with the seven OECD/DAC criteria common to the evaluation of humanitarian projects<sup>17</sup>. These include:

#### DAC CRITERIA

- Relevance/Appropriateness

Is the project aligned with local needs and priorities (as well as donor policy)? "Appropriateness" implies the tailoring of humanitarian activities to local needs, increasing project ownership, accountability and cost-effectiveness accordingly.

- Connectedness

Are short-term, emergency activities carried out in a context that takes longer-term and interconnected problems into account?

<sup>17</sup> These criteria were developed by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of OECD. DAC is the principal body through which the OECD study issues related to cooperation with developing countries. They are commonly known as the 'DAC criteria'.



- **Coherence**  
Do project staff assess security, developmental, trade and military policies along with humanitarian policies, to ensure that there is consistency and, in particular, that all policies take into account humanitarian and human-rights considerations?
- **Coverage**  
Do humanitarian projects reach major population groups facing life-threatening suffering, wherever they are?
- **Efficiency**  
Efficiency measures the outputs – qualitative and quantitative – achieved as a result of inputs. Measurement of efficiency generally requires a comparison of alternative approaches, to assess whether the most efficient approach was employed.
- **Effectiveness**  
Effectiveness measures the extent to which an activity achieves its purpose, or whether it can be expected to do so on the basis of the outputs. Timeliness is a necessary component of the measurement of effectiveness.
- **Impact**  
Impact refers to the wider effects of the project – social, economic, technical, and environmental – on individuals, gender groups and age groups, communities and institutions. Impacts can be intended or unintended, positive or negative, macro (sector) or micro (household).

## Project cycle management

Project cycle management, with its several components, is implemented throughout all projects. As illustrated in Figure 4, processes of identification, formulation, financing, implementation, follow-up monitoring and adaptation, evaluations and lessons learned are applied to all types of programmes. ACF-IN guidelines and manuals, training modules, examples of best practices and capitalisation reports support this process, in order to ensure the effectiveness and quality of interventions.

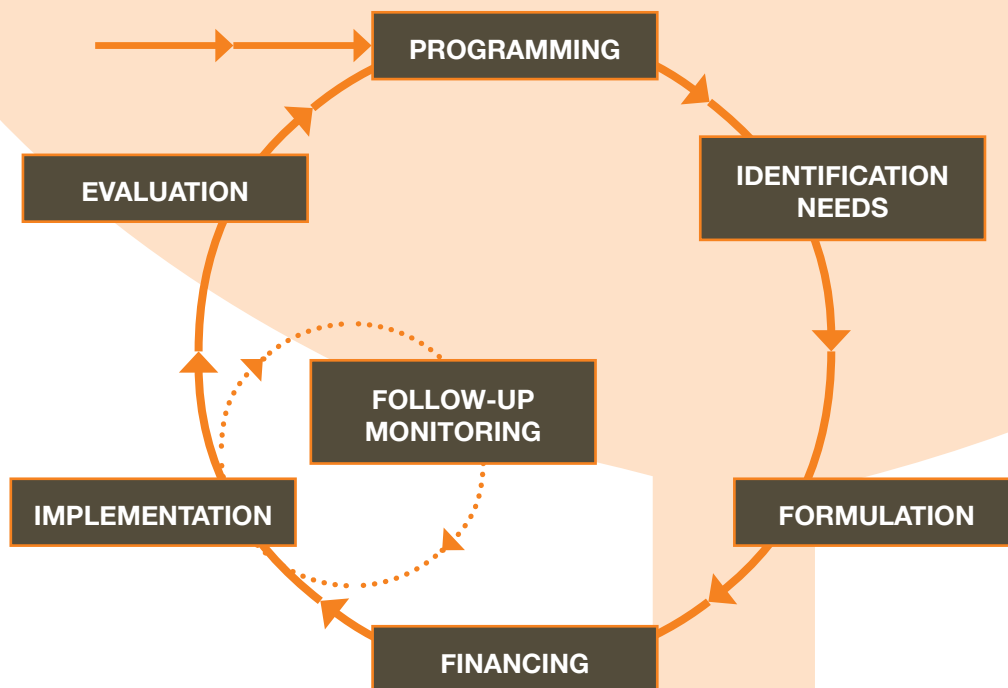


Figure 4: Project Cycle Management (Guiding Principles ACFIN, 2005)

Entry and exit strategies are best planned immediately from the beginning of the needs assessment phase of the project, at both mission level and project level. Entry criteria are often, but not exclusively, determined by prevalence or risk of malnutrition in the affected population. Clear phase-out criteria and exit strategies are difficult to determine beforehand, but are necessary to ensure project effectiveness, appropriate funding and sustainability.

## Community involvement

ACF-IN promotes the participation and empowerment of the community and the affected population on all levels and at all phases of the project. Traditional experience and knowledge is elicited and respected to ensure that programme activities are appropriate to the region and the population. Plans for eventual community management and transfer of responsibility and ownership to local control are considered from the first stages of a project, to ensure that interventions adhere to the principles outlined in chapter 4.

## Integrated programme approach

Wherever possible and appropriate, ACF-IN promotes an integrated programme approach, calling on experts from a variety of technical sectors, in alignment with the findings of the causal analysis described in Chapter 3. These integrated programmes, which may include water and sanitation, nutrition, food security, and/or livelihood components, address several underlying problems at the same time and have the greatest potential to impact conditions for affected populations. This approach provides the opportunity to address a wide range of immediate and underlying causes of an acute or chronic crisis. Integration of different technical sectors is considered beginning with the analysis and continuing throughout implementation and evaluation of each project.

## Capitalisation & sharing

ACF-IN is dedicated to ensuring good capitalisation and documentation of all food security and livelihood programmes to facilitate appropriate learning and sharing of experiences. Positive and negative aspects of each programme are documented in order to contribute to the search for appropriate responses in crisis, post-crisis and chronically food and livelihood insecure situations.

ACF-IN food security and livelihood teams document and share information about their work throughout the humanitarian sector in order to encourage continued improvement in responses to local needs, as well as policy development and overall quality of interventions and support material.

ACF-IN headquarter teams ensure the transmission and sharing of information across headquarters and on the international level. Their work includes the updating of training materials and guidelines according to new experiences and lessons learned in the field, as well as coordinating the possible publication of project and research results.

## Capacity building and local partnerships

ACF-IN is eager to build capacity on various levels through its food security and livelihood programmes. Reinforcement of the capacities of direct beneficiaries and communities, community based organisations and local NGOs, and technical government institutions remain a key goal of ACF-IN's efforts.

Capacity building projects focus on helping participants in the development process to increase their knowledge, skills and understanding about a variety of topics in order to bring about the desired developmental and behavioural change.

It is also important not to neglect capacity building of national and international ACF-IN staff, to enable them to better respond to the needs of suffering populations. This learning process is facilitated through internal ACF-IN trainings and exchanges, as well as external training opportunities. The objective is to improve general and technical project management abilities to ensure quality interventions for targeted populations.

Whenever possible, ACF-IN promotes local partnerships throughout all stages of a programme. These partnerships take advantage of local people's knowledge of local contexts in order to define appropriate responses to conditions on the ground. These partnerships also often significantly increase outreach to the local population. Informal partnerships are set up with beneficiary groups or communities, while official partnerships are arranged with local organisations and technical services and institutions. Local partnerships are closely linked to capacity building and empowerment.

For ACF-IN guidelines on local partnerships, see annexes.





# ACF-IN Food Security and Livelihood Interventions

## Assessment and surveillance interventions

The design of all ACF-IN food security and livelihood programmes are based on thorough assessments and contextual analysis of the situation on the ground. These assessments follow the frameworks and concepts discussed earlier in this document, which define the underlying causes of a problem or crisis situation. Assessments are facilitated in a participatory and creative manner, to ensure the contribution and ownership of the affected population and local institutions.

Surveillance of particular indicators of food security and livelihoods is another component of programme implementation. For example, surveillance of the market price of local staple foods is undertaken for all ACF-IN interventions.

Surveillance systems can be designed in a variety of ways. However, all designs share a common objective of continuously monitoring and analysing the contextual situation (such as food security and livelihoods or nutritional status) of and with the targeted population, enabling timely and adequate responses to emerging critical situations. Findings and recommendations are shared with responsible stakeholders and actors to enable decision makers to adapt ongoing programmes, define adequate strategies and necessary responses, and contribute to national early warning systems.

ACF-IN is dedicated to contributing to the ongoing definition and development of national and international initiatives on early warning systems, assessments and surveillance mechanisms. Methodologies integrated in current ACF-IN's work include IPC, SMART, LQAS<sup>18</sup>, etc.

ACF-IN has developed its own paper on assessment and surveillance, "ACF-IN Methodological Approach for Food Security Assessments and Surveillance 2006". See Annex 6 for a list of existing ACF-IN tools.

## Agro-sylvo-pastoral interventions

The objective of Agro-Sylvo-Pastoral Interventions (ASPI) is to reinforce a household's livelihood assets and its capacities to meet food security needs through production, resource management, and exchange. This type of programme is mainly used in early recovery, post-crisis, chronic crisis and development stages.

ASPI programmes generally target rural contexts. However, they can also be adapted to urban and semi-urban contexts, as well as refugee and/or IDP camps.

Detailed participatory analysis of the underlying causes of weak food production is necessary to define an appropriate response strategy in a given context. Activities employed in this category of intervention can include agriculture input support, strategic livestock management and vegetable gardening as well as agro-forestry, natural resource management and improved access to markets. Local economic development is often a side effect of ASPIs.

<sup>18</sup> Integrated Phase Classification of food security and humanitarian emergencies (IPC) ([www.fsau.org](http://www.fsau.org)), Standard Methodology for Analysis in Transition and Relief (SMART) ([www.smartindicators.org](http://www.smartindicators.org)), Lot Quality Assurance Sampling (LQAS) ([http://www.fantaproject.org/publications/LQAS\\_article.shtml](http://www.fantaproject.org/publications/LQAS_article.shtml))

ACF-IN has developed its own manual, “ACF-IN Agricultural Programmes 2006”. ACFIN also uses and endorses the “Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards” (LEGS)<sup>19</sup>. See Annex 6.

## Cash-based interventions

Cash-Based Interventions (CBI) can be implemented in various contexts during or after an acute or chronic crisis situation. They include free or conditional cash transfers, vouchers and cash-for-work programmes. The general objective of CBIs is to support an immediate increase in purchasing and/or investing power, enabling the beneficiary population to access basic necessities, including food and non food items, and/or to invest in the protection, recovery and strengthening of livelihood assets. CBIs can also take the form of social protection or safety net programmes, with the aim of providing predictable transfers to vulnerable populations over a given period of time. These programmes may also be food-based or combine both food and cash.

Cash-based interventions are likely to stimulate the local economy and thus promote economic recovery. This type of programme can therefore be seen as a market support intervention.

Participatory analysis of underlying causes for insufficient purchasing or investment power is a necessary component of this intervention. Market analysis and monitoring are key elements of the preparation and implementation of this type of programme, ensuring minimum disruption of local markets.

ACF-IN has developed its own manual and position paper on CBIs, “Implementing Cash-Based Interventions – A guideline for aid workers 2007” and “ACF-IN Cash-Based Intervention Position Paper June 2006”. See Annex 6.

## Food aid interventions

Food Aid Interventions (FAI) ensure sufficient food to people affected by an acute crisis. The main objective for these interventions is to save lives and prevent the degradation of beneficiaries’ nutritional and health status while protecting livelihood assets. This type of programme is a response to a lack of food availability, which may also be hidden behind an access problem caused by high food prices, during or following a crisis situation. Local procurement and the use of voucher systems are encouraged.

The most appropriate way to respond to identified needs must be determined in the context of the specific political, social, cultural, economic, security, and geographical situation. Implementation consists of the physical distribution of food commodities (or possibly vouchers) in the appropriate form, through a targeted or general distribution. Both wet (e.g. in school feeding) and dry rations are distributed depending on the context.

Systematic verification and monitoring throughout the intervention period are necessary to verify progress toward set objectives. Key elements for consideration include sphere standards on food quality, ration appropriateness and the organisation of the distribution point.

ACF-IN has developed its own policy and position paper on food aid, “ACF-IN Food Aid Position 2005” and “ACF-IN Food Aid Political Policy 2006”, as well as several guidelines for food distribution. All of these are listed in Annex 6.

## Income generating interventions

Income Generating Activities (IGA) promote the creation of income to improve vulnerable households’ purchasing power for food and non-food necessities, and to strengthen livelihood assets in a sustainable manner.

IGAs can be carried out immediately after a shock and focus on livelihood recovery. Alternatively, they can be implemented any time after the shock, during a chronic crisis, or as part of a long-term development project. They can take place in urban or rural areas. Participatory market analysis and a socio-economic assessment are key preparatory elements, as they help identify marketable services and products as well as describe existing demand for these products.

IGAs can be combined with CBIs and ASPIs in an integrated approach that will appropriately support recovery and development for the targeted population. IGAs can be supported with cash investment, with in-kind equipment and materials, or with training only to reinforce production and management capacities. Projects often employ a combination of these components, and should always include training aspects for the benefiting population.

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.livestock-emergency.net/>

IGA programmes may not always be directed at the most vulnerable population, as active participation and contributions are often necessary, and this is not always possible for individuals in crisis. It is important to consider possible adaptations of IGAs that will cater to this most vulnerable population. IGAs can be implemented with groups, communities and individual households.

ACF-IN has developed its own manual on income generating activities, "Income Generating Activities: A key concept in sustainable food security 2006". This document is also listed in Annex 6.

## Applied research interventions

ACF-IN is dedicated to facilitating studies and interventions in coordination with its programmes, with the support of the research service department. Applied research and innovative programmes that help to identify and implement long-lasting solutions and appropriate responses to the identified needs of affected populations are a key commitment for ACF-IN.

Research projects might include simple field studies, capitalisation and documentation of on-going programmes, or research partnerships with academic institutions that use well-developed and scientific methodologies.

Research remains focused on field interventions and the process of defining appropriate responses to crisis situations, as well as documentation of these activities in order to influence decision makers, donors, and internal and/or external policies and strategies.

## Advocacy interventions

ACF-IN also advocates and lobbies for the needs and rights of crisis-affected populations, alerting of needs in the field, and ensuring awareness and information among various population groups, as well as between populations and stakeholders such as governments, administrators, humanitarian actors, etc.

Advocacy and lobbying can also be facilitated towards donors, the UN, and other stakeholders, to ensure their commitment to humanitarian standards and initiatives, etc. Influencing the policies and strategies of internal and external actors and decision makers is an essential component of ACF-IN's advocacy activities.

The information used to lobby and advocate for the needs of distressed populations is derived from a community-based approach and contact with people at the grassroots level, as well as the above-described capitalization and research projects and assessment and surveillance information gathered by ACF-IN teams and its partners.

ACF-IN's own *HungerWatch Project* has published several advocacy-based reports on hunger related topics<sup>20</sup>. The main objective of these publications is to raise awareness of particular issues and contexts.

All HungerWatch documents are listed in Annex 6.

# Conclusion

Food security and livelihood interventions are included in the wider range of ACF-IN programmes that include water/sanitation/hygiene, medical, nutritional and psycho-social programmes. These are all integrated in the various conceptual frameworks outlined above and all contribute to the organisation's overall mission to save lives by combating hunger and malnutrition. This ACF-IN food security and livelihood policy provides key principles and goals that ACF-IN food security and livelihood departments follow in their daily fight against hunger.

While the policy is defined as a specific statement of principles to guide and determine present and future decisions, it is also a living document that will evolve over time as contexts change. It will be regularly revised and/or complemented with position papers and guidelines on specific issues as necessary.

<sup>20</sup> The HungerWatch Project - <http://www.actionagainsthunger.org/what-we-do/hunger-watch>

## The ACF-IN Charter of Principles

ACF-IN is a non-governmental, non-political, non-religious, non-profit network of Action Contre la Faim, Accion contre el Hambre and Action Against Hunger organisations. It was established in France in 1979 to deliver aid in countries throughout the world.

The mission of ACF-IN is to save lives by combating hunger and the diseases that threaten the lives of vulnerable children, women, and men.

ACF-IN intervenes in the following situations:

- natural or man-made disasters that threaten food security or that result in famine;
- situations of social/economic breakdown, linked to internal or external circumstances that place groups of people in extremely vulnerable positions;
- situations where survival depends on humanitarian aid.

ACF-IN provides assistance either during the crisis itself, through emergency interventions, or afterwards through rehabilitation and sustainable development programmes. ACF-IN also intervenes to prevent certain high-risk situations.

The goal of all ACF-IN programmes is to enable beneficiaries to regain their autonomy and self-sufficiency as quickly as possible.

### Charter of principles

While carrying out its activities, ACF-IN respects the following principles:

#### **Independence**

ACF-IN acts according to its own principles so as to maintain its moral and financial independence. ACF-IN's actions are not defined in terms of domestic or foreign policies, or in the interest of any particular government.

#### **Neutrality**

A victim is a victim. ACF-IN maintains strict political and religious neutrality. Nevertheless, ACF-IN may denounce human rights violations that it has witnessed as well as obstacles put in the way of its humanitarian action.

#### **Non discrimination**

ACF-IN refutes all discrimination based on race, sex, ethnicity, religion, nationality, opinion or social class.

#### **Free and direct access to victims**

ACF-IN demands free access to victims and direct control of its programmes. ACF-IN uses all means available to achieve these principles and will denounce and act against any obstacle that prevents it from doing so. ACF-IN also verifies the allocation of its resources to ensure that they reach the individuals for whom they are destined. Under no circumstances can partners working with or alongside ACF-IN become the ultimate beneficiaries of ACF-IN aid programmes.

#### **Professionalism**

ACF-IN bases the conception, realisation, management and assessment of its programmes on professional standards and its years of experience to maximise its efficiency and use of resources.

#### **Transparency**

ACF-IN is committed to respecting a policy of total transparency to beneficiaries, partners and donors and encourages the availability of information on the allocation and management of its funds. ACF-IN is also committed to providing guarantees of good management.

All members of ACF-IN worldwide adhere to the principles of the charter and comply with them in their work.



# ANNEX

## 02

### Right to Food

The term 'Right to Adequate Food' is derived from the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). The UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food in 2002 defined the “right to adequate food” as follows<sup>21</sup>:

***“Right to adequate food is a human right, inherent in all people, to have regular, permanent and unrestricted access, either directly or by means of financial purchases, to quantitatively and qualitatively adequate and sufficient food corresponding to the cultural traditions of people to which the consumer belongs, and which ensures a physical and mental, individual and collective fulfilling and dignified life free of fear.”***

This definition encompasses all elements explained in detail in General Comment 12 of the ICESCR, which states that:

***“The right to adequate food is realized when every man, woman and child, alone or in community with others, has the physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement.”***

In 2004, after two years of discussion and negotiation in the working group, the FAO Council adopted by consensus the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security. The Voluntary Guidelines are not legally binding, but draw upon international law and provide guidance on the implementation of existing obligations. They are directed toward States that are party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as well as States that have not yet ratified it. They are also intended for stakeholders working to improve compliance with the right to food at the national level.

The right to food also implies three types of obligations for States<sup>22</sup>:

- The obligation ***to respect existing access to adequate food*** requires State parties not to take any measure that results in the prevention of such access (e.g. conflict, discrimination).
- The obligation to protect requires measures by the State to ensure that enterprises or individuals do not deprive individuals of their access to adequate food (e.g. discrimination, markets).
- The obligation to fulfil (***facilitate***) means that States must pro-actively engage in activities intended to strengthen people's access to and utilisation of resources and means to ensure their livelihood, including food security (e.g. capacity-building, rehabilitation, environmental protection).

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.fao.org/righttofood/>

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.fao.org/righttofood/>



## The Millennium Development Goals

The Millennium Development Goals, adopted in September 2000 by 189 countries, include eight goals divided into 18 quantified targets for addressing extreme poverty. The various goals and targets are inter-related and adopt a holistic approach to tackling large issues such as income poverty, hunger, health, education, gender, and sustainable development.

### Millennium development goals:

- **MDG 1** Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- **MDG 2** Achieve universal primary education
- **MDG 3** Promote gender equality and empower women
- **MDG 4** Reduce child mortality
- **MDG 5** Improve maternal health
- **MDG 6** Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- **MDG 7** Ensure environmental sustainability
- **MDG 8** Develop a Global Partnership for Development



# ANNEX

## 04

### The Sphere Project

The Sphere project was launched in 1997 by non-governmental organizations and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movements to define minimum humanitarian standards in disaster response. The emphasis is on meeting urgent survival needs for people affected by disasters, while asserting their basic human right to life with dignity.

The Sphere handbook compiles the steps and indicators to consider in diverse sectors of aid. Its success led to the inclusion of a chapter on food security (2004 edition) in addition to food aid. ACF-IN contributed to the development of the handbook, which reflects current practice in ACF-IN food security and livelihood programming, and supports the use of the minimum standards to ensure quality assessments and appropriate interventions in disasters.

#### Contents of sphere handbook

##### What is Sphere?

##### The Humanitarian Charter

- Chapter 1: Minimum Standards Common to All Sectors
- Chapter 2: Minimum Standards in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion
- Chapter 3: Minimum Standards in Food Security, Nutrition and Food Aid
- Chapter 4: Minimum Standards in Shelter, Settlement and Non-Food Items
- Chapter 5: Minimum Standards in Health Services

##### Annexes

1. Legal Instruments Underpinning the Sphere Handbook
2. The Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movements and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief
3. Acknowledgements
4. Acronyms

##### Index

##### Sphere Project information

##### Feedback form

*The full document can be found at <http://www.sphereproject.org>.*

## Do No Harm

The “Do No Harm” project was initially set up in the early 1990’s to learn how assistance provided in conflict situations interacts with conflict conditions and can be used and/or misused in the pursuit of political or military advantage. The concept of “Do No Harm” has evolved to guard against the undesired effects of aid interventions, such as creation of social tensions, changing cultural or local habits, or negatively impacting the environment.

ACF-IN food security programming minimises these undesired consequences through thorough contextual analysis conducted during the development stages of a project, as well as ongoing monitoring during program implementation, in order to make the necessary adjustments should negative consequences be observed.

For more information and the DNH handbook visit:

<http://www.cdainc.com/dnh/docs/DoNoHarmHandbook.pdf>



# ANNEX

## 06

### List of ACF-IN Food Security and Livelihood Publications

#### Position Papers

- ACF Position Paper on Genetically Modified Organisms, 2003
- ACF Position Paper on Micro Credit, 2004
- ACF Position Paper on Food Aid, 2005 (practical)
- ACF Position Paper on Political Aspects of Food Aid, 2006
- ACF Position Paper on Food Product Quality, 2006
- ACF Position Paper on Cash Based Interventions, 2006
- ACF Position Paper on Bird Flu, 2006 and yearly updates

#### Books

- Introduction to Food Security: Intervention principles, 2006
- Agricultural Programmes: From initial assessment to programme implementation, 2006

#### Technical guidelines and tools

##### Cash-Based Interventions:

- Cash-Based Interventions guideline with annexes, 2007
- Cash or food decision tree, 2007

##### Community-Driven Participation:

- Community-Driven Participation:  
A practical manual of suggested approaches and tools for field practitioners, 2006.

##### Food Aid:

- Food aid guideline DRAFT, 2006
- Nutrition and food aid: Blanket under five distributions, 2006
- Food Aid and Alternatives to Food Aid, 2006 (Draft and forthcoming book)
- Descriptive overview of ACF food aid programmes in 10 countries, 2007
- Food aid by grouping method: Field guideline with annexes, 2007
- Quality control: Grille de spécifications alimentaires, 2008 (Draft, French only)

##### Food Security Surveillance Guidelines :

- Food Security Surveillance Guidelines 2005
- Food Security Assessments and Surveillance, 2006 (Draft and forthcoming book)

##### Market for the Poor Approach:

- Market for the Poor Approach:  
A new methodology to integrate poor people in the market system, 2006.

##### Implementation of fish ponds (Africa):

- Technical manual for field practitioners, 2008 (Draft)

##### Income Generating Activities

- Income Generating Activities, 2006 (Draft and forthcoming book)

#### Interactive Learning Tools as CD-ROM

- Community participation (2006)
- Micronutrients (2006)
- Cash-based interventions (2007)
- Agricultural programmes for non-agriculturalists (2008)

## **Hunger Watch Reports:**

### ***Beyond any Drought***

Commissioned by the Sahel Working Group, London, 2007

### ***Women and Hunger: Woman play a Central Role in the Fight Against Hunger***

Written by Samuel Hauenstein Swan

Published 2006, by ACF International Network

84 pages dual language French and English

### ***Water and HIV: Working for Positive Solutions: Impacts of the HIV Epidemic on Access to Safe Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in the Copperbelt of Zambia***

Written by Jennifer Organ

Foreword Ben Fawcett

Published 2007, by ACF International Network

33 pages, English

### ***The Justice of Eating: The Struggle for Food and Dignity in Recent Humanitarian Crisis***

Edited by Samuel Hauenstein Swan & Bapu Vaitla

Foreword by Dr Stephen Devereux

Published 2007, by Pluto Press

ISBN: 978-0-7453-2746-4

108 pages, English

Copies also available in French and Spanish

(published by Icaria Editorial).

### ***Local Voices: A Community Perspective on HIV and Hunger in Zambia***

Edited by Natalie Duck and Samuel Hauenstein Swan

Photos by David Gillanders

Foreword by Kevin Ryan

Published 2007, by ACF International Network and CINDI

82 pages, English, French and Spanish

### ***Hunger and HIV: From Food Crisis to Integrated Care***

Claire de Menezes, Susan Thurstans, Pamela Fergusson and Nynke Nutma

Foreword by Anne Nesbitt, Former Associate Professor, Department of Community Health, College of Medicine, University of Malawi

Photos by Susana Vera

Series Editor: Samuel Hauenstein Swan

Published 2007, by ACF International Network 2007

ISBN No: 978-0-955773-1-8

73 pages, English and Spanish

### ***Seasons of Hunger: Fighting Cycles of Quiet Starvation Among the World's Rural Poor***

Stephen Devereux, Bapu Vaitla & Samuel Hauenstein Swan

Foreword

by Robert Chambers

Published 2008, by Pluto Press London

[www.plutobooks.com](http://www.plutobooks.com)

ISBN No: 978-0-7453-2826-3

148 pages, English, French and Spanish





## ACF - INTERNATIONAL NETWORK

### CANADA

7105 rue St-Hubert, Bureau 105  
H2S 2N1 Montréal, QC, Canada  
E-mail: [info@actioncontrelafaim.ca](mailto:info@actioncontrelafaim.ca)  
Tel: (+1) 514 279-4876  
Fax: (+1) 514 279-5136  
Web: [www.actioncontrelafaim.ca](http://www.actioncontrelafaim.ca)

### FRANCE

4 rue Niepce  
75662 Paris, cedex 14, France  
E-mail: [info@actioncontrelafaim.org](mailto:info@actioncontrelafaim.org)  
Tel: 33 1 43 35 88 88  
Fax: 33 1 43 35 88 00  
Web: [www.actioncontrelafaim.org](http://www.actioncontrelafaim.org)

### ESPAGNE

C/Caracas 6, 1°  
28010 Madrid, España  
E-mail: [ach@achesp.org](mailto:ach@achesp.org)  
Tel: 34 91 391 53 00  
Fax: 34 91 391 53 01  
Web: [www.accioncontraelhambre.org](http://www.accioncontraelhambre.org)

### ETATS-UNIS

247 West 37th, Suite #1201  
New York, NY 10018 USA  
E-mail: [info@actionagainsthunger.org](mailto:info@actionagainsthunger.org)  
Tel: 212-967-7800 Toll free : 877-777-1420  
Fax: 212-967-5480  
Web: [www.actionagainsthunger.org](http://www.actionagainsthunger.org)

### ROYAUME-UNI

First Floor, rear premises,  
161-163 Greenwich High Road  
London, SE10 8JA, UK  
E-mail: [info@aahuk.org](mailto:info@aahuk.org)  
Tel: 44 208 293 6190  
Fax: 44 208 858 8372  
Web: [www.aahuk.org](http://www.aahuk.org)

