

Guidance Notes for Preparing Urban Livelihood Profiles

Note: An urban area may be a single zone or may be sub-divided into two or more zones or sub-zones, if different parts of the city have distinctly different economic characteristics.

Title of Urban Zone: _____

MAPS: Map showing general location of the urban zone within the city/country, plus an enlarged map of the zone itself with an overlay of district boundaries

TABLE: Urban zone population broken down between the 5-6 main admin units within the urban zone.

Main Conclusions and Implications

Length: One Third Page

Sections Contents:

TEXT: A bullet-point summary (within the summary) of the main conclusions and implications for decision-makers.

Questions that should be answered in the this section of the format:

- 1) What are the constraints to accessing food and income in this urban zone (disaggregated by wealth group if necessary)?
- 2) And what are the implications for programming?

e.g...

- Poor households in this urban zone are highly vulnerable to fluctuations in the price of staple foods, due to very low cash incomes and a heavy dependence on market purchases in most years. Possible interventions in 'bad' years include price subsidisation and/or food aid distribution.
- Market access to rural areas beyond the immediate confines of the town are severely limited by an inadequate and poorly maintained road system. Road construction and rehabilitation could help promote access to rural food crop production, increasing food availability and reducing food prices in the town.

Urban Zone Description

Length: One Third Page

Sections Contents:

TEXT: A basic introduction to the urban zone, including

- Basic geography: physical features (rivers, relief, etc.), climate (rainfall and temperature by season, etc.), vegetation, natural resources, population density etc.
- Basic characterisation of the urban zone, i.e. economic activity in the town (administrative centre, trading centre, industrial centre, etc.), main trade links, main sources of food, urban-rural links, other characteristics including overall poverty level.
- Brief description of market access
- Brief description of types of employment available locally and any labour migration to other areas.

Questions that should be answered in the this section of the format:

- 1) What is the basis of the urban economy, and how does this affect livelihood options for the population?

Markets

Length: One Third Page

Sections Contents:

MAPS: Map showing the main markets for the urban zone (both inside and outside the urban zone boundaries). These should include the main indicator markets for market price monitoring.

If the information is available, market maps for staple food and labour, indicating source, final destination (i.e. where consumed) and market routes. It may make sense to have separate maps for good and bad years.

TEXT:

- Brief description of a) patterns of staple food importation, b) labour markets (e.g. types of labour opportunity, out-migration in search of work, including abroad, seasonal in-migration from rural areas, etc.) and c) patterns of remittance income.
- Description of any factors affecting marketing for the urban zone (e.g. road conditions and transport costs).

Questions that should be answered in this section of the format:

- 1) What are the main staple food commodities sold into the urban zone? And what are the main markets and market routes for these?
- 2) Are urban-rural market links good or bad in this urban zone? What are the constraints to marketing in the zone, and how might marketing be improved?
- 3) Underlying questions are: how are changes in supply and demand likely to affect prices in this urban zone? How might a change in access to markets (e.g. as a result of insecurity) affect this zone?

Seasonal Calendar

Length: Half Page

Sections Contents:

GRAPHIC: Calendar illustrating seasonal patterns to food and income acquisition strategies:

- rainfall by month and timing of local harvests, livestock movements, etc.
- seasonal sources of income
- market prices

Questions that should be answered in the this section of the format:

- 1) What is the timing of the main agricultural and other seasonal activities during the year?
- 2) At which times of year do households have access to different sources of food and income?
- 3) How does the market price of staple food vary seasonally?
- 4) At which time(s) of year is access to food and income relatively low?
- 5) How will the timing of a hazard (e.g. flooding, insecurity) affect seasonal food access?

Wealth Breakdown

Length: Half Page

Sections Contents:

GRAPHIC: Bar chart showing percentage of community households in each wealth group.

TABLE: 3 column table, giving household size and composition, main sources of income, asset holdings, etc.

TEXT:

- Brief description of the main differences between wealth groups (e.g. income sources, income levels, asset holdings, capital and savings, education, skills, labour, etc.), with some explanation of the constraints faced by the poorer groups (i.e. why they remain poor).
- Anything else noteworthy about the breakdown, e.g. 'In this urban zone an unusually large number of households fall into the poor category. This is because...'

Questions that should be answered in the this section of the format:

- 1) What are the main differences between different wealth groups and how does this affect potential access to food and income?
- 2) Why are the poor poor? E.g. Because they do not have access to land? Because they do not have enough labour to cultivate their land? Because they lack capital to invest in production?
- 3) What percentage of community households fall into each of the wealth groups?

Sources of Food

Length: Quarter Page

Sections Contents:

GRAPHIC: Bar chart analysis of reference year food access for main wealth groups. Should include quantitative estimates of access to food from purchase, gifts, own crops, own livestock, etc.

Where quantitative data are available (rather than just a proportional breakdown), results should be expressed as a percentage of minimum requirements (2,100 kcals per person per day). Total access may be above 100% where estimated food access exceeds 2,100 kcals per person per day, e.g. for the middle and the rich.

TEXT:

Brief description of what the bar chart shows, with reasons for differences between wealth groups.

Questions that should be answered in the this section of the format:

- 1) How does the pattern of food access vary between groups?
- 2) How do differences between the wealth groups (described in the wealth breakdown) affect access to food (e.g. low levels of income -> low access to purchased food, etc.)?
- 3) How does total food access vary between different wealth groups (e.g. total access for poor = 100% of minimum requirements, middle = 110%, rich = 120%)? Note: This is only possible if total food access is being calculated.

Sources of Cash

Length: Quarter Page

Sections Contents:

GRAPHIC: Bar chart analysis of reference year cash income for main wealth groups. Should include quantitative estimates of access to income from labour, petty trade, business, remittances, etc.

Where quantitative data are available (rather than just a proportional breakdown), results should be expressed in cash terms, illustrating the difference between wealth groups in absolute terms.

TEXT:

Brief description of what the bar chart shows, with reasons for differences between wealth groups.

Questions that should be answered in the this section of the format:

- 1) How does the pattern of cash income vary between groups?
- 2) How do differences between the wealth groups (described in the wealth breakdown) affect cash income (e.g. lack of capital -> dependence on casual labour)?
- 3) How does total cash income vary between different wealth groups. Note: This is only possible if total cash income is being calculated.

Expenditure

Length: Quarter Page

Sections Contents:

GRAPHIC: Bar chart analysis of reference year cash expenditure for main wealth groups. Should include quantitative estimates of expenditure on staple food, other food, basic household items, education, health, etc.

Where quantitative data are available (rather than just a proportional breakdown), results should be expressed in cash terms, illustrating the difference between wealth groups in absolute terms.

TEXT:

Brief description of what the bar chart shows, with reasons for differences between wealth groups.

Questions that should be answered in the this section of the format:

- 4) How does the pattern of cash expenditure vary between groups?
- 5) How do differences in cash expenditure affect access to food and non-food items, education, health services, etc.?
- 6) How does total cash expenditure vary between different wealth groups. Note: This is only possible if total cash expenditure is being calculated.

Hazards

Length: Quarter Page

Sections Contents:

TEXT:

A brief description of a maximum of three main hazards, e.g. the main chronic hazard, the main periodic hazard, and one potential hazard that would have very serious consequences.

- Description of main chronic hazard (e.g. industrial decline, HIV/AIDS) and its effects on food and income access.
- Description of main periodic hazard (e.g. exchange rate changes, trade restrictions, crop failure in adjacent rural areas), its frequency and its effects on food and income access (e.g. increased food prices, reduced food availability).

Questions that should be answered in the this section of the format:

- 1) What are the main chronic and periodic hazards affecting this urban zone, and how do these hazards affect access to food and income for different wealth groups?
- 2) Are there any potential or new hazards that threaten this urban zone, and that could have serious consequences for food security in the urban zone? How?

Response Strategies

Length: Quarter Page

Sections Contents:

TEXT:

This section should focus on responses to the main periodic hazard, separated by wealth group.

- Descriptive analysis of which sources of food and income can be expanded in a crisis, with a judgement of the likely effectiveness of these strategies.
- Assessment of capacity of households to respond to possible crisis in the future. Assessment of continued viability of strategies employed in the past.
- Analysis of potential negative effects of strategies likely to be adopted.

Note: The term response strategies is preferred to the term coping strategy for two reasons. People often use coping strategies to refer to regular components of everyday livelihoods (e.g. firewood sale), which strictly speaking are only a coping strategies when intensified in response to a hazard. Also, coping can imply that the strategy in question is cost-free, which is not always the case.

Questions that should be answered in the this section of the format:

- 1) For the main *periodic* hazard, what are the main response strategies for the different wealth groups?
- 2) How viable are strategies that have been employed in the past?
- 3) Do any of the strategies have potential negative effects (e.g. threaten future livelihoods, have negative environmental effects, could increase the likelihood of transmission of HIV/AIDS?)

Crisis Warning Indicators

Length: Half Page

Sections Contents:

The indicators should relate to the main periodic hazard and be ordered from early to late. (The corresponding graphic should cover a two year timeframe. Early indicators of crop failure in adjacent rural areas can then be covered in the pre-harvest section of the graphic and response indicators in the post-harvest section.)

Note: The term 'crisis warning indicators' is preferred to 'early warning indicators', since many important indicators are likely to be quite late (such as a decline in nutritional status).

Questions that should be answered in the this section of the format:

- 1) For the main *periodic* hazard, what are the main indicators of a developing crisis? And in what order would these be observed?

Scenarios

Length: Half Page

Sections Contents:

For more quantitative assessments, it would be good to include a final section illustrating 1-2 scenarios.

Scenarios will be prepared for each urban zone looking at the likely impact of the main periodic shocks on access to food and income of different wealth groups. The scenarios will set out how these wealth groups

will be affected by a hazard (exchange rate change, trade restriction, etc.), how they are likely to respond, and what the effects will be on their access to food and non-food items.

Questions that should be answered in this section of the format:

1) How are the different wealth groups likely to be affected by selected hazards? How are they likely to respond, and how will their access to food and non-food items be affected?

Implications for Programming

Length: Half Page

Sections Contents:

This should deal with opportunities for increasing access to food and income within the urban zone, and the constraints people face in exploiting these.

- General analysis of the constraints that different wealth groups face in exploiting food and income options within and outside the urban zone, with brief suggestions of interventions that could help overcome these constraints.
- General analysis of the vulnerability of different wealth groups to different hazards.
- Analysis of the constraints that different wealth groups face in adopting various response strategies, and review of interventions that could help overcome these constraints.

Questions that should be answered in the this section of the format:

- 1) What are the constraints to accessing food and income in this urban zone (disaggregated by wealth group if necessary)?
- 2) How does this affect the vulnerability of different wealth groups to the main periodic hazard?
- 3) What are the implications of the findings for programming?

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Additional Notes:

1. The profile should be 4-5 pages long, in total.
2. The profile should say somewhere the month/year when the fieldwork was carried out, together with a footnote that explains that the information is probably valid for another, say, five years.
3. The summary needs to mention the reference year somewhere and what kind of year it was (good/average/bad). For example, the food section could be titled "Sources of Food: Bad Year (1998)". In the text, include comments on what the opposite type of year would be like.