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### From the *Use of humanitarian assistance data in scenario building* a review of FEWS NET’s current approach.

Shannon Patty

### The following is an excerpt from the report I wrote on the process of making humanitarian assumptions highlighting the data sources, common problems staff encounter in the process, and a step by step process of making the assumption. The full report is not available outside of FEWS NET management, but these are the most important content of the work. These quotes are mainly from field staff members, based on their own experiences.

### Key Information Sources

FEWS NET’s mission is to provide information to decision makers to enable preparation, planning, and efficient use of resources in acute food security situations. FEWS NET offices, which typically have minimal staff, rely on a “network” for secondary information. This information often comes through national forums and localized needs assessments. In many countries, FEWS NET participates in committees that assess vulnerability and advocates for capacity building within the national structure. Yet, even when FEWS NET is part of the national IPC working group, it produces an independent IPC-compatible report analyzing the food security situation on a quarterly basis with monthly updates.

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| FEWS NET Country office Information Structure  Source: *FEWS NET* |

To provide meaningful projections of the food security situation, field analysts must gather details on the programs that will take place in the scenario period. FEWS NET field analysts typically draw on four levels for humanitarian assistance information: Central, Direct, Subnational, and Ground. This section details the structure, participants, and interactions at each information level.

**Central:** Information at this level comes from government and UN/NGO forums that convene central stakeholders, frequently including donors. Typically, this is the main source of information for field offices, accessed through participation in coordination meetings. Typically, presentations and emails regarding plans, funding status, situation updates, and post distribution monitoring reports, a document that highlights what has been accomplished with humanitarian assistance distributions within a period of time, are gathered by the sectoral leads, the UN’s Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), or the national government ministries over humanitarian assistance. This information can be distributed to the participants in these national forums either through email or discussion during the monthly meetings.

**Direct:** After participating in the central forums, some offices contact the implementing organizations directly to request more details. This direct follow-up is often challenging for many field offices due to the implementer’s low priority for responding to information requests, mistrust due to former and ongoing minor disagreements over a current or previous phase classification, and also because of the general busyness of our partners.

**Subnational:** FEWS NET staff sometimes have contacts outside the central information structure in subnational government and UN/NGO positions. These contacts may be contracted by FEWS NET and partner organizations as field monitors or brought on a daytrip observation assessment. Typically FEWS NET staff establish a relationship with those who have specific information about programs in their areas. These contacts are typically made during field visits or at IPC analyses. Subnational field staff, particularly subnational government officials, are especially helpful in providing details on planning and likely assistance because of their knowledge of the pipelines and timing of assistance in their areas. These informants are typically involved in the monitoring and distribution of assistance.

**Ground:** Informants at the ground level include beneficiaries, community leaders, those whose livelihoods are affected by assistance (e.g., traders and transporters), and personal contacts. Ground informants are often found during regional visits and are most frequently used to triangulate information. When seeking updates and details on the recent work of implementing organizations, there are no guarantees for cooperation. Field informants are most valuable in confirming the information FEWS NET has collected, rather than as first hand informants, though that does occur in some countries. Some staff members noted that the information exchange is most successful when informants are visited in person or when they receive a personal phone call because these informants are typically not paid.

### Approach to gathering information

Since FEWS NET relies on the network for information, field staff must approach their communications and interactions carefully. This is most apparent for individuals who are not receiving material benefits from their interactions with FEWS NET or who are not paid for their work related to the information that FEWS NET seeks. However, working relationships are also important to maintain with the various organizations who collect data and implement programs, particularly because they are the foremost source.

**Formal interactions** occur when the typical channels for information are used. Ideally and typically interactions are kept formal and sources are quoted when specific information is used to develop the food security scenario and outcome analysis. Sometimes, organizations respond to requests for data by asking for an MOU or LOU that outlines the specific purposes for the data request and may request something in return. Typically an MOU/LOU is the working cooperation agreement, but these are often made globally and are less effective when applied at the country level.

What do you do if the organizations aren’t giving out information?

Sometimes reports are never published [due to some] politics of national unity. So you have to get it through your own connections. [We] always have success and sometimes we share with friends.

Even more importantly, maintaining a positive relationship with the government can greatly affect FEWS NET’s ability to function in country. Some reports must go through the government for approval before release to the public. FEWS NET’s reports can inadvertently draw attention to the government and implementing organizations’ work, especially in the case that they are not fulfilling their roles within the context of maintaining food security. The purpose of FEWS NET reports are to highlight the areas that are in need, rather than to expose these organizations, but intent and reality are difficult to distinguish when the product reflects poorly on these institutions.

When the government fears scrutiny or legal charges from their action or in some cases inaction on a humanitarian level, the exchange of information is halted within the community. Some field offices have communicated that leaked documents and information can make governments and other organizations grow more suspicious and less inclined to share information when requested formally. While in the short term accessing information through informal relationships is sometimes the only option, in the long term it may reduce the ability to build stronger relationships where it is unnecessary to use the informal.

Across the network of sources, a critical success factor is the **informal or personal relationships** that FEWS NET analysts have with individuals in various offices and organizations. These relationships often transcend barriers of politics, disagreements, and formal network arrangements. In many countries, FEWS NET staff reported having access to information despite poor relations in the central structures or government. In some countries, due to our close relationship with the government, FEWS NET is the first organization unblocked from the distribution ban on the government’s information. Additionally, other organizations rely on FEWS NET’s connections to get information from the government.

Within the various institutions, the effectiveness of a direct appeal for data correlates with the professional and personal relationship FEWS NET staff have developed with individuals in each of the implementing organizations, regardless if the appeal is made formally or informally. FEWS NET staff stressed the improvements in their interactions when they included the partner organizations in the final review of our reports, when they participate in the forums and assessments, and especially when the relationship is mutually beneficial.

Finally, it is important for staff members to build rapport while still not abusing the informant’s time. Some FEWS NET staff demonstrate their appreciation for the assistance by showing interest in them other than just for the information they hold. Field informants are most valuable in confirming the information FEWS NET has collected, rather than as first hand informants, though that does occur in some countries. Some staff members noted that the information exchange is most successful when informants are visited in person or when they receive a personal phone call.

### Collecting evidence

Can you reflect on your experiences following up with partner organizations?

One time a large geographic area was highlighted in a cluster meeting as having received assistance during our analysis period.

I went to the organization and asked for details on the populations that were assisted, by location. They replied that it was distributed evenly across all districts. I thought, “Is that even distribution made according to the number affected? Is it based on population? Or is it simply equal quantities for each area, regardless of actual needs?”

But I realized that the manner of this response suggested that in order to maintain the good will of the organization in the future, additional follow up questions were not advisable. This left the analyst with poor details on the assistance.

(Adapted from interview)

Humanitarian assistance information can be disseminated or suppressed by various stakeholders for a variety of reasons: 1) Justify resources used, 2) Promote stability of a country, and 3) Increase assistance. Sharing data can complicate interactions between organizations.

In an emergency context, the goal of the assistance is to save lives and prevent livelihoods deterioration. An organization chooses a certain program based on their belief, typically based on evidence, that this will assist the population in the way that is needed. Data is typically collected during the program to justify what and why an organization is doing what they do. Unfortunately, based on this emergency context, the data collection process for ongoing and completed programs can be a low priority or take a backseat within the organization’s scope of work due to the rapid changing context, disorganization of beneficiaries or limited establishment of a reporting structure. While the data collection methodology is beyond the scope of FEWS NET’s work, the results of surveys and assessments can be used by FEWS NET to highlight the effectiveness of a program on the population of concern. In the short term this may result in a discussion by donors to determine whether or not the program should continue, and ultimately may highlight the capacity of an organization. While it is important for funds to be used appropriately, the nature of the emergency situations makes data collection and use difficult.

Further, the noble motive to save lives and livelihoods can also lead organizations to compromise the information that is provided externally. Other less altruistic motives may also affect the information that is available. More than half of FEWS NET field offices report that governments and partner organizations provided unsubstantiated or incorrect information on their humanitarian assistance programs, whether due to insufficient[?] capacity to collect and manage, or intentional misinformation. A minor problematic example might be the number of households and areas assisted, as well as what was provided to the beneficiaries. In more extreme cases, field staff were told in central forums that entire communities received assistance; upon further investigation at the ground level, multiple informants stated that it never arrived. Staff mentioned political turmoil from faulty targeting and political pandering could create social panic evidence of failure of a government policy, such as land tenure failure could end with the loss of faith in the economy from the wider finance community, causing currency devaluation.

More commonly, offices mentioned that central sources had a tendency to clean or omit crucial information. These crucial details might be that the pipeline was delayed by a short period of time, or that some areas were not reachable due to extensive flooding. This information is intentionally left out because it may muddy the overall discussion of the assistance that occurred in a large area, while the minor examples affected very few. FEWS NET staff believe subnational sources were more likely to know specific details useful for food security scenario building.

Surprisingly, some field staff trust the information presented in the central forum when there is discussion and partners are allowed to ask questions to substantiate their work. However, conflicts in the timing of FEWS NET’s reporting cycle and when these institutional meetings are held or even the government’s release of information make this dialogue difficult at times.

Field staff reported that contacts can sometimes provide biased information. Some offices noted that their informants may have motive for providing faulty info- they are tied to the community and their community is usually chronically in need. Staff discovered that local leaders may report that assistance was not provided when in fact it had been. Examples of biases are the development of a worse scenario to justify the food assistance. Once information is collected on the various programs, FEWS NET staff keep in mind the various biases that each source of information holds. Staff members report that information presented in the UN/NGO forums is more reliable than the government’s, but both can be problematic and require additional validation.

You mentioned you never have issues with receiving information late!

“[The] manager believes in real time information. [So there is] no excuse for delayed information. If [it is] delayed, in subsequent month you’ll get a full report.”

### Reliability of the data

Across all countries, FEWS NET field analysts commonly reported problems in a few key areas. These include: availability of data, timeliness of reporting, and aggregated details. These data issues can occur while gathering information for the projected and current periods, in addition to detailing assistance that has occurred in the current month.

**Availability of data:** FEWS NET analysts are looking for details of humanitarian assistance: which localized areas and how many were assisted by the programs. Even if this data is recorded, the governments and NGOs may be reluctant to share details from their programs, often citing the beneficiaries’ privacy, competition among organizations for funding, and political sensitivities as the major obstacles.

**Timeliness of reporting:** FEWS NET reports are published at the end of the month, while distribution cycles can occur unevenly and throughout the month. It is difficult to align these and have a network meeting to discuss the information. In addition, field staff can end up repeatedly contacting organizations for months in an effort to receive data that eventually becomes is too old to be verified through a field visit. Multiple offices reported that a three-month delay for information is common.

**Aggregated details:** Many field staff note that even when they receive information, it comes in a form that is not useful for their analysis. For example, organizations frequently aggregate information across districts or geographical locations, rather than by community or livelihood zone, making it difficult for field staff to compare to the populations of concern. Typically, the data is collected from the field and numbers are aggregated prior to reaching the central forums, so recalculations are more complicated.

### What kind of evidence?

The greatest challenge when reporting on humanitarian assistance is knowing if the assistance has been carried out according to the plans or if there were any major changes that occurred and were not reported. These change the expected food security outcomes. Some of the more common changes are numbers, areas, timing, ration size, and mode of assistance.

According to staff, the population of concern, the areas that are in need, and the timing of the needs are typically determined through a joint assessment, which FEWS NET frequently participates in. The majority of this information is used in steps one to five of the scenario development. A meeting is called to discuss the humanitarian response options and response plans are created among the implementers. This information is eventually shared within the central forums. FEWS NET staff can also come up with an analysis based on our own observations, but most use the one determined through the food security counsels. Ideally these discussions and assessments are made in advance with the intent to be prepared as the situation develops. Implementers are fundraising and preparing for the assistance. Sometimes the actual assistance programs can change based on funding levels or if the situation changes. Staff’s experiences highlighting the common planning and implementation challenges are shared below. A few questions that have arisen from the staff’s experiences are also included.

**Numbers:**

“Suddenly the number doubled, because new areas experienced very serious attacks from different fighting group and new displacement taken place in those areas. The amount increased and assistance stayed same. The impact of HA on total population in need would be less than what we assumed in the beginning. We use changed info and other factors to build our assumptions regarding the HA. The overall situation on ground in terms of population in need, severity, access to areas, and available humanitarian funds. Together we based assumption on that.”

“[If you are] working with planned figures and along the way there are problems… it will affect the projected aspect of analysis... If [the planned assisted numbers are] reduced from 2 mill to 1.2 mill it will change phase… 2.0 mill WFP says 1.8 and then only had funds for 47% of requirements for the programs.”

“The beneficiary numbers are typically lower than joint assessment totals, but all government and NGOs stick to it as a working document.”

What should they do when government and most agencies have agreed on a beneficiary number that is not the same as what the vulnerability assessment committee and independent FEWS NET analysis found? Should funding should be based on needs not government's numbers?

**Areas:**

“The targeting system is established by ward (political boundary) not livelihood zone- and we’ve seen that costs and logistics prevent some areas from receiving aid due to low numbers. Small changes [in the programs] are not communicated well-timely. [The implementing organization] will make changes and we don’t hear [so we can’t] adjust our assumptions.”

“Structuring of assistance [information] is part of limiting factor. We want it by region- the population actually reached. [We say] it can’t be the full population, [then they] say it is “substantial”.”

“Due to resource limitations, government and implementing organization may skip an area where they need [assistance] and don’t have a ‘what or why’, and don’t know the affect. [This happens] due to resource limitations- [the implementers] will shift to the most vulnerable areas.”

**Timing of assistance provided:** Assistance is typically planned for the period of greatest need. In the case of delayed distribution, a household may resort to negative coping strategies, including the sale of assets. The assistance may be provided, but because it was late the household may have the same outcome as if the assistance hadn’t been provided. Timing of the assistance to the period of need may mean the difference of the household’s productive assets sold to pay for food. For example, if agricultural inputs are not provided in the correct time period for use in the agricultural season, the assistance will not change the outcomes. Programs are typically planned to start when the peak of the needs occur, but in reality the program may start late per the earlier discussion of continuity. There are multiple forms of timing issues, each with different outcomes.

*Late start:* Humanitarian assistance may be planned and funded for an area, but may not reach the population at the appropriate time. A one to two month delay for the start of the program is a normal occurrence, even for inter-annual programs. While this information may be reported, the effect of the delays are unknown.

“The date may say September but in all years they start November/December. We ask them, ‘Do you see yourselves starting in September?’ and make a judgment call. [In our assumptions] all the years we say [it will] start later, because they always do.”

*Retroactive assistance:* Another similar occurrence is skipping a cycle of distribution due to pipeline issues and not doubling up in the next distribution cycle. What may have originally been an adequate assistance for the households now has significantly changed from the plans. Staff have a difficult time using this information, because the effect of the assistance is unknown.

“The other factor is food security constraints. [These are] beyond our hands. The roads are blocked by bandits and [the implementing organization] cannot come to distribute food and people skip one to two months food. [The implementing organization] says they will not feed retroactively. If someone misses this month they will not be compensated next month.”

*Duration of assistance:* Often assistance programs end when the green harvest arrives. Some field staff believe that this often may result in further consumption issues for next season because much of the harvest is eaten before it is fully ripened and it is before the typical consumption season begins.

“Assistance was planned through February but the [lean season] goes through March. Season had delayed by one month and we highlighted that gap and later a decision was made to fill the gap. Interventions… even when assured and funding in place have delayed. Households have stayed hungry while using other coping mechanisms, or not getting right amount of food.”

“Some district may receive based on the original plan the emergency food aid- the original level. Some may receive three or six months, not according to the plan. The national government follows a caseload approach. Food aid plan may not be fully availed to target.”

Finally, humanitarian assistance often arrives at the end of the season, as it is typically the most needed time. However, staff repeatedly mentioned that many of the problems associated with asset depletion might be resolved from the beginning, and with less input required. Staff wonder if it is possible to promote this concept of early action.

**Ration size:** Ration size is often used flexibly, especially when funding constraints occur. Based on the needs assessment full or half rations are planned to cover the consumption gap of households.

“We could confidently say [in our assumptions] because of the presence of humanitarian assistance which was funded at [a certain] level, we think it will cover the needs of X percentage of people. Somehow, beyond what was available from [one organization] nothing else came, so they ended up with only half rations.”

**Mode of assistance:** The mode of assistance is typically determined by a market assessment. Calculations are typically made based on a predetermined food basket which fulfills the minimum macronutrient requirements. A last minute change of this nature is typically due to a pipeline problem, but may result in less food available to the beneficiary household due to market price fluctuations.

“The type of assistance delivered turns out sometimes as planned, but sometimes changes. [It was] planned as food but given as cash…. In some cases it is as planned in others there is acute shift. The seventh round of 2013 it was planned to be in food but was given as cash, because of resource limitation in food. We weren’t aware of this. [The sum of the voucher] per person for a month was supposed to fill 15 kg of food.”

### Influencing factors

According to staff, many of the changes occur due to pipeline issues, political interference, and security. Staff are unsure of how to treat these complications in their reporting, as they typically occur without time to prepare in advance. “For projected, you don’t know the security situation or if humanitarian actors will be able to secure the funding. WFP was committed to assist the 150,000 people in flash flood prone areas. They are currently facing pipeline problems they say they will secure extra food aid to help, but we don’t know if it will happen or not. Sometimes the assistance for projected period is problematic.”

**Pipeline delays** can abruptly alter the implementation of a program. These can occur due to larger humanitarian issues in the world, or due to weather, funding, or security for the food before distribution has started.

“The assumption was affected by pipeline issues delay[ing] the start. We said October, they started in November. [We] must relook at the phase because of delayed distributions, certainly they were a phase worse off.”

“Breaks in pipeline and security are something beyond our control. WFP says we have enough food to feed people in camps throughout this period. Although they might have funding coming. The funding is there.”

**Political interference** in the assistance process was a common theme within the interviews. Political interference typically occurs during the implementation process. Some offices note that beneficiary numbers were controlled by the government and frequently politicized. Everyone in the humanitarian community accepted the numbers as factual and then made their programming and analysis based on them.

“Government programs- implementation is screwed up- not based on vulnerability. Politics may compromise the selection criteria for beneficiaries.”

“There was a time when [my country] was touted to be food basket- the programs implemented by government were very successful and was a success story leaders given accolades- didn’t want to admit there were problems. [In reality at that time it was a] window dressing and intervened in small areas.”

“Projecting prices to be so high and prevail up to now. The government came with an intervention and pushed prices way down. [I] didn’t ever think they would release so much grain- buying at high price and release at that low price. Whatever you project when something like happens you can never predict. Our analysis was that it was due to the election year- a political move to get votes. Politicians are giving handouts. [You] don’t see that in nonelection years.”

**Security climate**: Security, as mentioned before can affect the pipeline before implementation starts, but additionally security can affect during implementation, effectively blocking the beneficiaries from receiving food, destroying the assistance, or making it too dangerous to disseminate assistance in some areas.

“Most important thing [in the analysis] is what would be the access in the area- external factors that may limit the security, impossibility of roads, etc. [Does prepositioning work?] The reality is even if [the food is] prepositioned in a town area- even reaching [households] within the same district it is a challenge. Security can change in short term. External factors play a great role when considering HA.”

“In extreme cases... food can be used as a weapon to sideline areas where there are rebels. [They] may be starved deliberately. That might not happen in this area.”

## Making the analysis

The following is a brief summary from FEWS NET’s guidance for scenario development most relevant to the use of humanitarian assistance:

**STEP 1 Set Parameters:**

A. Identify the specific geographic area of focus and provide the area’s population.

B. Identify the household group that this scenario will focus on. If available, provide the population estimate for this group.

D. Define scenario duration and timing

What are you looking for in your analysis of Humanitarian assistance?

“We want to understand whether the required amount and type of food is being delivered and what to do if we fail to deliver timely and adequate assistance? [Is] the intended resource [reaching] the intended beneficiary and if targeting is ok.”

**STEP 3 Develop key assumptions:**

A. List the key factors, relevant to food security, which are expected to behave normally during the scenario period.

B. List the key shocks or anomalies that you anticipate will occur during the scenario period and that will affect food security. These should be events that are relevant to the chosen household group (1B). For each event, describe level of severity and expected timing as specifically as possible.

**STEP 6 Develop response assumptions:**

Describe how households and external actors are likely to respond to the changes in income and food access described in Step 4. (e.g., coping strategies, community support, and humanitarian assistance from both the government and external donors). For each response, describe you assumptions about timing, magnitude, and impact.

**STEP 7 Describe and classify projected household food security:**

Given current conditions and outcomes (Step 2), projected impacts on food and income sources (Step 4A/B) and likely response (Step 5), describe the evolution of household food consumption and livelihoods during the scenario period, for the chosen HH group. Be sure to describe expected food security outcomes over the entire scenario period.

**STEP 8 Describe and classify projected area food security:**

A. Describe how malnutrition and mortality are likely to evolve in this area during the scenario period. Consider current levels of malnutrition and mortality, projected changes to food access (Step 6A), and other factors that may affect malnutrition (e.g., seasonality, disease, and local caring practices).

B. Based on Step 6B and Step 7A, classify this area according to the IPC 2.0 Area Scale. Remember to provide classification for the entire scenario period. Note that malnutrition and mortality are relevant to IPC classification as supporting evidence of food access constraints.

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| **Scenario dev.** | **What is relevant to humanitarian assistance** | **Hum. Analysis** | **Action** |
| Step 1 | Identify population, areas, and timing of needs | Step A, C | Gather info, build assumption |
| Step 2 | Summarize the current situation |  | (Baseline) |
| Step 3 | Analysis of shocks | Step A, C | Gather info, build assumption |
| Step 4 | List changes in external assistance affecting income |  | (Baseline) |
| Step 5 | List changes affecting food sources |  | (Baseline) |
| Step 6 | Likely response of external actors | Step B, C | Triangulate, build assumption |
| Step 7 | Evolution of household food consumption | Step D | Determine impact |
| Step 8 | Evolution of food security outcomes | Step E | Phase classification |

The purpose of food security scenario development is to “come up with a final picture whether households will meet consumption need or not. The actual amount we will come up with figures, numbers, deficits, etc. So they come up with how much deficit and subtract what is delivered by humanitarian assistance.” A humanitarian assistance analysis cannot be made independent of the scenario development, and the scenario development is not complete without the inclusion of humanitarian assistance. They depend on each other’s information, and are used to compare needs (step 1 and 3) to plans (step 6), likely impacts (step 7), and actual food security outcomes (step 8).

The following steps were identified for including humanitarian assistance in the current scenario:

1. Gather information

* “We get reports, documents and exchange monthly emails (once or twice a month). [We] rely on the organization networks, forums, and task force meetings.”
* “That is mainly based on data collected and observations of field analysts and enumerators. Plus add any humanitarian assistance reported as planned and implemented during the last month.”

Tell me about your experience with including humanitarian assistance in your work.

“There are different bottle necks- there is no hard and fast standard on how you deal with humanitarian assistance. It requires work. It would be easier to have a standard approach.”

1. Triangulate information

* “For most info we depend on the recent report that an agency releases, or actual info from sources on ground there what is happening what info they have in addition to the report we can pick here and there. In addition to that you can check with field monitors there. This is very easy to get information.”
* “We make cross verification through field assessments. Ask likely beneficiaries if they have received any programs.”
* “[We are] looking at what is the situation like on the ground [with] agriculture extension workers and those implementing assistance programs.”

1. Build assumptions
   * “In most cases we don’t mention specifically the program itself or the agency… but generally we describe the situation… We put it very frankly that any outcome identified is likely not to happen as assumed… we said we are expecting the prices to go beyond our projection before. The same thing we do for others, but they are partners so we don’t want to lose them so we put it in a very diplomatic way, like, ‘Based on these evidences and these changes we expect these changes in these areas’. We don’t hide this.”
   * “The [region, district] is getting X assistance. Y number of people are likely to receive, however, access and insecurity [reasons for insufficiency] is likely to undermine that assistance reach[ing] the population.”
   * “We were told WFP was funded 60 percent. We applied an assumption that we had enough for 60 percent of the [planned] time for the response and for the remaining period we did not have enough assistance. Mapping showed they wouldn’t have assistance. We know the way WFP was operating, it showed that WFP was covering all the needs and were resourcing. Then had communicated to us. Made it clear if they didn’t get resources we made assumption for when resources ran out. In the end the donors stepped up and people were assisted.”
2. Determine impact
   * “I don’t go into details, it’s just to say whether they have enough for a certain program. It’s a yes or no. Will needs be met? What are implication if needs are not met?”
   * “For projection [of impact] it depends on our knowledge as analysts and to what extent we are confident that the other people programs and our knowledge about the programs… expected changes in overall situation in terms of severity. And this depends on our knowledge about the areas rather than concrete information we can depend on.”
   * “There was a time HA started but it was not adequate and more households were left out, or [the situation] became worse over a period of time. Because the [households] became worse off the assistance wasn’t making a difference. There was a case where we had assistance which was inadequate not making a difference and still were in a crisis as a district, but HA was taking place. It isn’t automatic. Depends on if [the assistance] is adequate enough”
3. Classify phase

* “The judgment call we make [happens] after incorporating [humanitarian assistance] with the [known] shortfall. We see the percent of deficit reduces and consumption outcomes improving may move our indicators into another phase- if you look at food consumption or livelihood change… humanitarian assistance can improve the phase if it is provided and adequate enough to cover a certain deficit.”
* “If we are confident and we know program is taking or is going to take place, funded, highly likely with structures in place, and it’s adequate such that it will meet/help not less than 20% of the population that is affected. Also if the assistance quantities are adequate then we say this will provide enough to meet needs of households in a month – they will be able to consume adequately.”
* [Our] interpretation is that you are putting a phase classification for an area what it says is that this area would have been in a phase worse if there wasn’t that humanitarian assistance. For example if the humanitarian assistance isn’t having an impact- phase two is what it would be without assistance- in essence the assistance is ineffective.
* “If the assistance is expected to meet all food needs in particular livelihood zone. That means if household would be in crisis it moves back down to maybe stressed- sometimes even down to minimal but with humanitarian assistance.”