



# Adapting to An Urban World

## **Urban Case Study: Adapting Tools and Methods to Assess Food Security in Urban Areas of Somalia**

### **Lessons Learned from Phase I**

April 2016



**SOMALIA  
FOOD SECURITY CLUSTER**  
*Strengthening Humanitarian Response*



**World Food Programme**



**GLOBAL  
FOOD SECURITY CLUSTER**  
*Strengthening Humanitarian Response*

# Adapting to an Urban World

## Somalia Case Study

Report prepared by Margarita Lovon (Independent Consultant)

### Acknowledgement

The Food Security Cluster extends its sincere appreciation to its partners who have played significant role in shaping the initiative, and in the entire roll out process. The role of FSNAU/ FAO, WFP-VAM, FEWSNET, Concern Worldwide, NRC, CRS, CARE, and WV was paramount in this regard. The initiative would not have materialized without the sustained support of the Adapting to an Urban World Project team from the gFSC, WFP VAM and its Steering Committee members IFRC, Oxfam, Samaritan's Purse, UNHCR, ALNAP, World Vision, World Animal Protection.

The FSC is also appreciative to the consultant (Margarita Lovon) for her leadership in the roll out process. She has contributed her knowledge and skills in adapting the tools and methodology within a very short timeframe, withstanding many challenges. The support of NRC, DRC, KAASHIF, WOCCA, Ministry of Interior, National Statistics Bureau, and National Disaster Management Agency in field validation exercise and feedback was immense and the FSC is very grateful for such valuable contributions.

The FSC Secretariat

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## List of Acronyms

CARI	Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators of Food Security
CPI	Consumer Price Index
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
EFSA	Emergency Food Security Assessment
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FCS	Food Consumption Score
FEWSNET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
FSC	Food Security Cluster
FSNAU	Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit
gFSC	Global Food Security Cluster
IDSUE	Indicator Development for the Surveillance of Urban Emergencies
IPC	Integrated Phase Classification
MEB	Minimum Expenditure Basket
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
PESS	Population Estimation Survey
PPS	Probability Proportional to size
SWALIM	Somalia Water and Land Information Management
ToT	Terms of Trade
VAM	Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping
WFP	United Nations World Food Programme
WOCCA	Women and Child Care Organization

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The need to address acute food and livelihoods insecurity among the growing urban population in Somalia has been recognized by humanitarian actors in recent years like elsewhere in similar context. The increasing food insecurity related assessments and programming in urban setting in Somalia is one of the indication of such recognition hitherto limited as compared to rural areas.

The predominantly rural-focused humanitarian actors in Somalia, however was not equipped in addressing the growing and complex food security need of urban population in Somalia particularly in face of recurring disasters / risks /shocks. Most of tools and approaches used in assessing food in security, targeting and delivery of aid have been predominantly based on rural frameworks. Hence, the actors are grappling with wide range of challenges to assess, target and respond to the need of the affected population in urban setting in Somalia. This challenge is not the unique to Somalia and humanitarian actors operational in many protracted and transitional countries facing similar challenges.

The Somalia food security cluster in collaboration with its partners in Somalia has rolled out an initiative of adapting food security assessment tools and methodology to address this challenge partly. The initiative was envisioned to make food security related responses appropriate and effective in urban setting in Somalia subsequently. The initiative was supported by the project “Adapting to an Urban World, co-led by the global Food Security Cluster and the World Food Programme Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM).

The FSC with the support of an independent consultant has completed the first phase of the initiative. The consultant has made extensive desk review and consultation of the actors to adapt the tools and methodology for assessing urban food insecurity in Somalia. The draft tools prepared based on the initial steps was further reviewed and improved based on the input from partners before piloting in Mogadishu urban setting. The consultant also presented the key lessons and challenges based on the field testing exercise and incorporated in the report and revised tools.

This initiative is still the work in progress given the remaining phases. However key lessons learned and recommendation related technical, operational and methodological issue in assessing urban food insecurity in Somalia presented in this report. The adapted tools also attached in the annex. Key steps and ways forward in terms of refining the proposed tools and institutionalization was also highlighted in the report which will inform the subsequent phase of the initiative

## 1. Background

Global population continues to shift into urban areas and urbanization trends have led to increasing concerns about understanding food security within these contexts. The understanding is even more challenging in the face of disaster which is becoming an increasing trend in urban context. Much is understood and known about measuring food security and vulnerability of traditional livelihoods in rural settings however these dynamics in urban settings are much less understood particularly in the face of disaster. In order to address this need, the World Food Programme Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (WFP VAM) and the global Food Security Cluster (gFSC) have launched a joint project, *Adapting to an Urban World*, aimed at developing specific food security assessment tools and methodologies. Several partners, including UNHCR, Oxfam, Samaritan's Purse, World Vision International (WVI), IFRC, World Animal Protection and ALNAP have also joined the urban partnership. A desk review and several case studies will be implemented under this initiative to capture different urban contexts facing food insecurity. Four case studies have already been completed, including in Harare, Zimbabwe, different cities in Madagascar, Port-au-Prince, Haiti and in the context of the Syria crisis, in Lebanon and Jordan, as highlighting cases of urban refugees. The Somalia assessment has also been conducted in line with the *Adapting to an Urban World* project objectives and findings will be compared with the other case studies and contribute to the development of final urban assessment tools and guidance.

Food security tools and methods designed to assess acute food insecurity in Somalia urban context are essentially non-existent, with the exception of work done by FSNAU, FEWSNET, and WFP in response to the protracted crisis. Humanitarian actors usually are using methods more adapted to rural contexts which are not necessarily suitable to assess food security and vulnerability in urban settings with a great diversity of livelihoods, coping strategies and settlement patterns.

The lack of adequate tools and methodology has significantly constrained the "appropriateness and effectiveness of the food security response" and "targeting" to acute food insecurity in urban setting in Somalia. Organizations such as Concern Worldwide and Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) are cognizant of such challenges and are planning to roll out an initiative in Somalia (e.g. Mogadishu) and elsewhere (e.g. Ethiopia) that will help in addressing the challenges. The FSC believed this to be an opportune moment to coordinate with partners interested in addressing various challenges to strengthen the humanitarian response to food security crisis in urban settings in Somalia and launched this initiative. The urgency of this initiative is more pronounced with the growing need and vulnerability of the urban population and increased initiative of the actors to respond to the need.

## 2. Objectives

The overall objective of this initiative is to strengthen the humanitarian response to food security crises in urban and peri-urban settings in Somalia. The following are the specific objectives:

- Design food security tools /methodology appropriate for urban food security assessment in the humanitarian context in Somalia
- Roll out the designed tools /methodology in a pilot area in Somalia
- Collate lessons learned from the roll out and refine the designed tools and methodology

- Disseminate refined tools and methodology for wider use by the stakeholders

### 3. Key Activities and Methodological Approach

In the first phase (November-mid December, 2015) the following activities were prioritized:

1. Desk review of existing documents, reports, tools, methods, datasets, etc., developed by different stakeholders to assess food security and vulnerability in urban areas in Somalia and other similar settings.
2. Bilateral consultations with key stakeholders to recover experiences, lessons learned and challenges
3. Development and field validation of adapted data collection and analysis tools and methods to assess food security and vulnerability in urban Somalia, first concentrating in Mogadishu
4. Reflection on the field validation exercise and preparation of a proposal for the way forward

#### 3.1 Desk Review

The main purpose of the desk review was to identify good practices as well as gaps and challenges faced when conducting food security assessment exercises in urban areas of Somalia, and in other similar contexts. The review focused on indicators, tools and methodologies used to determine food insecurity and vulnerability in urban/ peri-urban areas. Complementary to these aspects, the review also looked at the linkages of needs assessments and ongoing food security response in Somalia urban context.

Key focus areas of the desk review were:

- Sampling and identification of sampling frames and areas of interest for assessments
- Food security analytical frameworks and key indicators used
- Data collection methods and tools
- Data analysis and reporting

The methodological approach consisted of an extensive review of documents on previous urban food security and vulnerability assessments in Somalia (See list under references), complemented by a review of relevant documents from experiences in similar settings in other countries.

The document review was complemented by bilateral interviews with key stakeholders implementing food security assessments and response interventions in Somalia, namely: FSNAU, FAO, FEWSNET, VAM-WFP, Concern Worldwide, OXFAM, NRC, DRC, WOCCA, KAASHIF, Shelter Cluster and Governmental institutions in Mogadishu: Representative of Ministry of Interior, National Bureau of Statistics and the National Disaster Management Agency.

The results of the desk review was presented and discussed with key stakeholders in a workshop, highlighting the good practices and challenges and proposing methodological solutions to address the main gaps.

#### 3.2 Development of Food Security Assessment Methods and Tools

The development of methodologies and tools was done in a participatory way. First, based on the desk review and existing tools, the consultant adapted a draft data collection tools and analytical



methods to assess food security in urban Somalia. The draft was circulated among the partner institution for inputs and comments. Inputs were then incorporated in a reviewed version of the tools ready for pilot test in the field. Further review of the proposed tools was also done in discussions with partner's field staff and enumerators in Mogadishu.

### 3.3 Field Validation of the Tools

The main purpose of the field validation was to assess the pertinence, feasibility and quality of the data collection and analysis methods and tools proposed.

Under **pertinence** it was assessed whether the indicators, questions or other type of data collection tools are relevant to assess food security in the urban context of Somalia.

**Feasibility** considered if the proposed data collection methods are feasible to apply under the conditions prevailing in Somalia, namely security restrictions, need for confidentiality, people's mobility, and threats.

**Quality** considered whether the proposed methods and tools allowed gather quality data. The quality of the questions was also reviewed.

The pilot test of the tools was carried out in Mogadishu.

### 3.4 Review of the Results of the Field Validation

Field experience in the application of the proposed assessment tools was compiled in a discussion session with the enumerator and partner's field staff directly involved in the field validation exercise.

### 3.5 Reflection on the Pilot Test and Way Forward

A final workshop was organized with the stakeholders to review the results and experiences from the pilot test and to prepare a plan for the next steps to roll-out the assessment exercise and compile lesson learned and recommendations to further refine the methods and tools.

### 3.6 Timeline of the First Phase

ACTIVITIES	29-30 Oct	2- 6 Nov	9 - 13 Nov	16 - 20 No	23-27 Nov	30 Nov-4 Dec	7 - 11 Dec
<b>Activity 1: Desk review</b>							
1.1 Gathering of relevant documents							
1.2 Review of experiences on Urban Food Security assessment in Somalia and other similar settings							
1.3 Bilateral interviews with key stakeholders							
1.4 Workshop to present the desk review results and propose general guidelines to develop methods and tools for Somalian contex				17-nov			
<b>Activity 2: Development of food security assessment methods and tools</b>							
2.2 Preparation of draft methodological tools							
2.3 Inputs and comments to draft tools							
2.4 Refinement of the tools							
<b>Activity 3: Pilot test of the tools in the field</b>							
3.1 Selection of the "clusters" and recognition visits					25-nov		
3.2 Enumerators training					29-30 nov		
3.3 Data collection in the field							
3.4 Data entry and analysis							
<b>Activity 4: Review of experiences of the pilot test</b>							
4.1 Discussions and meetings with enumerators and field staff							
4.2 Compilation of field experiences							
4.3 Preparation of the final version of the tools							
<b>Activity 5: Reflection on the pilot test and way forward</b>							
5.1 Workshop							09-dic
5.2 Final report							30-dic

### 4. The Urban Context in Somalia

Social and political instability and the overlapping of the clan system with a relatively newly born democracy, make the Somali context a very complex one. *“This complexity is amplified by rapid urban growth, making it difficult to consolidate the potential advantages of a well-structured urban context to help the rehabilitation and development process. The Somali urban setting is largely ruled by unregulated market principles. Towns are a bundle of casually, haphazardly laid-out buildings, and a multitude of users fight over the same unorganized public spaces”* (UN-Habitat).

The displacement of hundreds of thousands people, most of them from rural to urban areas adds another dimensions to the complexity of urban centers in Somalia. Somalia has seen a strong pattern of urban migration for several decades by people seeking informal or formal employment in the major urban centers, but displacement was exacerbated by fifteen years of civil war and several droughts. *“In the 1980s, Somalia’s rate of urban migration was estimated at 6.5%, one of the highest in Africa.<sup>1</sup> The civil wars caused a short-term reversal of this pattern as people fled fighting in the major southern urban centres to return to areas from which their clans came, typically small regional towns (such as Beletweyne, Galkayo, and Baidoa) and rural villages. Some moved to the safer northern urban areas (such as Bossaso and Hargeisa), which also possessed a concentration*

<sup>1</sup> NRC, UN Habitat, UNHCR, Land, Property and Housing in Somalia, 2008, p.69.

*of businesses and development agencies. In more recent times, the lack of development in rural Somalia has resulted in migration to urban cities in search of livelihood opportunities.*<sup>2</sup>” (UN-Habitat). Hence, development of urban centers has not been planned, and the population of urban poor was not well integrated into the cities and remains without access to services. It is also likely that urban IDP settlements will eventually lead to the rise of more permanent slums, with limited access to basic services such clean water, education or health, as well as inadequate access to food.

There are no accurate and updated population figures in Somalia. According to the latest Population Estimation (PESS 2014), the urban population in Somalia reach 5.2 million, accounting for 42 per cent of the total population. Compared to many African countries, the proportion of the urban population is relatively high. This can be attributed to the definitions of urban-dwellers used, which are in line with what was used prior to the civil war. By this definition all administrative districts and regional headquarters are considered urban areas, regardless their population density and availability of services associated with urban areas in other countries (PESS 2014).

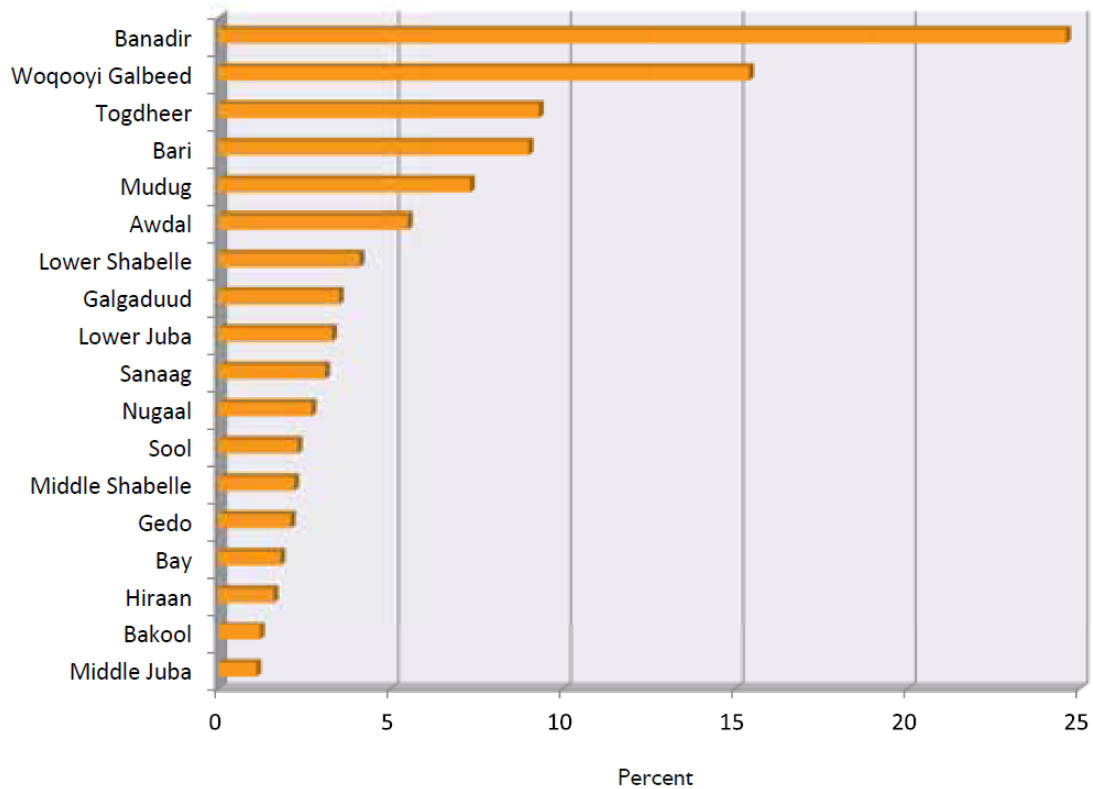
The regional breakdown shows that Banadir (Mogadishu) with 1.28 million urban people concentrates one quarter (24.6 percent) of the total urban population in the country, followed by Woqooyi Galbeed with 15.4 percent, Togdheer with 9.3 percent, Bari with 9.0 percent and Mudug with 7.3 percent. The urban population in these five regions made up more than 65 percent of the total population living in urban areas in Somalia. Middle Juba region had the lowest share of the urban population at only 1.1 percent. (PESS 2014).

Cities also host higher numbers of internally displaced persons (IDP). Mogadishu has been the largest recipient of IDP influx. The majority of those fleeing from the south-central regions have remained in South Central Somalia transforming Mogadishu in the single largest IDP hosting location. The latest UNHCR figures indicate the existence of 1.13 million IDPs across Somalia, around 9 per cent of the total population (UNHCR, Dec 2014). Banadir (Mogadishu) host the highest number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) at 33.4 percent, followed by Galgaduud, hosting 10.8 percent, and Lower Shabelle with 9.3 percent of all internally displaced Somalis. In terms of absolute numbers, the PESS estimates that around 369,288 IDPs live in Banadir, 119,000 in Galgaduud and 103,000 in Lower Shabelle.

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<sup>2</sup> Incl. pastoralists hurt by worsened pastoral livelihoods due to the livestock ban and natural phenomena, have fled their homes to seek economic opportunities in new areas

Figure 1: Urban Population by Regions in percentages



Source: Population Estimation Survey, PESS 2014.

## 5. Best Practices, Challenges and Gaps Arising from the Existing Food Security Assessment Practice in Somalia - Desk Review

Experiences assessing food security in urban areas of Somalia exist and have been developed and improved in recent years. Various studies carried out in the last eight years have identified key features that make up the urban livelihoods in Somalia and at the same time have proposed methodological solutions to better measure food insecurity and vulnerability in urban areas.

### Experiences in Urban Food Security Analysis

- **Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU):** Implement regular baselines and semi-annual integrated food security and nutrition surveys since 2008. FSNAU has been conducting the urban surveys in 10 regions since 2011 in all regions in the North, some in Central as well Mogadishu and Kismayo in the South. FSNAU also conducts market analyses (prices, terms of trade, market functioning).
- **FEWSNET:** Food and nutrition security updates based on secondary data, market monitoring and updates on early warning indicators. Conduct also specific studies.
- **World Food Programme (WFP):** Conduct urban Emergency Food Security Assessments (EFSA), Mobile based food security monitoring (m-VAM), market monitoring (prices of key food and non-food commodities) and urban programming experiences
- **NGOs:** Urban programming and targeting experiences

The following is a summary of the key features, best practices, challenges and gaps encountered in the desk review of food security studies conducted in urban Somalia, complemented by the appreciations of key stakeholders interviewed.

#### 5.1 Sampling and Mapping

Urban food security surveys in Somalia, consider urban cities as **homogeneous** and are representative only at “city level” and not at lower level (i.e district). This is with the exception of urban surveys conducted by FSNAU in the North part were representative sample drawn randomly at regional level using PPS sampling techniques. It is recognized that this approach is not the best, as great disparities exist, not only across cities but within the cities, and the analysis of the entire populations does not allow to identify such differences. However representativeness at lower level implies larger samples and a key question remains on how to find the right balance between representativeness and costs.

FSNAU urban surveys in the North were representative at regional level and not at city level. Sample was drawn from the urban areas of the regions randomly using PPS Cluster sampling

#### **Challenges**

- Lack of accurate and updated population and other socio-economic data is the main constraint to define the sample frame and identify the most vulnerable zones in urban areas in Somalia. Most of the surveys applied multi-stage cluster sampling techniques. Cities or districts are divided into sections and clusters based on key informants, satellite images and maps.
- Displacement and constant population movement inside the cities (i.e Mogadishu) due to insecurity, also adds difficulties to maintain updated information on enumeration areas and clusters. In this regard, the Concern-IDSUE experience in Nairobi suggests that household counts needs to be established before choosing a sample size as a way to ensure representative samples. According to such experience, enumeration teams complete the

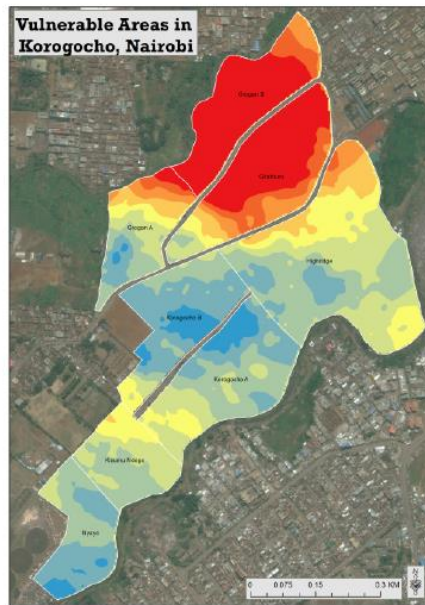
household count of the entire neighborhoods prior to the survey, this could take up to one week depending on the size of the area.<sup>3</sup>

### **Best Practices**

- Urban food insecurity/vulnerability mapping to identify urban settlements, neighbourhoods or areas within the cities that face similar levels of socio-economic or food security vulnerabilities is an important tool to guide assessments and programming. Although, experiences and tools to map food insecure areas within the cities in Somalia were not developed, there are mapping tools designed and tested for other purposes or in other countries that could serve as good examples to develop a food security mapping tool. One is the experience of the Shelter Cluster mapping exercise of IDP settlements in Somalia and another is the experience of Concern-IDSUE in slums in Nairobi (See boxes below).

#### **Hotspot map of vulnerable areas in Korogocho, Nairobi.**

A composite indicator of income, food insecurity, and household hunger was used to map areas of vulnerability (in red) which represents a clustering of households with very low income, high food insecurity, and high rates of household hunger.



**Source:** Indicator Development for the Surveillance of Urban Emergencies – IDSUE. Year four Annual Report, January to December 2014. Concern Worldwide and USAID.

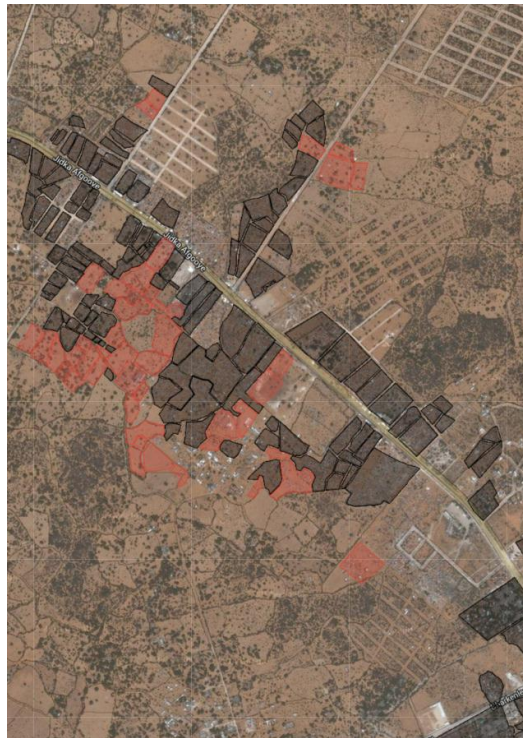
<sup>3</sup> Concern Worldwide staff personal communication

### Shelter Cluster Mapping Exercise

The infrastructure mapping exercise is an inter-sector tool developed by the Shelter Cluster to provide a reliable, useful and timely overview of the living conditions of the IDPs, inclusive their access to basic services. The exercise targets mainly existing and newly developed IDP settlements in Somalia. The aim of the exercise was to produce quick turnaround 'baseline data' that would enable the production of a map of all settlements including a perimeter, shelter-density checks and an overview of all facilities accessed by IDPs. It would also collect general and demographic data from key informant interviews per settlement. The exercise is always conducted on a limited budget and consequently a restricted timeframe.

All data is collected through mobile technology, analyzed and disseminated by the Shelter Cluster Secretariat. Shelter Cluster provides for each mapping exercise a fact sheet, pdf maps and online maps. All data is available to the wider humanitarian community for further detailed analysis through the following link: Data mapping exercise. Source: <https://www.sheltercluster.org/library/mapping-exercise-9>

Mogadishu Infrastructure mapping May-June 2014



## 5.2 Urban Livelihoods in Somalia

### *Lessons Learned from the Assessment Practice*

- **Urban livelihoods are complex and more diverse:** Complexity of urban livelihoods is recognized as a common characteristic across cities in different countries and it is not specific to Somalia. However, the Somalia's urban context exhibit certain peculiarities which are especially important to plan and deliver both humanitarian and development assistance to improve food security.
- **Urban livelihoods are directly dependent on markets** and the state of the Somali economy, as such, market and income related shocks are the main stressors. Hence vulnerability is closely linked to commodity prices and income opportunities and their rates, as well as the number of family members working<sup>4</sup>. Insecurity is also a key challenge impacting food access of urban households. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) are a particularly vulnerable sub-stratum of the urban community in Somalia. Drought in the neighboring rural areas also affects urban food security through low supply of locally produced cereals and livestock products, which make up the bulk of urban food consumption for large parts of the country, particularly in the South, resulting price increases and consequent low consumption
- In the major cities, **household income sources are more diverse than rural areas**. Income sources in urban areas are based on trade at different scales (petty trade and larger-scale activities, including trade of crops and livestock products), casual or more formal employment, self-employment (craft making: bricklayer, masonry, carpentry etc.), remittances or other type of family/community support, and other income generating activities such as rental of services (i.e. means of transport) or urban infrastructure<sup>5</sup>. Direct involvement in agricultural production, livestock rearing or cultivation is relatively low among urban families particularly in Mogadishu (i.e. the Mogadishu Food Security & Nutrition Situation Trends shows that only 12 per cent of urban households keep any type of livestock). However agricultural production and livestock rearing can be more significant in other cities in the country. For instance in the South, urban areas are surrounded by huge agricultural lands, meaning that significant number of families engage in farming as farmers themselves or laborers. Significant numbers also keep animals for milking, others invest in livestock to increase their wealth and also to fall back on bad years.<sup>6</sup>
- **Multiple number of people earning income within the households**. The FEWSNET assessment in Beled-Xaawo found that the median number of income sources per household is 2 and the maximum number goes up to 5 income sources.
- **Instability of income sources**. Due to concentration in unskilled, irregular and temporary jobs, instability affects the earnings of the urban poor just as it does those of the rural poor. However, income fluctuations do not necessarily follow a marked seasonal patterns as in rural areas. Urban household's income could change from day to day, while periods with lower employment or income generating opportunities are not well defined and depend on the specific income

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<sup>4</sup> Le Sage, A., Majid, N. The livelihoods gap: Responding to the Economic Dynamics of Vulnerability in Somalia. *Disasters* 2002, 26(1): 10-27.

<sup>5</sup> According to the various urban food security assessments reviewed, casual labor is the main income source for around 30 to 50 percent of households, petty trade for 10 to 15 percent, self-employment for 12 to 15 percent, while 15 to 40 percent of households receive remittances.

<sup>6</sup> FEWSNET personal communication



source and could vary greatly over time and among households with the same income sources. In general, there are temporary, seasonal and stable income sources.

- **No income homogeneity.** There might be differences in the earnings perceived within the same category of income source such as casual labor or self-employment, depending on the type of economic activity: i.e. casual labor wages in construction work differ from wages earned working as porters in the markets or doing other activities. This indicates that gathering information only on general categories of income sources would not be enough, as the earnings could vary greatly among households relying on the “same income source”. However, separating each category by specific activity would result in unmanageable numbers, provide little analytic value and create confusion (Campbell, L.).
- **Employment and labor opportunities vary within and across the cities.** Insecurity, presence of markets or other facilities such as ports shape the demand for labor and business opportunities. There are areas within the same city where labor demand, trade opportunities and other income generating activities are greater, compared to areas where, due to insecurity and mobility restrictions, such activities are not well developed.
- **Limited understanding of the relationship between livelihood assets and strategies or how households’ assets influence their livelihood strategies.** For example, urban population is known to invest any excess of their incomes in land, livestock or jewelry which can be considered as financial capital because their high liquidity. Social networks (family and clan affiliation) also play an important role as a coping and require more understanding on how people utilize them. Both types of assets are very difficult to capture in surveys, particularly during crisis, as people do not reveal them in anticipation of getting more<sup>7</sup>.
- **These features result in great disparities in the food insecurity and vulnerability situation within the cities, within the same settlement or within the same neighborhoods.**

### ***Methodological Challenges and Gaps***

- Overall, the dynamics and vulnerabilities of urban livelihoods in Somalia are still not well understood, while assessment tools do not capture well the complexity and diversity of the urban livelihoods.
- The diversity of income sources is as important as the level of income. But the main challenge is how to capture information on different income sources without making long and complex data collection tools. For instance how to capture different levels of trade (ranging from petty trade to larger businesses), different casual labor activities (construction, portage, house work).
- It is important to monitor overtime changes on income sources and earnings. But, how to qualify and determine improvement or deterioration of more informal, temporary economic activities? i.e. Increase of petty trade can be qualify as good?, Decrease in casual labor is negative or positive? How to capture overtime fluctuations in the household’s earnings?

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<sup>7</sup> FEWSNET personal communication

### 5.3 Expenditures and Income

One of the key indicators to estimate the level of food insecurity is the proportion of food expenditures to the total household expenses. As to the assessment practice in Somalia, data to estimate this indicator is collected asking directly the households to calculate the proportion of their expenses on food or non-food items, using also proportional pilling techniques.<sup>8</sup> A few number of surveys also collect absolute expenditure data in a more disaggregated manner (asking the household expenses on a list of food and non-food items).

Food security assessments in Somalia also collect some income data by asking the number of days worked and the average daily income earned by each household income earner and by type of economic activity: casual labor, petty trade, self-employment, other trade and skilled salary<sup>9</sup>. However, how the income data is used in the final estimation of food insecurity and its contributing factors is unclear.

Additional remarks on income data are mentioned in the literature from other urban contexts highlighting that, it is hard to calculate incomes in urban settings as they are highly instable and might change day by day, making very difficult to gauge food security based on income information.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, better indicators to assess the capacities of the households to access income to cover their food and other basic needs are coping strategies and consumption (expenditures). *“As poor families tend to spend similar amounts on dissimilar things, regardless of their diverse income sources, it is easier to focus on expenditure than income when doing urban assessments”* (Boudreau, 2008, p.219, cited in Campbell, 2013). However, for both income and expenditures respondents have also recall issues, as incomes and expensed are not documented at household level making more difficult to provide accurate information.

#### ***Lessons Learned from the Assessment Practice***

- The average share of food expenditures to the total household expenses is relatively high among Somali urban households - around 70 percent according to the assessment reports reviewed while nearly 50 per cent of households spend more than 75 percent of their income on food<sup>11</sup>).
- Concerning non-food expenditures, the proportion of household’s expenses on specific items varies across cities. For instance, compared to Mogadishu, transport and rent expenses were not high in Beled-Xaawo but cooking fuel and water were high<sup>12</sup>. It is, therefore, important to collect disaggregated data on expenditures to better understand the main constraints faced by the households. The list of items to include in the questionnaires need to be tailored to better reflect the situation across the different cities in Somalia.

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<sup>8</sup> FSNAU questionnaires directly ask the families

<sup>9</sup> FSNAU Urban FGD food security survey questionnaire – Gu 2015

<sup>10</sup> Campbell, L. Tools and Methodologies for Urban Food Security Assessment, Targeting and Distribution. Date of Completion: 25 January 2013. Submitted in partial fulfilment of the MA degree in Development and Emergency Practice, Oxford Brookes University

<sup>11</sup> Estimation based on FSNAU Gu-2015 urban food security assessment database

<sup>12</sup> FEWSNET, SPECIAL REPORT Beled-Xaawo, Somalia Urban Food Security Assessment

## 5.4 Food Consumption

The Food Consumption Score (FCS) and the Household Dietary Diversity are the two indicators most commonly used to measure food consumption in the urban assessment practice in Somalia. The assessments undertaken in urban areas in Somalia show that, compared to rural areas, the consumption pattern of urban families tend to be more diverse. For instance, according to the FSNAU urban food security assessment – Gu 2015 data, the proportion of households with poor food consumption is less than 2 per cent, and those with borderline food consumption around 3 per cent.<sup>13</sup>

### ***Lessons Learned from the Assessment Practice***

- The main staples vary across cities. For instance, the FEWSNET assessment found that in Beled-Xaawo, rice and processed cereals such as wheat flour are the main staples, which differs from other areas with higher consumption of maize and sorghum. This situation could indicate that current sorghum based Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) might need revision to monitor the cost of living in urban areas.

### ***Methodological Challenges and Gaps***

- Food consumption indicators included in the food security assessments only focus on the food consumed at home and do not take into account food eaten outside the home. Partners interviewed recognized that food consumed or purchase out of home is relevant in Somali cities, as certain household members regularly eat outside (especially when they work away from home) and purchasing snacks in the streets is common. It is then suggested to gather information on food consumed out of home by adapting a specific module in the household questionnaires, complemented by qualitative information. However how to incorporate this information in the analysis of the household's food consumption levels is a challenge that needs to be addressed based on field testing and future survey data.
- On the other hand, studies from other urban contexts also highlight the fact that food eaten outside the home is usually more expensive than home-prepared food and has an important effect on the household's food expenditures. It is therefore suggested to capture information specifically on expenditures on food eaten away from home or purchase in the streets.

## 5.5 Shocks and Coping Strategies

The coping strategies to which the urban household resort are complex and mirror the variability of the sources of vulnerability. The most frequently observed coping strategies are related to changes in their food consumption, which are usually the first strategies adopted in cases of crisis, before resorting on other type of coping mechanisms such as depleting assets. Families often shift to less preferred foods, reduce the portion size of prepared meals, decrease the number of meals eaten per day and borrow food from the markets or other households.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Estimation based on FSNAU Gu-2015 urban food security assessment database

<sup>14</sup> According to the FSNAU Post-Gu assessment 2015, around 30 percent of households resort on these coping strategies.

Related to livelihood coping mechanisms, there are specific strategies to urban areas which differ from the rural communities. People movement from one part of the city to another (looking for lower rent costs), avoidance strategies<sup>15</sup>, taking loans and credits from several sources formal or informal, sending children to hawk and take a second job, are among the coping mechanisms more prevalent in the cities than in rural areas.<sup>16</sup>

#### ***Methodological Challenges and Gaps***

- The specific type of coping mechanisms adopted by urban households and the severity of such strategies are not well understood. Most of the surveys collect information only on food consumption related coping mechanisms missing the livelihood coping strategies. Qualitative assessments prior to quantitative surveys could help understanding these aspects and could also help to tailor the list of the most common coping mechanisms among urban households.

### **5.6 Household Assets**

**Different list and use of assets.** The asset based of urban households differs from those owned by rural families. Urban households tend to own few farming tools and livestock but could possess a more diverse range of productive assets such as sewing machine, repairing tools, construction, blacksmith, carpentry tools among others. Mobile phones, internet or phone connection are also used as productive assets. Other categories of assets are in-kind (i.e. petty trade goods) or liquid capital (business running capital). Access to community assets such as: basic services, markets, transport services, and safety nets (remittances, gifts and zaka) also influence the ability of urban households to meet their food security.

#### ***Methodological Challenges and Gaps***

- Although exhaustive, the list of household assets in the data collection tools applied in Somalia, needs to be better tailored to urban contexts by including the type of assets that permit distinguish different levels of vulnerability among urban families.

### **5.7 Gender and Institutional Relationships**

Gender plays a particularly important role, as there is an important gender differentiation in the access to employment and income sources. Women are much more likely to work in informal occupations such as petty traders (i.e. selling vegetables or milk) and domestic work. Although men also engage in casual work, they have better access to salaried work and skilled casual labor<sup>17</sup>. This indicates that overall the occupations open to women tend to be less secure than those of men.

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<sup>15</sup> Tactics to deal with perception of insecurity, such as staying at home, using unusual routes, coming back home earlier, etc.

<sup>16</sup> Concern Worldwide and USAID. Indicator Development for the Surveillance of Urban Emergencies – IDSUE. Year four Annual Report, January to December 2014.

<sup>17</sup> FAO, Overview of Mogadishu and IDP assessment – Gender. Mogadishu 2012 Post Deyr assessment

Assessments in urban Somalia also found important disparities by gender of the household head on the level of indebtedness (female headed households tend to resort more on loans and credits) and the type of housing.

### ***Best Practices***

- Considering that Somalia is a male dominated society, a good practice is the use of the concept of “main provider” in addition to the gender of the household head. This permits differentiation between households dependent on men, women or both.

### ***Methodological Challenges and Gaps***

- Most of the assessment tools do not include gender disaggregated data for key variables such as income sources.
- Roles and relationship of institutional and other actors is not well known. What is the level of interaction and how the various actors present in the cities, clan, gatekeepers, elders, government, non-government, etc. define household’s access to services, land, markets, humanitarian assistance and other services is not well understood.

## **5.8 Markets**

Urban households heavily rely on markets to meet their food and other basic needs. Reliance on markets means that urban families are more prone to price fluctuations and market disruptions. Close monitoring of food, labor and other essential commodity markets is key to assess the food security situation and to inform programming decisions to select the best response option that not disrupt the markets.

In the current practice in Somalia, actors such FSNAU, WFP and FEWSNET are implementing market monitoring systems across the country, including the main markets in the cities. Information on cereal availability and prices, cost of wage labor, purchasing power (Terms of Trade between labor & cereal); market functioning and restrictions, cost of the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB), Consumer Price Index (CPI) and trader’s profile are regularly collected and analyzed.

### ***Lessons Learned from the Assessment Practice***

- Markets in the cities rely on regional products, therefore it is important to assess and monitor the regional production dynamics and the flow of food to the major cities.
- Distribution of markets across the regions are not equal, there are regions having more markets than others, impacting on the variability, quality and representativeness of price information. For example, Lower Shabelle, Gedo and Lower Juba regions in the South have 4-5 markets while Nugaal, Sool, Sanaag and Togdheer in the North have only 1 market each<sup>18</sup>.
- Goods to be monitored should include charcoal, firewood or other petty trade goods relevant to urban areas.

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<sup>18</sup> FEWSNET personal communication



## 5.9 Assessment Practical Aspects

### ***Lessons Learned from the Assessment Practice***

- The assessment experience in urban Somalia has underscored the need for extensive training and practical sessions for the enumerators to minimize errors and misinterpretation of questions and answers.
- Expectations of the households on getting benefits from the assessments are likely to skew some results. Families tend to exaggerate their situation expecting some type of assistance. Asking direct questions such as those for the estimation of the Household Hunger Scale, in contexts where surveys are closely linked to assistance, would yield to overestimation of food insecurity.
- Use of mobile technology is not always feasible due to insurgency. But a combination between paper and mobile questionnaires would be a good approach.

## 5.10 Programming Needs

### ***Methodological Challenges and Gaps***

- Programming for food security in urban Somalia must also account for the complexity of the urban context. In general, programming and policy construction need for more holistic and contextualized understanding of food security, but also a more detailed analysis of the complex patterns of poverty and structural vulnerability typical to the urban environment in Somalia. There are key questions arising from the food security programming actors that assessments need to answer to better guide the selection, targeting and delivery of humanitarian and development interventions to address food insecurity among poor urban families in Somalia:

- ✓ **Food insecure people:** How many are food insecure? Who are they? Where are they? Which capacities exist to deliver assistance?
- ✓ **Mapping the urban poor: Are food insecure** concentrated in geographically areas of the cities or they are distributed throughout the city? How to identify areas within the cities facing similar levels of vulnerability?
- ✓ Indicators to determine vulnerability: Which are the **indicators** that determine **urban vulnerabilities to food insecurity? How to collect and monitor these?**

## 6. Lessons Learned and Methodological Recommendations – Results of the Field Validation Exercise in Mogadishu

### 6.1 Description of the Exercise

The field validation exercise took place from 26 November to 7 December 2015 in Mogadishu. It consisted in the field test of two types of data collection tools: a standardized household questionnaire and a semi-structured interview for key informants (See Annex 1).

The household questionnaire comprised 10 sections, namely: household demographic and access to basic services, assistance received, livelihoods, expenditures, remittances, food consumption, debt and asset levels, shocks, coping strategies and the hunger scale.

The key informant interview included information on community demographics, livelihoods, food consumption patterns at community level, shocks and coping strategies most commonly applied in the area, wealth ranking and seasonal calendar of the main income sources.

The tools were prepared in close collaboration with the FSC partners. First, a draft version was circulated for inputs and comments. Inputs were incorporated then in a second version, which was further improved through discussion with enumerators and field staff of partners working in Mogadishu.

Due to insecurity and time constraints and to facilitate the field work, the districts for the field exercise were selected among those with partner's presence. Specific areas or neighborhoods within the districts were selected randomly based on the knowledge, information and maps elaborated with key informants including the field staff of the partner institution involved in the exercise. Eight districts and 18 neighborhoods were selected for the field exercise. A total of 102 households and 10 key informants were interviewed. Data collection focused on urban resident households or protracted IDPs (living in Mogadishu for more than 5 years). Data gathered was then entered in Adobe Premier forms and analyzed in Excel and SPSS.

A total of 11 enumerators and supervisors from various organizations (see list below) carried out the field test. Prior to the field work, two days training session was delivered to all enumerators and supervisors. Data was collected in paper questionnaires as mobile devices were not easily available.

## ***Participants***

### **Nairobi**

FSNAU, FAO, FEWSNET, WFP, Concern Worldwide, OXFAM, NRC (provided documents including previous assessment reports, data collection tools and reports, provided comments and inputs to the tools, participated in the discussions and workshops during the first stage of the initiative).

### **Mogadishu**

NRC, DRC, KAASHIF, WOCCA (provided inputs and comments to the tools, provided enumerators, supervisors and the logistics for the field validation exercise).

Governmental institutions: Ministry of Interior, National Statistics Bureau, National Disaster Management Agency (provided inputs to improve the tools).

## **6.2 Process**

### ***Lessons Learned***

- Capacities to conduct food security assessment in urban areas such as Mogadishu exist and could be further exploited to roll out the assessments at district level.
- Numerous stakeholders ranging from UN Agencies, International and National NGOs have strong presence across all districts in Mogadishu and are capable to undertake food security assessments. Importantly, the field validation exercise has demonstrated that there is high interest and commitment among the FSC partners not only to participate in coordination meetings but also to implement assessments. There is a critical team of local staff and enumerators able to conduct food security assessments in urban areas.
- Stakeholders working in the area have experience and depth knowledge on the urban livelihoods, so that the involvement of the local staff was critical to shape the data collection tools during the field validation exercise. A brainstorming session with partner's field staff prior to the design of the assessment tools helped to better adapt the questionnaires and check list to the local context. Aspects such as the list of the main income sources, coping strategies, type of foods sold and eaten in the markets and streets were discussed and adapted together with the enumerators and local staff.
- Though the state institutions remain weak in terms of their capacity, including technical capacity, the assessment tools are important inputs for the governmental institutions to develop social and economic information systems in the country.

## **6.3 Practical Aspects**

### ***Lessons Learned***

- In contexts such as Mogadishu with high presence of humanitarian institutions, assessment fatigue and high expectations for assistance could bias de findings. Enumerator's should be trained to deal with such issues in the field.
- Paper questionnaires did not facilitate immediate quality control. Use of mobile data capturing is recommended.



- It would be important to conduct the qualitative part of the assessment (focus group discussion and key informant interviews) before the quantitative survey to adapt the standardized household questionnaire. Aspects such as the list of the income sources, coping strategies and types of food and snacks eaten outside the home could be gathered using the qualitative tools. This information should then be incorporated in the household questionnaire.
- Application of qualitative tools needs more training time, particularly if the enumerators have little experience with such tools. Special attention should be given to the recording of the answers.

## 6.4 Livelihoods

### ***Lessons Learned***

- The field validation exercise in Mogadishu has confirmed the findings of the previous assessments in terms that urban livelihoods are highly dependent on labor and markets, while income sources are more diverse compared to rural areas. To successfully engage in the urban market economy, families need skills, assets and livelihood strategies more suitable to the urban setting.
- Availability of working age and skilled household members is a key factor to engage in the labor market and/or to run an income generating activity. Households without or with only one working age member and high dependency ratio (i.e. single headed households with many children) tend to be more food insecure compared to those having two or more members able to work. In addition, to take part in a labor based economy, education, skills and health status of the working age family members are also important.
- The financial, physical and economic household asset base differs from rural areas. House land is one of the most valuable assets in Mogadishu, as house ownership brings stability, security and opportunities to run a business or generate income. Other type of valuable assets are those suitable to generate income such as: financial capital to start up a business (even petty trade), means of transport (vehicle, rickshaw, motorbike, donkey cart), computers and mobile phones that are used frequently as productive tools.

### ***Methodological Recommendations***

- Tools need to capture better, relevant indicators such as:
  - ✓ Human capital: capacities of the household members in terms of education and skills and physical conditions (health): Number and qualifications of working age members. Dependency ratio
  - ✓ Certain cultural aspects that can be relevant to urban contexts. For instance previous experience with selling livestock products, such as camel milk, was considered important to start the same business in Mogadishu
  - ✓ Financial and economic assets: house/land property, access to financial capital to develop or expand businesses, holding of productive assets adapted to urban life (vehicles, rickshaw, donkey cart, computer, internet connection, skilled work tools)
  - ✓ Social capital: social networks, family relationships including relatives in the diaspora.

- ✓ Natural capital: access to agricultural land that can be more relevant in cities outside Mogadishu
- ✓ Physical capital: access to basic services (water and sanitation systems, electricity)

## 6.5 Income Sources

### ***Lessons Learned***

- The field validation has confirmed that income sources in Mogadishu differ from rural areas and are more diverse. Although unskilled casual labor is the most common income source, there are other specific categories of income sources such as driver or transport service and domestic work which are more prevalent in Mogadishu. Though, very few families cultivate crops or keep livestock, interestingly some families re-sell crops or livestock products such as milk. Diversity exist also in terms of earnings, as wages within the same category also differ. For instance, for casual labor, salaries in construction work tend to be higher than portage. Petty trade or other trade earnings also vary greatly.
- The field validation exercise has confirmed also the assumption that seasonality on income and employment have different dimensions in urban settings compared to rural areas. In Mogadishu seasonality is determined by the agricultural seasons (which determines the flow of foods to the markets, hence food availability and prices) but aspects such as availability and prices of imported cereals and the economic movement in the city is determined also by the Indian Ocean and monsoon seasons. The monsoon season, when the number of ships docking at the port are lower, was considered as the period with major difficulties to access income and food in Mogadishu.

### ***Methodological Recommendations***

- The list of income sources should be tailored to reflect the most common economic activities in urban areas and the diversity within the same categories. However, the list should not be too long and unmanageable, as specific information on sub-categories could be gathered using qualitative tools such as focus groups discussions and key informant interviews (for instance information on sub-categories of casual labor: construction, portage, farming, etc. and the average wage for each, was gathered from key informants during the field validation exercise). The list included in the household questionnaire has proved to be suitable for urban families (See Annex 1) and includes, among other the following categories:
  - ✓ Trade at different scales: informal petty trade, small scale trade or small business, wholesale trade or big business
  - ✓ Trade with crops and livestock products: re-selling or middleman.
  - ✓ Self-employment: one category including handicrafts, computer and phone repair, vehicle repair, tailoring.
  - ✓ Transport services: one category including working with donkey cart, rickshaw driver, minibus driver, etc.
  - ✓ Domestic work: one category including washing, cleaning, cooking (especially important for women)

- ✓ Unskilled casual labor
- Stability of income sources and earnings need to be better captured using qualitative tools: seasonal calendar by type of most common income sources, trend lines of household earnings in the past three months.

## 6.6 Shocks

### ***Lessons Learned***

- The field test showed that the types of shocks urban households in Mogadishu can face are widespread, but insecurity and loss of employment are the most important. There are also small scale shocks such as small-scale fires and floods as well as economic related shocks (higher food prices)<sup>19</sup>. These shocks affects in different ways the food security situation as they cause: loss of assets, loss of income, personal harm, loss of money among others.
- Households reported perceived insecurity when walking in the streets or staying at home which also result in residents taking on ‘avoidance strategies’, which are tactics that lower risks of armed attacks or other security threats. This may mean staying indoors, using unusual routes. These tactics are likely to have a negative impact on the food security of the household, and are likely to constrain additional income activities which are curtailed due to insecurity.

### ***Methodological Recommendations***

- Information on the shocks that affected households is key to contextualize the causes of food insecurity and would help to take better decisions in terms of interventions. The questions included in the household questionnaire to gather this data has been proved to be adequate.

## 6.7 Expenditures

### ***Lessons Learned***

- The field validation showed the relevance and feasibility (in terms of time and complexity of the questionnaire) of capturing data on disaggregated household expenditures. The data collected demonstrated that though the share of expenses on food is relatively high (around 70 per cent according to the field validation exercise in Mogadishu) there are other nonfood items that are critical among urban households. Water, cooking fuel, mobile phone and repayment of debts take an important share of the household income in Mogadishu.
- Disaggregated expenditure data could also inform better the main constraints faced by the households and guide the most appropriate non-food interventions.

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<sup>19</sup> Nearly 20 percent of the interviewed households reported having affected by fire or flash floods in the past 30 days, armed attacks were reported for nearly half of the interviewed households and loss of employment affected to 45 percent of households.

### ***Methodological Recommendations***

- Considering that a full expenditure module would not be feasible particularly for routine monitoring, and on the other hand, that the common practice in Somalia is to simplify such module by asking directly to the households to estimate the proportion of their income disbursed in food and non-food items, further statistical analysis (based on larger surveys) is needed to compare the performance of both methods to estimate the share of food expenses (based on disaggregated expenditure data and the simplified module). The field validation exercise showed that the proportion of food expenditures tend to be lower when estimated based on the disaggregated expenditure data compared to the direct estimation made by the respondents.

## **6.8 Out of Home Food Consumption**

### ***Lessons Learned***

- Food eaten outside the home is important particularly for children under five and men. Half of the households interviewed during the field validation exercise reported one or more members that have eaten outside the home or purchased in the streets, the week before the interview. Men working outside tend to eat lunch away from home, while children under five consumed some snacks at mid-morning or breakfast time. School age children also used to eat snacks outside the home.
- Experience from other urban assessments suggested that prior to the development of the questionnaires it is important to carry out a rapid visit to the markets and places where people normally eat or purchase cooked food, to gather information on the type of food commonly sold and consumed, the main ingredients, type of clients and the hours with greater demand. Yet, during the field validation, due to time and security constraints it was not possible to conduct such visits, instead, the list of the type of foods eaten outside or sold in the markets and streets was completed together with the enumerators and partner's field staff, including the local names of the meals or snacks and information on the main ingredients (See an example of the data collection sheet in Annex 2).
- Based on this exercise, a list of the most commonly consumed street foods and snacks was developed (Annex 2). The list shows that most of the preparations and snacks consumed away from home consist of processed cereals (maize or wheat flour and pasta) oil and sugar; some include also protein sources such as any type of meat, fish or pulses and vegetables and fruits. "Sambusa" (fried pastries stuffed with vegetables, ground meat or fish) and "Bajiyo" (a Somali version of Indian pakora, a mixture of maize, vegetable and spices which is deep fried) are the most common foods consumed outside home according to the field validation exercise

### ***Methodological Recommendations***

- Prior to the household survey prepare a list of the foods sold in the streets, markets, or other places where people used to eat. The list could be prepared in a meeting with field staff of partners working in the area and should include the local names and the main ingredients. If time and security permits carry out a rapid visit to few markets and places

selling street foods to prepare that list. The questionnaire module on food eaten away from home could be open or include the list of the most common preparation and snacks and a question on the consumption frequency (How many days in the past week each food type has been consumed?)

- Information on which household members (i.e children, adult males or females, etc) have eaten outside and whether the food eaten away replaced a family meal time or was consumed in addition to what was eaten at home, should also be gathered. In addition data on the reasons why family members eat outside the home should be also gathered as this could provide information on difficulties faced to prepared food at home.
- Further statistical analysis (based on larger surveys) need to be done to estimate the effect of the foods eaten outside the home in the value of the standard food consumption indicators, such as the FCS and the HDDS, and to decide how to incorporate data on out of home consumption into the broader food access analysis. It will be also important to gauge the effect of the food consumed away from home in the quality of the diet of the most vulnerable household members (especially children under five). Consider also whether individual food consumption modules need to be added in order to capture such effects and assess the variation of food consumption patterns within the household.
- Another dimension that needs further research is related to the effect of foods eaten outside on the share of household's food expenditures. The field validation exercise showed that the share of food expenses tend to be higher when the value of foods eaten outside are included. This goes in line to what has been found in other countries (Ruel, et al).

## 6.9 Coping Strategies

### ***Lessons Learned***

- The field validation showed the importance of collecting data on livelihood coping mechanisms. Data collected in Mogadishu showed that apart from resorting on coping mechanisms related to reduction of quality and quantity of food consumed, households adopted other coping strategies such as: borrow money, sell domestic assets, look for a second or complementary job, send children to seek for work or to hawk, beg for money, reduce non-food expenses in health and education, and spend savings or sell jewelry.

While consumption related coping strategies help to assess the short term coping, livelihood coping informs on the future coping capacity of the households by providing information on aspects such as the degree of asset depletion including human capital (i.e withdraw children from school and send them to work, or reduction on expenditures on health or education). The actual WFP CARI approach to estimate household food security includes livelihood coping as one of the key dimensions and provide guidance on how to classify different levels of coping: stress, emergency and crisis.

### ***Methodological Recommendations***

- The household questionnaire applied in Mogadishu has validated the list of the most important livelihood coping mechanisms adopted by the households. However the severity of each coping strategy could vary in other contexts, therefore it is suggested to use

qualitative tools such as focus groups discussions to classify the coping mechanisms by the degree of severity, in other cities.

- Specific questions on indebtedness (the amount of outstanding debts and the main purpose of getting credits) are also important as getting formal or informal loans is common among poorer households (previous assessment and the field validation found that around 70 to 50 percent of households have outstanding loans). High levels of indebtedness jeopardize the future coping capacity of the families as usually a big share of the income goes to the repayment of the debts.

## 6.10 Markets

### *Lessons Learned*

- The results of the field validation show that most food is purchased through the market, making analysis of market functioning, dynamics and structure a key component of urban food security assessments and programming. The smaller stores and local markets in the neighborhoods are the places where most of the households purchase their food, but prices are sometimes higher in these places. This would be indicating that market and price monitoring should look also at some neighborhood markets or small shops.

## 6.11 Household Hunger Score

### *Lessons Learned*

- Questions on the household hunger score did not render quality information and according to the experience of the enumerators, respondents tend to bias their answers by presenting a more dramatic food insecurity situation expecting any type of assistance. This findings go in line with the appreciation of partners interviewed, who indicated that in context with higher levels of humanitarian aid such as Somalia “asking direct questions” could lead to overestimate the food insecurity levels. Nonetheless, questions on Household Hunger Score need to be further tested in other cities and if feasible tailored to the Somali context.

## 6.12 Analytical Frameworks

Analytical frameworks applied to estimate the level of food security in Somalia are based on standard and recognized food security analysis frameworks. FSNAU bases its analysis on the Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) framework, while WFP has developed recently the Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators of Food Security (CARI) approach.

Based on such frameworks, the estimation of the household food security status is made based on key variables and indicators as follows:

**FSNAU:** At household level- food consumption, based on three categories of the WFP Food Consumption Score<sup>20</sup>; share of food expenditures to the total household expenditures, classified in

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<sup>20</sup> Acceptable, borderline and poor food consumption

four categories<sup>21</sup>; and level of coping, based on two categories (moderate and severe coping) derived from data on food consumption related coping strategies. At area level, in addition to household food security classification, other contributing factors such as the variations on food availability, the value of the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB), terms of trade (between labor wage and cereals), civil insecurity, among other indicators are considered to define the classification of the acute food insecurity situation.

**WFP:** The CARI approach, estimates the food security status at household level. Two dimensions of food security are taken into account: 1) the current food security situation, based on the Food Consumption Score categories or other food consumption indicators, if available, and 2) the future coping capacity based on two indicators: the share of food expenditures, and the level of coping (stress, crisis and emergency) based on livelihood coping strategies.

### ***Methodological Recommendations***

In general, approaches applied to determine household food security status (FSNAU-IPC, WFP-CARI) are appropriate to urban areas. However the thresholds to classify individual indicators such as the FCS, or the share of food expenditures, in urban settings, could be discussed and further validated based on larger surveys. Contributing factors to explain and contextualize food security and estimate vulnerability should also include indicators more relevant to urban contexts such as:

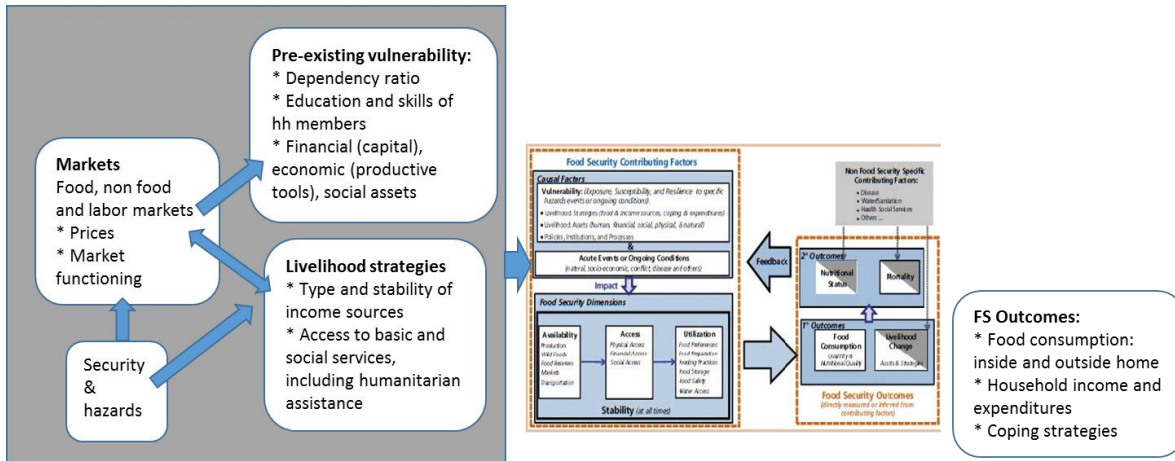
- **Structural variables (pre-existent vulnerability):** dependency ratio, household members education and skills, gender of the main household provider of food or income, financial (liquid or in-kind capital), economic (assets suitable to urban areas), social assets
- **Livelihood strategies:** Type of income sources, Number of persons earning income, stability of income sources (changes in income sources)
- **Environment and shocks:**
  - **Markets:** Variations on food availability and food prices, ToT, Cost of the MEB or alternatively the WFP Cost of the Diet, Regional flows of food to the cities.
  - **Security and hazards:** insecurity level perceived by the households, use of avoidance strategies, shocks experienced by the households
  - **Access to basic services:** water, sanitation, cooking facilities, humanitarian assistance
- **Outcome variables:** Disaggregated food and non-food expenditures, Food Consumption Score or Household dietary diversity, including consumption outside the home. Coping strategies: Coping strategy index (consumption coping) and levels of livelihood coping; and tentatively the Household hunger score.

The figure below shows how these variables could be integrated in the IPC framework.

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<sup>21</sup> Categories are: Low (less than 50 percent), Medium (51- 65 percent), High (66 – 75 percent) and Very high (> 75 percent)

**Figure 2: Tentative approach to integrated Indicators to assess food security in urban areas into the IPC framework**



## 7. The Way Forward – Proposed Second Phase of the Initiative

### Justification

It is widely recognized that ensuring appropriateness and higher effectiveness of food security humanitarian and development response in urban setting in Somalia needs more accurate assessments. In general, programming and policy construction in urban Somalia need for more holistic and contextualized understanding of food security, but also a more detailed analysis of the complex patterns of poverty and structural vulnerability typical to the urban environment in Somalia. There are key questions arising from the food security programming actors that assessments need to answer to better guide the selection, targeting and delivery of humanitarian and development interventions addressing food insecurity among poor urban families. There is a demand that assessments should provide in a timely and accurate manner, information on the numbers, profile, location and capacities of food insecure people. Maps and tools to easily identify most vulnerable people, to improve response targeting is also highly needed.

The first phase of the initiative to develop/adapt tools and methods to assess food security in urban areas of Somalia that comprised a field validation exercise in Mogadishu has demonstrated that capacities to expand the scope, coverage and approach of the urban food security assessment exists among the FSC partners working in the cities. A critical mass of partner’s field staff and enumerators with access to the areas and deep knowledge of the urban livelihoods exist and could be mobilize to conduct larger surveys. Drawing upon existing experiences, the desk review and the field validation has also helped to further adapt assessment tools to the context of larger cities facing complex emergencies such Mogadishu. Based on such experience a set of tools were tailored and are ready for further validation in other cities and to roll-out.

Important lessons learned arose from the first stage of this initiative in terms of key aspects, indicators and data collection tools that need to be considered when assessing the various dimensions of food security in urban areas of Somalia. The validated tools captured well the complexity of the urban livelihoods in Mogadishu, including the complex amalgamation of income sources. Aspects such as food consumption outside the household, shocks that affects food security,



the quality of the human capital and livelihood coping mechanism more commonly applied in urban areas were included in the data collection tools and successfully validated.

The field validation highlighted also outstanding challenges and gaps that need to be further tested to complete the whole exercise of adapting food security assessment tools to urban Somalia. Qualitative data capture to complement quantitative household surveys need to be expanded to other food security dimensions such as seasonality and stability of household income and employment opportunities and the severity of the coping mechanisms. Sampling methods need to be tested in larger surveys and an approach to map out the most food insecure or vulnerable areas within the cities need to be tested based on existing best practices such as the Shelter Cluster mapping of IDP settlements. In this line, the FSC partners consider that it is important to implement a second phase of this initiative to achieve these aims.

### ***Objectives***

The second phase of the initiative should aim at:

- Test the data collection tools in other cities such as Hargeisa, Kismayo or Bossaso
- Roll out the assessment tools in larger surveys at district level in Mogadishu (at least in two districts)
- Validate a sampling approach and a mapping tool to map the most vulnerable areas within the cities

The main products of the second stage will be: a set of urban food security assessment tools adapted, validated and mainstreamed in the food security assessments carried out by FSC partners. The set of tools will include a sampling and mapping tool to identify the most vulnerable areas within the cities.

### ***Institutional Arrangements***

To achieve its objectives and ensure sustainability, in the second phase the initiative should pursue stronger linkages with all technical partners and ongoing assessment activities in-country. This should be achieved by working in close partnership with key actors and initiatives such as FSNAU, SWALIM, WFP-VAM and others. The main focus should be to mainstream the adapted tools into the current food security assessment practice in Somalia.

Operational arrangements will consider, the establishment of an Urban Task Force under the FSC, whose tasks will be:

- To oversee the pilot testing of the tools in 1-2 urban centres (decide where next and when) as well as rolling out one full assessment in 1 or 2 districts of Mogadishu and another districts in the Southern Somalia.
- To document ongoing urban activities (linkages to assessments- targeting, challenges and best practices)
- To coordinate the work with the Urban Working Group of the gFSC on issues such as: mapping of urban food security intervention, and advocacy and promotion of urban food security programming

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**Contacts:**

Somalia Food Security Cluster Secretariat [info.somalia@FSCluster.org](mailto:info.somalia@FSCluster.org)

Aysha Twose *WFP/VAM Rome* [aysha.twose@wfp.org](mailto:aysha.twose@wfp.org)

Marina Angeloni *Global Food Security Cluster* [marina.angeloni@wfp.org](mailto:marina.angeloni@wfp.org)

**For further information:**

Website: <http://www.wfp.org/food-security> or <http://www.fscluster.org>



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