Annex D

Drawing up an assessment plan, schedule and budget

[section 10.1 from *Emergency Food Security Assessment Handbook*, first edition, WFP 2005]

Required output: A written plan that specifies: (i) what will be done to prepare for and undertake data collection in the field and to complete the assessment process; (ii) how, when and by whom it will be done, and (iii) the resources required and from where they will be obtained.

Why?	To ensure that all necessary preparatory steps are taken in time and that the field surveys, proceed as smoothly as possible and the assessment produces the required outputs on time.
When?	Planning should start as soon as the objectives of the assessment have been defined. The schedule prepared at this stage will have to be reviewed, and may need to be revised, once the data collection and sampling methods are defined in activity 6 (see figure 10d).
By whom?	A designated working group of individuals from […the lead/responsible agency…] and partners collaborating in the assessment.
How?	Based on the refined 'working' scenario, the agreed objectives and timeframe for the assessment, and the decisions on methods and sampling procedures, particularly the number of sites to be visited, draw up: • a schedule in the form of a bar chart showing when the various steps will be undertaken, and when they must be completed; • an action plan specifying, briefly (probably in the form of a matrix), what is to be done for each step, the human and material resources required, and who is responsible for completing the action within the specified time frame; and • a preliminary budget.

Drawing up a schedule

The assessment plan must clearly specify how the remaining activities of the process will be completed and assign responsibilities for everything that needs to be done. The plan must be written down and available to all concerned.

Figure 10b provides an example of a possible schedule for planning and implementing a rapid assessment in the 3-week period. For completeness, it includes the previous activities 1 to 4. In case of a crisis in a confined geographic area, the whole process may be compressed into a single week. In a major crisis covering a large area, it may be stretched over six weeks.

In practice, it may be found that the assessment cannot be completed as proposed, within the specified timeframe, with the human and material resources available. If so, the problem must be discussed with all collaborating parties and more resources must be mobilized or a decision be made to either extend the timeframe or cut back on some aspects, with a clear understanding of the possible consequences in terms of the quality and reliability of the data and the conclusions that will be able to be drawn. The schedule will need to be updated accordingly. In fact, the schedule should be considered as a working document that is refined on an ongoing basis especially during the first few days of planning. However, once methods have been decided, every effort should be made to adhere to the schedule agreed at that point.

Figure 10b **Sample schedule for an assessment**

Activity	Time (days)																				
	Week 1							Week 2							Week 3						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
1. Establish/re-confirm working arrangements with partners	■																				
2. Compile and review secondary data	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■						
3. Review working scenario from initial investigation	■																				
4. Define assessment objectives & timeframe	■	■																			
5. Draw up assessment plan	■	■																			
6. Define information requirements	■	■																			
Decide data collection methods and sampling procedure	■	■																			
7. Design/customize data collection instruments			■	■																	
Pre-test assessment tools (with team training)					■	■	■														
Finalize assessment tools								■													
8. Prepare briefing kit, supplies & equipment		■	■	■																	
9. Identify and recruit team members	■	■	■	■																	
Orient/train team(s)					■	■	■														
10. Arrange transport, security and communications			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■						
11. Collect data at field sites									■	■	■	■	■	■	■						
12. Process and analyse data										■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■				
13. Identify and analyse response options																■	■	■			
14. Report writing																■	■	■	■	■	■
15. Present findings																			■		
Finalize and disseminate the report																					■

The ***time for design and planning*** up to and including activity 10 depends on the level of preparedness. It should be able to be completed within 1 to 2 days if there has been good contingency planning for this kind of situation (and personnel for assessment teams have been trained in advance). Otherwise, good management will be needed to complete this phase within 5 to 7 days.

The ***time for training field assessment teams*** depends on the methods and techniques to be used and the experience of the available individuals in using those methods and techniques. Allow sufficient time for training to ensure that data collection will be undertaken correctly and in a reasonably standard manner by all teams, see section 10.7.

The ***time for field data collection*** is determined by:

- *the number of sites to be visited and the time required at each site* – these depend on: (i) the sampling design which, in turn, depends on the heterogeneity of the area and population concerned, and (ii) the data collection methods/techniques to be used. Compromises may have to be made, see below;
- *the time required to travel between sites* – this depends on the locations of the sites which, in turn, is determined by the sampling design, and the terrain and means of transport available. Don't underestimate the time required; and
- *the number of assessment teams* – this depends on the availability of: (i) personnel with relevant skills; and (ii) transport and related logistic resources.

Table 10-A suggests the times typically required for interviews. See section 10.4 concerning the numbers of sites that will need to be visited and the number of interviews required at each site. In practice, you will normally have to choose between teams visiting and completing interviews in either 1 or 2 sites per day.

Table 10-A **Rough indications of the times required for interviews**
• Half a day in each provincial or district headquarters. (A full day if it is a slow-onset crisis.) • 1 to 1½ hours per group interview. (2 hours for a subgroup interview to collect data for household economic analysis.) • Maximum 3 to 4 group interviews per day per pair of interviewers. (2 to 3 for household economic data collection.) • Up to 45 minutes per household for a questionnaire-based household survey. • Minimum 3 to 4 hours in each selected village/urban-locality/camp for a team of 4 (more if the community is not homogeneous or a household survey is to be undertaken).

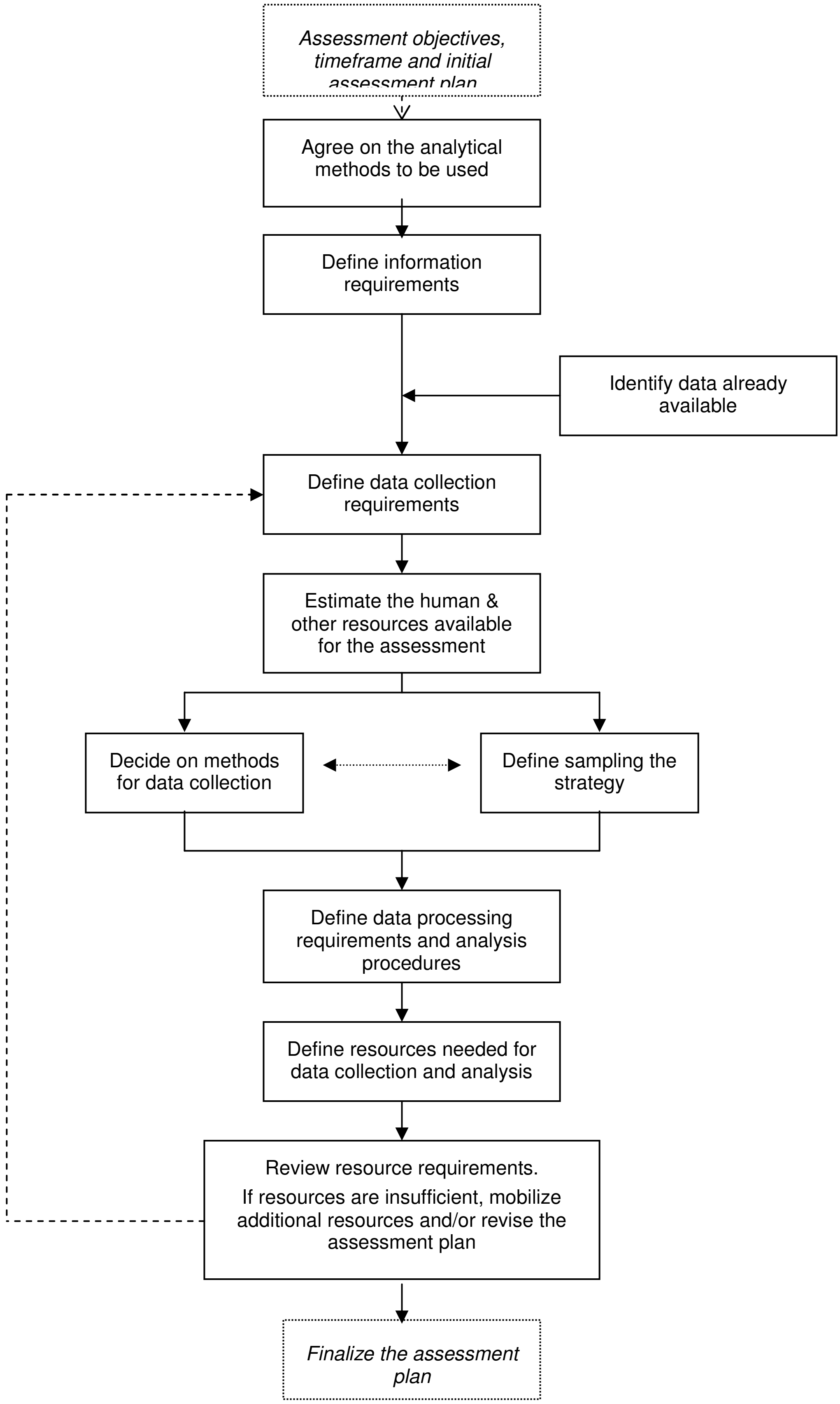
The ***time for data processing and analysis*** depends on the number of interviews, the amount of data to be collected, and the resources mobilized for data processing, especially if a household survey is to be conducted and a large numbers of questionnaires processed. Data processing often takes a lot longer, and requires more resources, than had been expected. You must plan in detail how the data will be processed, what skills and materials will be needed, who will do it and where it will be done. Estimate the number of people and hours needed to do it. As a rule of thumb, allow the same number of person-hours for data processing and analysis as for data collection. See 11.6 for details of the kind of arrangements required.

Add on 3 or 4 days for writing and finalizing the ***report*** after the analysis is completed.

Planning for data collection, processing and analysis

The basic steps involved in defining data collection requirements, methods, sampling procedures and arrangements for data analysis (Activity 6) are illustrated in Figure 10d. Section 10.2 provides guidance on defining data collection requirements. Sections 10.3 and 10.4 address the issues of determining the most appropriate data collection methods and sampling strategy to be used, taking account of the time and resources available.

Figure 10c **Steps in defining data collection requirements, choosing methods and planning for data processing and analysis**



Once you have defined the methods to be used, you must specify the procedures to be used for processing and analysing the data collected by field assessment teams and the resources and time that will be needed:

- Section 11.6 provides guidance on the ***processing*** of data (both quantitative and qualitative data). For data collected using rapid appraisal techniques you must develop – specify – the initial summary matrices that each team is required to produce. For household survey data, planning will focus on where and by whom the completed questionnaires will be processed, and how they will be submitted by each field team.
- Chapter 12 provides general guidance on analysis while chapters 4 to 7 provide guidance in relation to each theme. At the planning stage, you should draw up an ***analysis plan***. For the analysis of data collected using rapid appraisal techniques, you should specify: (i) the basic analyses (cross-tabulations) to be made at the first stage of the analysis on a team-by-team basis; (ii) whether you will be able to arrange for an independent analyst to work with each field assessment team without unduly delaying the analysis process; and (iii) how and by whom the final overall analysis will be undertaken. For the analysis of household survey data you must also envisage the initial cross-tabulations to be made and specify who will undertake the detailed analysis and interpretation of the data and then combine the household survey data with that from community group and key informant interviews.

The value of an independent eye in analysing rapid appraisal data

An analyst who did not participate in the data collection brings a fresh mind and an unbiased perspective to the analysis of the recorded data. This can help to identify relationships suggested by the data and issues that may benefit from discussion within the team, while avoiding bias arising from team members' impressions for which evidence may be limited. The team and the analyst can then discuss and agree on findings – the story that the data tell.

Preparing a budget for the assessment

Ensure that you have a realistic budget before the field work begins. A rapid assessment may cost anything up to US$ 30,000 depending on the geographic extent and topography of the area and the variety of livelihood zones and socio-economic groups affected. As a starting point, consider the following line items:

- per diem/DSA costs for government and other participants (if unable to be borne by their own organization);
- transport costs (fares, rental and/or fuel and maintenance costs for vehicles, boats, helicopters, aircraft, as required, DSA for drivers);
- security costs (in case it is necessary to hire guards or escorts);
- training costs (rental of premises/accommodation; transport; materials; honoraria for trainers; DSA for trainees, etc);
- telecommunications expenses (telephone bills, including sat-phones if needed; acquisition of radios, etc.)
- incidental costs for teams while in the field;
- equipment including camping gear, if necessary (purchase or rental if borrowing is not possible); and
- photocopying costs for briefing kits, data collection instruments, the final report, etc.

Encourage all participating agencies to participate in covering the costs, at least by paying the costs (including per diems) of their own staff.