

Management response to the Final Evaluation of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Global Strategic Programme (GSP) (2014-2018) – 2 May 2019

Overall response to the evaluation

In this section, Management presents its overall views on the evaluation, the report and its conclusions.

Overall, the IPC partnership appreciates the findings and conclusions of the Evaluation, which highlighted strategic areas to be further reflected and acted upon. The evaluation report was found to be comprehensive and well-articulated.

The IPC Partnership has, therefore, accepted or partially accepted all recommendations (please see detailed responses and the related justification in the table below), also considering that most of the recommendations reflected what is already being implemented or is planned to be implemented in the new IPC Global Strategic Programme (GSP) 2019-2022, and/or in the IPC Technical Manual Version 3.0, which has just been released. This includes for instance: the enhanced focus on quality assurance, the change in the institutionalisation strategy of IPC, a greater role for the Global Food Security Cluster, yearly monitoring of use of IPC findings etc.

Some of the recommendations have only been “partially” accepted, owing to the need to take into consideration context and capacity related challenges. In all these cases, the IPC Partnership has tried to retain the essential spirit of the recommendation and to revise the sheer *modus operandi* so to better address context and capacity requirements.

Response by recommendation

In this section, Management should address each recommendation, discussing them in the order presented in the executive summary of the evaluation report. This should be done in the format of the Management Response matrix below (see Box 1) and include:

- a. The recommendation number and text copied from the evaluation report;
- b. Indication of whether the recommendation is accepted fully, partially, or rejected;
- c. Description of the actions to be taken, with comments as required on the conditions to be met during implementation, or on reasons leading to a partial acceptance or rejection of a recommendation;
- d. The responsible party or FAO unit for implementing the action/s;
- e. The time-frame for implementation and/or an implementation schedule, if required;
- f. Indication if further funding from FAO or a resource partner is required for implementing the recommendation.

Management response matrix¹

Management response to the Final Evaluation of the IPC Global Strategic Programme (2014-2018)					Date
Evaluation Recommendation (a)	Management response (b) Accepted , Partially Accepted or Rejected	Management plan			
		Actions to be taken, and/or comments about partial acceptance or rejection (c)	Responsible unit (d)	Timeframe (e)	Further funding required (Y or N) (f)
<p>Recommendation 1 c Adjustment to the strategic direction of the GSP: AFI's early warning role</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>The IPC is not an Early Warning (EW) system, but it plays an important EW function, and the IPC Partnership agrees that this function should be optimized, by improving the way IPC projections are developed and communicated. Therefore, in order to address this recommendation, within the framework of the new GSP, the GSU will undertake the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct a review of countries' practices: frequency of analysis, projection or not, number of projection periods, length of projection periods. - Conduct a retrospective study on the accuracy of projections and learn from the (most) accurate ones to identify good practices. - Build internal and external capacity on projection/scenario development. - Improve projection processes (coverage, timeliness of updates). - Develop technical guidance to better support projections. - Improve communications, with more emphasis on projection findings as EW. - Improve collaboration with relevant partners who have EW systems and capacity in place (e.g. FEWS NET, FAO) 	<p>GSU</p>	<p>2019-2022</p>	<p>N</p>

¹ Each column is cross-referenced to the bullet letters above.

		<p>and strengthen linkages with these partners for the monitoring of risk factors.</p> <p>- In the longer term, explore how Advanced Technology and Artificial Intelligence can support projections.</p>			
<p>Recommendation 1 d Adjustment to the strategic direction of the GSP: roll-out and use of CFI</p>	<p>Partially Accepted</p>	<p>The IPC Partnership agrees with the need to pause the rollout of the IPC CFI, while exploring options for reform of the CFI. No new CFI country rollouts will be initiated until this reform has been completed. However, the IPC Partnership thinks that it is important to complete the CFI rollout in the countries where this has been initiated, so not to stop country assistance abruptly, as this would be detrimental to countries and to the IPC’s credibility. As part of the reform, the Partnership will:</p> <p>- Keep CFI under the IPC governance structure but define/set up a structure (possibly other than the GSU) that would lead the reform and implementation of CFI in new countries. A study will be commissioned to both explore the possible organizational structure and develop a clear road map.</p> <p>- Broaden the partnership to include development partners and/or global research institutes and identify IPC Global Partners to “champion” the CFI reform process and its implementation/rollout.</p> <p>- Ensure adequate capacity of the new structure, including additional skills/expertise (e.g. policy, development profile).</p> <p>- Undertake a feasibility study prior to implementation of the reformed CFI in a new country; better define stakeholders to be part of the CFI IPC Technical Working Group (TWG) at the country level; simplify CFI protocols and process (lighter, shorter); look at ways of enhancing CFI to better answer decision makers’ information needs; and improve communications.</p> <p>- Monitor use and document learning as CFI work progresses.</p>	<p>GSU</p>	<p>2019-2020</p>	<p>Additional funding may be required depending on the model proposed by the study.</p>

<p>Recommendation 2 Continued focus on monitoring use of the IPC</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>As already foreseen in the new GSP, the GSU will look at monitoring the use as well as the relevance of IPC findings, including in terms of geographic coverage, unit of analysis, timeliness, and frequency of analysis compared with decision-makers' information needs. This will be done through a variety of activities including e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular user surveys/key informant interviews, annual desk reviews - Strategic missions to selected countries - Monitoring the relevance of IPC results through the development and regular update of the country IPC relevance score - Regular meetings with donors - Web analytics (for IPC website) <p>The GSU aims at involving TWGs in many of the above-mentioned activities, as relevant. However, with regards to the Evaluation recommendation to specifically encourage and support TWGs to map users and to consult them regularly, the IPC partnership is concerned that this will overburden the TWGs and may not be feasible in many countries, depending on capacity.</p>	<p>GSU</p>	<p>2019-2022</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>Recommendation 3 Strengthening the quality and transparency of the IPC analysis process for the acute scales</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>The IPC Partnership agrees with this recommendation and had already included the following actions as top priorities in the new IPC GSP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity development (e.g., through the newly developed IPC Level 3 training with a special focus on facilitation of IPC analysis, and in particular technical consensus building, webinars) and capacity monitoring through the IPC capacity score - Real time support to country analyses - Development and sharing of tools based on good practice 	<p>GSU</p>	<p>2019-2022</p>	<p>N</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality reviews and quality monitoring - Lessons learning exercises - Research and technical guidance on use of qualitative data in IPC analyses. <p>Furthermore, the recently launched IPC Manual Version 3.0 provides improved protocols for Consensus Building (IPC Function 1), Communication, including transparency (Function 3), and Quality Assurance (Function 4).</p> <p>However, the IPC Partnership proposes to approach some of the specific modalities proposed by the Evaluation to strengthen the quality and transparency of the IPC analysis process in a somewhat different way, as follows:</p> <p>(i) With regard to commissioning and publishing publications on good practice, based on lessons learned, the IPC Partnership envisages developing practical tools to be shared and discussed during IPC trainings and through the Community of Practice for use by analysis facilitators and/or TWGs (e.g., TWG members’ rules of engagement to support the process of building technical consensus and ensure neutrality of analyses). This approach will also entail organizing webinars on specific topics to provide a forum for IPC practitioners (Community of Practice) to share their experiences/good practice.</p> <p>(ii) While the IPC Partnership agrees with requiring TWGs to publish the list of participating agencies, which is already foreseen in the IPC Manual Version 3.0, and keeping an internal record of the names of staff who took part in the analysis, it does not support the idea of publishing the names of those individuals, due to the need to protect individuals from potential external influence/interference.</p>			
<p>Recommendation 4 Establish a research facility for the GSP/ GSU, to build an evidence base</p>	<p>Partially Accepted</p>	<p>The IPC Partnership agrees with the Evaluation Team on the need to conduct research studies to deepen the analysis and understanding of acute food insecurity.</p>	<p>GSU</p>	<p>2019-2022</p>	<p>TBD</p>

<p>to inform future technical development of the IPC acute scales</p>		<p>However, establishing a research “facility” would be too ambitious and costly. What the IPC Partnership proposes is to keep this exercise small and practical and focus on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct a retrospective review of the accuracy of IPC projections (this can be done by GSU in 2019). - Learn from the ongoing research being conducted by Dan Maxwell and Peter Hailey (to which the IPC GSP contributes financially) on: (i) how to better identify households in IPC Phase 5 (Famine), (ii) recommendations for improving early warning, and (iii) how to better collect and use qualitative data. - Commission independent research studies on other selected topics (e.g., to determine what happened in IPC Phase 5 areas and better understand the impact of prolonged Phase 3 & 4) to be identified through an internal consultation process. 			
<p>Recommendation 5 Developing and clarifying the strategy on institutionalization</p>	<p>Partially Accepted</p>	<p>Overall, the IPC Partnership agrees with the recommendation to clarify and develop the strategy on institutionalization. However, the proposal to “categorize” countries is not supported, because it is felt that any categorization would be too generic, and that it might be negatively perceived by countries.</p> <p>To address this recommendation, the IPC Partnership will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Define better the objectives of the IPC’s institutionalization and key elements of the strategy (related to quality, capacity, processes, governance, funding/cost-sharing, use, etc.) considering different country contexts. - Emphasize multi-partner commitment and promote institutionalization within partners “vertically” through awareness raising. - Where feasible (e.g., in Central America, Southern Africa, East and Central Africa), develop a strategy for each 	<p>GSU</p>	<p>2019-2021</p>	<p>Y, the GSU organigram in the new GSP foresees a full-time position for the Institutionalization and Policy Officer but this will only be possible if the GSP is fully funded.</p>

		<p>region taking into account the institutional set up at regional and country level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Build on IPC retroactive quality reviews and lessons learning exercises to develop country consolidation plans. - Recruit a GSU Institutionalization and Policy Officer to drive this process. 			
<p>Recommendation 6 Implications for GSP global partners</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>The IPC Partnership agrees with this recommendation overall. This will be implemented through the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finalizing and endorsing the criteria for Steering Committee membership - Developing work plans with partners' respective contributions (at all levels) based on each partner's comparative advantages - Establishing a network of communication officers among IPC Global Partners and train them on IPC communication - Pursuing IPC and <i>Cadre Harmonisé</i> collaboration and exchanges of trainers <p>However, the IPC Partnership is concerned about the feasibility of the Evaluation Team's recommendation of sharing responsibility at country level for the logistics and management of IPC activities. This and the activities described above are also contingent on some partners' human and financial capacities, which are currently major limitations to greater partner engagement in support of the IPC at regional and country level.</p>	<p>GSU and IPC partners</p>	<p>2019-2022</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p>Recommendation 7 Further disaggregation of IPC analysis</p>	<p>Partially Accepted</p>	<p>The IPC Partnership agrees with this recommendation. However, in practice, being able to disaggregate the analysis will heavily depend on the data available. To address this recommendation, based on internal consultations, two thematic areas will be identified for further technical development. These may include gender, refugees & IDPs, or food security analysis in urban areas.</p>	<p>GSU</p>	<p>2019-2022</p>	<p>N</p>

		In addition, the IPC GSU will continue to support countries to disaggregate analysis to smaller geographic areas, as recently done in Central African Republic and Yemen.			
Recommendation 8 Topics for the MTR for the next phase of the GSP	Partially Accepted	In principle, the IPC Partnership agrees that it is important to have a MTR of the next phase of the IPC GSP. However, it is too soon to identify the most relevant topics. Therefore, the IPC Steering Committee reserves to make a final decision on the MTR and its specific focus by mid-2020.	GSU	Mid-2020	TBD