

Module 2: Baseline Assessment
SESSION 7: SEASONAL CALENDARS
FACILITATOR NOTES

Presentation	<i>Seasonal Calendars.ppt</i>
Handouts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>H2.7 Handout 1 - Seasonal Calendars</i>• <i>H2.7 Handout 2 – Seasonal Calendar Exercise</i>
Practitioners Guide Reference	Chapter 3 HOW TO GATHER BASELINE INFORMATION. <i>Activity 4. Visit Community (or Village) and Interview Community Representatives. Information to Collect</i>
Time	1 hour 15 minutes

Purpose and content

To describe the importance of seasonality in livelihoods analysis and to introduce seasonal calendars as a basic tool for gathering HEA information.

Objectives

By the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- Describe what a seasonal calendar is and why it is necessary in HEA for both baseline- and outcome analysis
- Construct a seasonal calendar from an interview with key informants

When to run this session

This is session 7 in the Baseline Assessment Module. It is not absolutely essential to introduce this as the seventh session, but it does need to be taught before any field exercises.

Handouts

- *H2.7 Handout 1 - Seasonal Calendars*
This reviews what seasonal calendars are, why they are needed and how they can be constructed. It also presents two examples of seasonal calendars – one from Ethiopia and one from Zambia.
- *H2.7 Handout 2 – Seasonal Calendar Exercise*
This is a blank seasonal calendar, extracted from Interview Form 3. Participants will be asked to fill this in for an area they know, in small groups.

Key learning points

- Seasonal calendars record things like the rains, harvests, agricultural activities such as planting and weeding, livestock sales, peak food prices, wild food availability and the hunger season.
- Seasonal calendars are necessary because among the rural poor, seasonal variations in food access, own-labour needs and employment opportunities tend to

define the livelihood options that people pursue and the constraints they face. We need to understand food and income access for different groups in different seasons of the year.

- Seasonal calendars tend to be constructed most effectively during interviews with community or village leaders, and with household representatives of different wealth groups, though you should gather as much information on seasonality as you can from the start, including from secondary sources.

Session plan

Session plan summary		
Activity	Methodology	Timing
Introduction to seasonal calendars	Presentation	15 minutes
How to construct a seasonal calendar	Small group exercise	40 minutes
	Plenary discussion	20 minutes
Wrap up	Plenary discussion	5 minutes
Total		1 hour 20 minutes

ACTIVITY 1: INTRODUCTION TO SEASONAL CALENDARS

(15 MINUTES)

Go through the presentation on seasonal calendars. Much of this is summarised in the first handout, *H2.7 Handout 1 – Seasonal Calendars*.

ACTIVITY 2: HOW TO CONSTRUCT A SEASONAL CALENDAR

(1 HOUR)

How you run this exercise depends on how well the participants know the area to be studied in the forthcoming assessment. But whichever way you run it, you will need to distribute a page of flip chart on which they can record their calendar, and *H2.7 Handout 2 – Seasonal Calendar Exercise* which contains a blank seasonal calendar extracted from *Interview Form 3*.

- If at least some of the participants know the area to be studied, this is a good opportunity to start constructing a seasonal calendar for it, and for participants who are not familiar with the area to start learning about the seasonality of local livelihoods.
 - Ask participants to divide into groups, with each group having at least one or two people who are able to describe a basic seasonal calendar for the study area. Go through all the checklists at the top of the form.
 - If possible, each small group should ‘act out’ a seasonal calendar interview, with part of the group interviewing those who have some local knowledge.
 - The seasonal calendars can then be compared in plenary. Ask one group to go through their calendar. Other groups can then offer their own opinions.

- Once some agreement has been reached on the main seasonal activities, it is a good idea for everybody to write this out as a preliminary seasonal calendar in the Livelihoods Field Handbook. They can then refer to this, and add to and revise as necessary, during the field assessment.
- If few of the participants know the area to be studied:
 - Divide them into small groups such that people who know a particular area are grouped together. Ask each group to put together a seasonal calendar for the area they all know, using a page of flip chart or the blank seasonal calendar.
 - When finished, put the seasonal calendars on the wall and let participants take a look at all of them.
 - Refer to the Seasonal Calendar page in the Livelihoods Field Handbook, making sure participants are aware that it is there and to be filled in and used in the field.

In plenary, ask participants how they felt about the exercise. Clarify any areas of confusion or uncertainty.

ACTIVITY 3: WRAP UP

(5 MINUTES)

Try to include the key learning points in your wrap up.