**Assignments**

1. Bearing in mind the definition of monitoring and evaluation, what is the importance of M&E to Nutrition and food security projects
2. Assess the extent of progress of a project, if it is on track against its objectives and targets and determine what still needs to be done to meet objectives. • If the project is not on track, monitoring can identify risks or problems taking it off track, as well as potential solutions and decisions to address these. Project field staff are in a better position to undertake an analysis of problems and solutions as they are closer to the implementation of activities, and should work with management to take those solutions forward. Rapid identification and addressing problems improves effectiveness and avoids waste caused by unresolved issues.
3. Assess the degree of relevance and success of a project through satisfaction feedback from beneficiaries and other stakeholders on if needs are being addressed and quality control.
4. Identify successes and learning from positive experiences that can boost motivation and learn lessons from challenges for future activities.
5. Provide data for evaluations. • Building up monitoring data over time can highlight longer term trends to allow for more strategic evaluation; • It can also allow evaluations to assess the extent to which relevant cross-cutting issues are being addressed (e.g. gender, HIV/Aids, climate change).
6. Discuss the tools used in M&E of nutrition and food security projects

A good M&E system will help in the following:

• Clarify what impact the project/program is expected to have

• Decide how progress and impact will be assessed

• Gather and analyze the necessary information for tracking progress and impact

• Explain the reasons for success and failure, and

• Agree on how to use this information to improve future actions

1. Briefly discuss the evolution of food and nutrition security concerns. In your opinion are the strategies being put in place asserting food security

Coping strategies should be assessed in conjunction with consumption, expenditure, food share and nutritional status indicators Household food insecurity is categorized into four stages;

**First stage of household food insecurity**

This is marked by the initial shortage of food or inability to provide sufficient quantities of food to all members of the household coping strategies. These include;

 Reduced meal frequency (number of meals per day)

 Gathering wild foods

 Inter-household assets transfers and loans

 Increased petty commodity production (firewood, charcoal)

 Seeking of wage labour

 Diet change (maize instead of rice),

 Borrowing from relatives

**Second stage of household food insecurity**

The second stage of food insecurity is marked by the sale of assets, specifically non-productive assets. At this point in the food security crisis, food consumption begins to supersede asset preservation as the top priority, but still not entirely.

It involves the sale of jewelry, goats, chickens, other livestock and any other asset. Generally, the assets that are preserved are those related to income generation, such as land, farming equipment, oxen and cattle. 50

In addition to non-productive asset sales, the second stage also sees the onset of loans or credit from merchants (as opposed to family) who also have serious implications for the future security of the household and recovery to their original status.

The coping strategies are,

 Selling of non-productive assets

 Loans outside of kinship network

 Temporal migrations for work or land to farm

 Skipping meals for a day

**Third stage of household food insecurity**

Stage three is indicative of productive asset sales and the shift of the number one priority from asset preservation to food consumption. At this point all else has either failed to provide sufficient food quantities or the crisis has prolonged itself into a dire situation.

All livestock remaining at this juncture will be sold, all personal items sold, possibly even the sale of housing material and the pledging and or sale of land. This disposal of all assets ensures current survival, but severely jeopardizes the future security of the household.

In the case of natural disasters, such as drought, many assets will be lost involuntarily, specifically livestock succumbing to disease or starvation. When the crisis has reached this stage famine conditions have essentially set in coping strategies.

In the third stage the situation worsens even further leading to;

 Sale of all livestock

 Sale of productive equipment

 Sale or mortgage of land

 Migration

 Redistribution of children

**Fourth stage of household food insecurity**

Stage four is the last on the line and represents complete destitution. The household no longer exists as it once did, permanent migration (either whole or part of household) occurs in order to resettle on suitable land, find wage labor, or more likely for food aid assistance.

As mentioned before, individuals are generally too weak to work and simply need food and care to survive.

Indicators of stage four coping strategies are;

 Permanent migration

 Begging for food and resources

 Complete dependence on external aid

Destitution involves permanent migration, probably in search of food aid, due to the fact that they are too weak or ill to work. The frequency and severity of coping strategies practiced vary according to;

 The causes of the food shortage (chronic or crisis)

 Kinds of households affected (agricultural or pastoral)

 Local market conditions

 Absence of presence of relief programs

1. Discuss the common indicators of nutritional status
2. *Number of undernourished people in regions and at country level*
3. Number of severely undernourished people
4. *Number of children affected by wasting*
5. *Number of children who are stunted*
6. *Number of children who are overweight*
7. *Number of adults who are obese*
8. *Number of women affected by anaemia*
9. *Number of children age 0-5 months exclusively breastfed*.
10. Taking examples from your country, discuss the causes of food insecurity in rural areas.

Factors that affect food and nutrition security.

These Factors are;

* Climate Factors
* Governmental Factors
* Social Cultural Factors
* Economic Factors

**CLIMATIC FACTORS**

1. **Drought**

Prolonged lack of rainfall leads to drought. Drought affects food production contributing to vulnerability to food insecurity. Drought leads to crop failure and death of livestock prompting the communities especially those on arid areas to be dependent on food aid. 20

1. **Floods**

Floods affect food security in the following ways;

 Destruction of crops in the field and in the stores

 Drowning of animals.

 Floods can lead to disruption of road and rail transport, telecommunications and the breakdown of electricity and water supplies. These factors affect food accessibility.

 Floods displace people thus they cannot engage in production activities.

**GOVERNMENTAL FACTORS**

1. **Political stability**

In cases of political instability and when there is civil war that leads to displacements. This affects food production as well demand for more food. There are numerous consequences of political instability on food security such as;

 Civil war and displacement affects people’s access to basic needs and livelihood. For example, it affects food production, distribution and access.

 Conflict removes able-bodied population from agricultural production

 It also diverts resources, directly and indirectly from more productive and socially beneficial uses, to dealing with the aftermath of the civil war. In case of displacement it

makes government resources to be redirected to operations dealing with IDPs thus retarding the economic growth of a country.

**Government policy**

The food and agricultural policies in place affects the food security situation in a country.

Policies can affect food security positively or negatively. For example;

 If taxes were imposed on agricultural inputs, there will be high cost of food production thus most farmers are not able to produce food.

 Road charges to food on transportation of food hinder movement of food from high potential areas to low potential areas

 Subsidies on farm implement can also lead to high food production that influences food security positively.

 The policies on import and export affect food status at any particular time.

**ECONOMIC FACTORS**

 The economic status of a household or individual has a great influence on the food security status. High food prices reduce the individual purchasing power.

 The Market structure can influence food security status through market liberalization. This opens new opportunities to those farmers who have access to good land, irrigation and markets. However, it has by-passed the resource-poor farmers and those in lowpotential and remote areas.

 Marketing of farm produce is currently being affected by brokers or middle men. These are people who mainly get food from the producers to sell to the consumers. They escalate food prices in order to make profit.

 High transportation costs due to dilapidated roads taht affects movement of food from high potential area to low potential area. It also discourages those farmers who are producing because they can not sell their farm produce. It also result in high transactions costs for farmers and inaccessibility to input and output markets.

 Poor storage facilities and wastage are major setbacks to increased agricultural production.

 Problems in livestock marketing due to limited cattle holding grounds and meddling with stock-routes which lead limited access to markets.

**SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FACTORS**

Cultural practices mainly influence food security at individual and household level. Food taboos and believes expose households, communities and individuals to food insecurity.

Communities that do not consume some type’s food are food insecure even when there are plenty of such foods in the farms and in the market. In some communities some members are served first before others. This creates intra-household food insecurity.

The culture of people affects the livelihoods of people which in turn affect food security. In Sudan for example, we have three main livelihoods namely, pastoralists, agropastoralists, agricultural communities. Most of them live in ASAL regions and their livestock are affected by drought.

Livestock markets are also not well developed thus its not easy for them to sell the livestock. They keep on traveling with their herds and flocks to follow the rains and the growth in pasture, while setting areas aside for grazing reserves and splitting herds to minimize risk as coping mechanism.