



# **Report of a Two-Day Workshop on the Revision of the Sphere Handbook, Monrovia, Liberia, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2003**

**Hosted by Save the Children UK, Monrovia, Liberia**

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**Date of report: 31<sup>st</sup> January 2003**

## **Aims of meeting**

1. To familiarise participants with the wider revision process and its objectives.
2. For each sector (food aid, nutrition and food security), to allow participants the opportunity to review and revise (and develop) the indicators and guidance notes linked to the specific standards (building on the work already done at the previous workshops in Nairobi, Addis, Kabul and Delhi)
3. To achieve better integration between all the sectors, especially nutrition, food aid and food security, thus making standards easier to use and more accessible

## **Participants**

Leila Bourahla and Sonya LeJeune from Save the Children (UK) facilitated the meeting. Nineteen participants attended the workshop (see Annex 1), 15 on the first day and 17 on the second, representing humanitarian agencies and Government Ministries in Liberia.

## **What is Sphere?**

The Sphere Project is an initiative managed by four NGO networks (Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response, InterAction, VOICE and ICVA). Since the launching of the first edition of the Sphere handbook (2000), over 25,000 volumes have been sold and the handbook has been translated into 15 languages (eight spontaneously). This worldwide interest on behalf of national and international NGOs, the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement, governments, academics and UN agencies demands that the Sphere handbook be made as effective as possible. To this end, a revised edition of the handbook will be published in late 2003. In Spring 2003, a draft of the revised text will available on the website.

## **The Revision Process**

The revision's purposes are: to strengthen the link between the Humanitarian Charter and the Minimum Standards; to update the qualitative and quantitative indicators and guidance notes as needed; to address cross-cuttings issues such as children, women, the elderly, disabled, HIV-AIDS, and the environment; to enhance linkages between sectors; to iron out inconsistencies, faults and important omissions from the first edition; and to eliminate repetitive text. In addition, as per an earlier commitment by the Sphere Management Committee, Minimum Standards relating to Food Security will be developed as part of this process.

Six Focal Points and the Sphere project office will undertake this work over one year. Each Focal Point will work in their own particular way based on their sector-specific needs. All Focal Points are committed to a broad-based consultative process with feedback and input from field-based users paramount and with an emphasis on consultation with the agencies that are regularly using the handbook in disaster response.

As with the development of the handbook, the revision process is based on a broad-based consultative process to allow everyone opportunity to contribute. This includes the following *consultative groups*:

**Regional Working Groups:** regional clusters of field practitioners and experts, who have relevant sectoral experience and in the case of nutrition and food aid, experience in implementing the minimum standards.

**Review Group:** a relatively smaller group of technical staff or advisers based within headquarters or regional offices of the relevant Sphere pilot agencies, international NGOs, UN agencies, donors and academic institutions. This group will be asked to comment where appropriate on drafts emerging from the Regional Working Groups. A face-to-face meeting of the Review Group is planned for early 2003.

**Email and Web based consultation group:** Other field practitioners and experts to comment and review the skeleton food security standards developed at Oxford, the original handbook, and the draft of the revision.

This workshop in Monrovia followed on from Regional Working Group meetings in Nairobi, Addis Ababa, Kabul and Delhi.

### **Timeframe for revision process for nutrition, food security and food aid**

September	Boston meeting	
October	Regional meeting Nairobi & Addis Ababa	<i>DRAFT 1</i>
December	Regional meeting Afghanistan & India	<i>DRAFT 2</i>
January	Regional meeting Sri Lanka, Southern Africa, Thailand, West Africa	<i>DRAFT 3</i>
February	Consultation with Review Group Donor meeting Meeting with Human Rights specialists	
March	Full consultation on <i>penultimate draft</i>	
April	<i>Final draft</i> goes to the Editors	

## **Summary**

### **Summary of substantive recommendations on the new food security standards:**

Suggestions were made for amendments to proposed indicators.

Food security response even in acute emergency phase will be felt through to post-acute phase, therefore needs to take this into account when planning interventions.

### **Summary of substantive revisions suggested for the food aid section:**

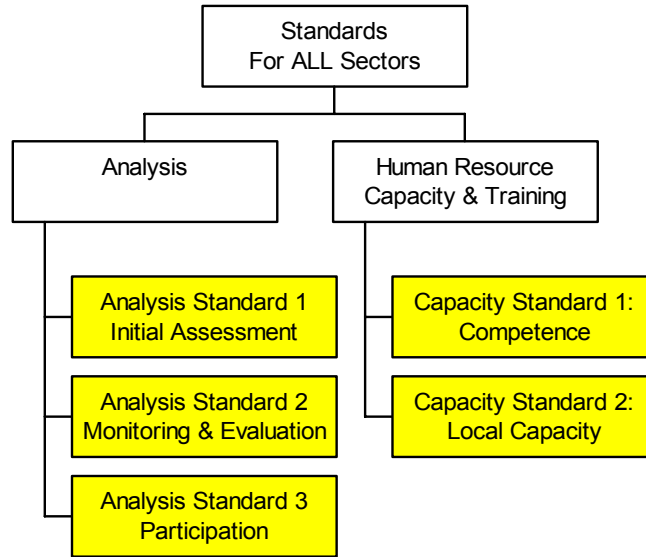
The guidance notes for each standard should give relevant potential sources of information including documents and suitable people to talk to.

Ensure greater participation of beneficiaries, including of children.

Some new indicators were added.

## Structure of the Handbook

It was agreed by the Sphere Project Office and all sectoral Focal Points, that the Minimum Standards that are common to all sectors, should be removed from the individual chapters and incorporated into one chapter at the beginning of the handbook. These are referred to as 'Standards For All Sectors' and they include:



Analysis Standard 1 relates to initial assessment.

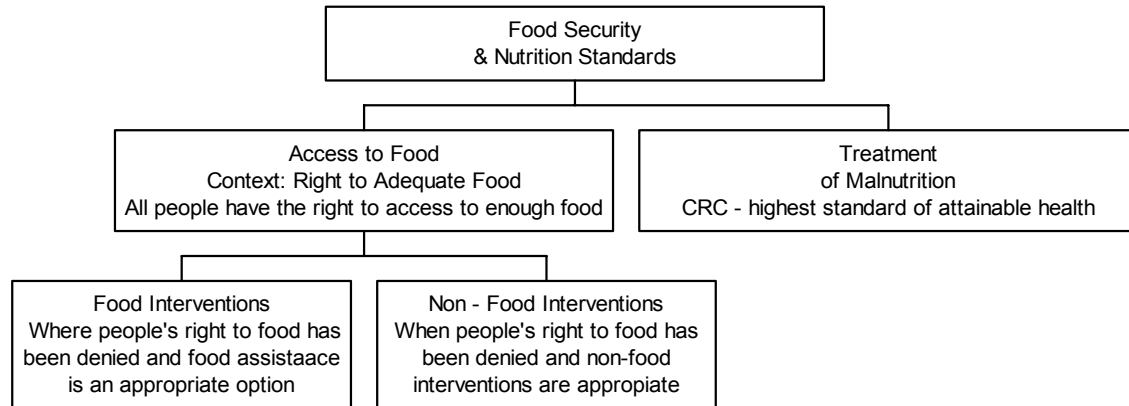
### Monrovia workshop General Recommendations:

Would be useful to consider how SPHERE relates to the transition phase between acute 1<sup>st</sup> phase of an emergency and the post-emergency or chronic emergency period. Possibly could have some standards adapted for such a situation.

## ***Integrating food aid, nutrition and food security***

The World Food Summit definition of food security was considered acceptable to participants. However the definitions used by some agencies include utilisation by the body as well.

At earlier workshops the following structure had been agreed following lengthy discussion:



The existing food aid standards would naturally fall under ‘food interventions’ while the new specific food security standards would fall under ‘non-food interventions’.

### **Feedback on structure**

- Overall this was felt to be a good idea because the three are closely linked. Links to health also need to be emphasised.
- Clearer links may need to be shown between the food and non-food based interventions to show how they both lead to increased food access.

## Technical standards – Food Security

Overall the wording needs to ensure that children have an active role.

### Definition of food security:

- On the whole, agree with suggested definition.
- Should the definition of food security include food utilisation by the body as well (and therefore consideration of health status), or is that covered under nutrition?
- Could also add: “...and without endangering the long-term survival of the population.”

### Initial assessment

Minimum standard	This should not have just a health focus. Therefore add <i>food access, protection and security</i> risks as well.
Indicator 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Guidance notes: better to have ‘assessment’ rather than ‘evaluation’ teams</li> <li>· Children should have an active role in the assessment, for example as providers of information.</li> <li>· Procedures should also consider exit strategies.</li> <li>· For the multi-sectoral checklist used without a multi-sectoral team; at the very least the analysis should be multi-sectoral to ensure rigour and balance. In addition, having interagency teams would avoid duplication and ensure the information is more widely relevant.</li> </ul>
Indicator 2	Is it feasible to produce a report in 3 days?

### Food security assessment and analysis

Indicator 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· How to link food security surveillance to early warning practically? One occurs occasionally while the other is a continuous process.</li> <li>· Need to put in place or support local structures to monitor food security. This could be part of an early warning or surveillance system</li> </ul>
Indicator 2	<p>Indicator: Add: “ normal means of accessing food <i>and non-food needs (services / items)</i>”</p> <p>Guidance notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Health specialists should also be in the team</li> <li>· Key references include Household Economy Analysis. SC-UK (2000)</li> <li>· Could also list examples of useful secondary sources by type including food economy reports, agricultural reports and statistics.</li> </ul>
Indicator 3	<p>Indicator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Link analysis of food security with biological utilisation of food / health status.</li> <li>· The analysis should also look at local / community capacity and resources, as part of thinking towards future interventions.</li> </ul> <p>Guidance notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Seasonal calendar of activities would be useful here.</li> <li>· Intra household analysis is more relevant in chronic emergency situation, to broaden understanding of feeding practices of children, possible HIV/AIDS and gender limitations.</li> <li>· Include consideration of different opportunities and coping strategies for finding food</li> </ul>
Indicator 4	Suggested references: guidelines from different agencies and donors

### **Access to adequate food**

Minimum standard	Does the phrase ‘upholds their dignity’ take into consideration protection especially for women and children? If so, maybe this needs to be clarified, if not then should this be added to the standard?
Indicator 1	Need to find a measure before people show signs of illness, rather than ‘mortality’.
Indicator 2	Best to give a specific timeframe rather than just saying ‘minimum’, which is open to interpretation.
Indicator 3	Add a monitoring and evaluation component here to identify the local capacity and the impact of intervention.
Indicator 7	Add to guidance note: “..... <i>equal opportunities for women, men, children, older people, .....</i> ”
Indicator 9	Information on local possibilities would be useful here

Issues identified but not yet developed / bullet 2: make it stronger eg “Disaster response must include capacity building....”

### **Primary production**

Standard	Query why deleted the word ‘hunt’. If for security or environmental reasons possibly add a footnote to this effect.
Indicator 1	A seasonal calendar of typical activities in the region and where the people have come from (if different) will strengthen analysis here
Indicator 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Add a note on building local capacity where necessary to learn new technology, including that of local technicians</li> <li>· There should be no distribution of GMO / hybrid seeds – give traditional varieties where possible</li> </ul>

Add an indicator / guidance note to look at quality / health and nutritional implications of foods that people might be eating as a coping strategy.

### **Preservation of assets**

Add *creation* of assets also, to link in with post acute emergency phase

### **Income and employment**

Indicator 1	Link with minimum standard on markets as market surveys would provide useful supporting information
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There was discussion over ‘fair’ terms of trade. Does this necessarily mean that they are ‘*non-exploitative*’? If not then need to include this as well.

### **Markets**

Indicator 2	Fair market price should be based on time, inputs and effort involved
Indicator 3	Ensuring the ‘most vulnerable’ have market access was seen as desirable but not practical
Indicator 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Possibly includes road rehabilitation.</li> <li>· Also consider economic access.</li> </ul>

## **Technical standards – Food Aid**

### **Food Quality and Safety**

#### **Minimum Standard:**

The word ‘sufficient’ needs to be more clearly defined.

Also, where does this leave genetically modified foods? Are they of ‘sufficient quality’?

#### **Indicators:**

- The phrase ‘no unreasonable’ caused much debate therefore should be rephrased.
- The time of distribution should take into account how long the food is expected to be in use following distribution. So if there is less than 1 month before the expiry date then the food cannot be used for a distribution of food that is intended to last 1 month
- Add: Staff *at all levels of the distribution chain* should have adequate knowledge about potential health hazards
- Ensure that food declared unfit for human consumption by health officials is disposed of and not allowed to re-enter the human food chain. (This links to Guidance notes no.4 under food aid standard 6)
- Procedures should be put in place to ensure beneficiaries particularly women, children, the elderly and disabled can report on and raise concerns about food quality.

#### **Additional points to be included in Guidance Notes:**

- Sources of information also include stock cards, food aid monitors, and beneficiaries.
- Systematic quality checking should be done at those critical stages when it is most important to determine the quality of food before it deteriorates.

### **Food acceptability**

#### **Key indicators:**

- Clarify who the ‘people’ are that are being consulted ie beneficiaries, government. Also, it was felt that it would not be appropriate to consult a population on the move.
- The word ‘staple’ should be clarified.
- Foods that are familiar might not be appropriate. (for example in Liberia people know what maize meal is, but do not always know how to prepare it)
- There should be no distribution of genetically modified food to the general population
- Post distribution monitoring should be undertaken among recipients to determine how food aid is used within the households, and its impact

#### **Additional Points for Guidance notes:**

- All guidance notes should start as for standard 3 eg with possible sources of information eg beneficiaries, government, women, children etc depending on the indicator to ensure more uniform data collection
- Need to determine beneficiary access to other foodstuffs (condiments, sugar, salt etc), and their coping mechanisms to access food
- Consider the potential impact of food aid on local market / agriculture (this links with the third indicator)

## **Food handling and safety**

### **Key Indicators:**

- Be more proactive in the food borne diseases and storage indicators: for example, eg *the coordinating body investigates at household and community level the incidence of food borne diseases / how food is stored .....and finds .....*
- The third indicator links with the preparation of food, so if removed, need to emphasis the link to the relevant section in watsan sector. Meanwhile, *two* cooking pots are needed; 1 for sauce and 1 for staple.
- Indicator 6: add cooked '*or processed*' form. To include for example milk given through feeding centres.
- Indicator 7: change available to '*accessible*'.

### **Additional points for guidance notes:**

- Food hygiene: change to "*It is therefore necessary to promote.....*"
- Mention the elderly, young children and AIDS patients as examples of individuals who cannot prepare their own food (indicator 5).
- In addition to interventions by NGOs, community care systems should be encouraged and supported.
- Surveys should be done to seek information from beneficiaries on food preparation, storage and food-borne diseases (links with indicator 1).

## **Resource Management**

### **Key indicators:**

- The first indicator is covered under the following two therefore suggest it is revised or deleted.
- New: *Beneficiaries are involved in management of resources including the dissemination of information*

### **Additional points for guidance notes:**

- As for other standards, add guidance note on sources of information including reference documents, people.
- Certification: make this more pro-active for example "*Efforts should be made to acquire phytosanitary certificates.....*"
- Providing information: from *youth* groups also. Also, modify to say "...the affected population *should* be enlisted to help provide information *and advice...*"
- General management; bullet point 6: losses identified and accounted for; specify '*between entry point and distribution to beneficiaries*'
- Donated food is not always labelled with expiry dates especially for grains, so should there be an indicator to this effect or guidance note?
- Add new bullet point related to general management: *beneficiaries are involved in the distribution process and are aware of the planned ration size, total amount planned for distribution, balance and actual amount distributed.* Also, explain to beneficiaries how any remaining food will be used, for transparency.

## **Logistics**

### **Key indicators:**

- Indicator 1 re supply chain: add that *reports should be available for accountability.*
- Indicator 5: *skills to be upgraded regularly to reflect changes in technology and practice.*
- Add also “*delays from poor transport system should be reduced*”
- Should there be a separate indicator to ensure that food is delivered to beneficiaries in a timely manner?
- New: *A minimum contingency stock level should be maintained at all times.*

### **Additional points for guidance notes:**

- Add suggested sources of information including documents and people.

## **Distribution**

### **Key Indicators:**

- In the first two indicators, specify that the ‘people’ referred to are the beneficiaries.
- New: *All beneficiaries should have a ration card, which clearly indicates family size and allows for recording that food aid has been received.*
- New: *When food is scooped, standardised uniform containers should be used.*
- Modify: “The method *and places* of distribution *are* readily accessible...”. This indicator also links with the security of humanitarian workers in a conflict situation. Even if all the resources are available, the service might not be provided because of security concerns – for beneficiaries and aid workers.
- Add that *women, children, the elderly and disabled are consulted over method of distribution.*
- Beneficiaries should participate in monitoring distributions.

## **General Comments**

- Targeting: although this will be included in the general 1<sup>st</sup> chapter, specific food aid standards might be required for example when it is necessary to ‘refine’ targeting. For example when food aid resources are insufficient for the target population.
- Bring out more clearly the protection of beneficiaries especially linked to food aid needs
- The participation of children and other marginalised groups should be strengthened throughout.

## ***Mechanisms for follow-up***

### **Follow-up action**

- The suggested modifications were sent to participants for their final comment before the final report was written.
- A group of nutritionists have agreed to try and meet to discuss the nutrition minimum standards.

## Annex One: List of participants

Name	Agency	Position	Area of interest (Food Security, Nutrition, Food Aid)	Emergencies where you have worked (location / date)	Email address	Prepared to remain actively involved in revision process?
A. Alfred Foboi	Liberian Islamic Union for Relief and Development (LIURD)	Assistant Programme Officer	Food Security and Food Aid	Liberia 1992 onwards (Lofa, Cape Mount, Montserrado)	n/a	Yes
Patrick K. Farnga	Liberians United to Serve Humanity (LUSH)	Agricultural / Repatriation Officer	Food Aid and Food Security	Liberia from 1994 (Bong, Nimba, Cape Mount, Montserrado)	<a href="mailto:relief26@yahoo.com">relief26@yahoo.com</a>	Yes
Domitien Ntibagirirwa	CONCERN	Food Security Coordinator	Food Aid, Food Security, Nutrition	Rwanda 1996-1998 Mozambique '98-2002	<a href="mailto:dominti@hotmail.com">dominti@hotmail.com</a>	Yes
Charles Lawrence	Save the Children (UK)	Monitoring and Evaluation Programme Officer	Food Aid, monitoring and evaluation	Liberia	<a href="mailto:scukliberia_charles@yahoo.com">scukliberia_charles@yahoo.com</a>	
Gregory T Blamoh	WFP	Senior Programme Assistant	All	Throughout Liberia	<a href="mailto:gregory.blamo@wfp.org">gregory.blamo@wfp.org</a>	Yes
Housainou Taal	WFP	Deputy Country Director	All	Sudan, Zambia, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, Liberia	<a href="mailto:housainou.taal@wfp.org">housainou.taal@wfp.org</a>	Yes
Admentus Zinnah	Liberians United to Serve Humanity (LUSH)	Camp Supervisor	Food security, quality and quantity of food	Liberia	<a href="mailto:bankozi@yahoo.com">bankozi@yahoo.com</a>	Yes
Andrew Omwenga	World Vision Liberia	Commodity Officer	Food Security and Food Aid	Sudan, Kenya, Liberia	<a href="mailto:andrewomwenga@yahoo.com">andrewomwenga@yahoo.com</a>	Yes
Sayba Y. Tamba	Save the Children (UK)	Livelihoods programme Officer	Food Security and Food Aid	Liberia	<a href="mailto:saybatamba@yahoo.com">saybatamba@yahoo.com</a>	Yes
Koffi Pewe	Veterinaires sans Frontieres	Technical Assistant	Food security, livestock development	Togo 1992-2002	<a href="mailto:koffipewe@yahoo.fr">koffipewe@yahoo.fr</a>	Yes
Jacob E. Center	Veterinaires sans Frontieres	Technical Field co-ordinator	Livestock development	Liberia (Lofa, Bong, Nimba, Montserrado)	n/a	Yes
Adams K. Lincoln	USAID	Health Co-ordinator	Health and nutrition	Monrovia	<a href="mailto:aklincoln2000@yahoo.com">aklincoln2000@yahoo.com</a>	I'll try
Augustine A. Allieu	Catholic Relief Services	Head of programs	Food Security	Liberia (Lofa, Bong, Nimba)	<a href="mailto:aaallieu@yahoo.com">aaallieu@yahoo.com</a> <a href="http://aallieu@crslr.org">aallieu@crslr.org</a>	Yes
Isaac D. G. Flowers	Ministry of Agriculture	Assistant Minister for Livestock and Fisheries	Food Security	Monrovia	<a href="mailto:zeekif@yahoo.com">zeekif@yahoo.com</a>	Yes
Luther Massaquoi	Lutheran World Federation / Service	Agriculture Supervisor	Food Security	Liberia 1996 onwards	N/a	Yes

Benjamin K. Flomo	Save the Children (UK)	Food Security and Livelihoods Officer	All	Liberia 1990 onwards	bflomo2002@yahoo.com	Yes
Helena Okai-Krakue	Save the Children (UK)	Food Security and Livelihoods Monitor	All	Liberia 1999 onwards	hkrakue@yahoo.com	Yes
Peter Briggs	WFP	Programme Assistant	All	Liberia	Peter.Briggs@wfp.org	Yes
William K. C. Kawalawu, Sr.	European Union	Aid Co-ordination Officer	All	Liberia 1995 onwards	euliberia@liberia.net williamkawalawu@yahoo.com	yes
Leila Bourhala	Save the Children (UK)	Health Programme Manager	All (especially Nutrition)	Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea/DRC	leilalaly@yahoo.fr	Yes
Sonya LeJeune	Save the Children (UK)	Food Security and Livelihoods Programme Manager	All	Burundi 1997-1999 Rwanda 1999-2001 Liberia 2001-2003	dambduzo@mail.com	Yes