Regional Food Security Analysis Network (RFSAN)

Iraq

iMMAP

Services

Information Management, Coordination, GIS, Research and Analysis, Data Visualization and Capacity Building

Objective

Improve the quality and availability of food security information to support humanitarian and resilience interventions in the sub-region affected by the protracted crisis in Syria and Iraq, and to strengthen national capacities and provide demand-driven, accurate and timely food security information to guide decision-making.

Established due to the lack of technical capacity to produce accurate and timely food security information needed to aid humanitarian interventions, the Regional Food Security Analysis Network (RFSAN) was launched in 2014 with funding from USAID and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). A partnership between the FAO and iMMAP, RFSAN was well recognized for its analytical capacity in food security and livelihood analysis and its support to the global Food Security Sector/Cluster (gFSS/C), Secretariat and partners in Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey. The program had played a prominent role as evidence provider by coordinating assessments and data collection while also sharing datasets through its own networking platform.

The unique partnership built upon the complementary qualities of both entities. FAO has the global mandate in food security, has proven capacity in food security information and early warning systems, and is a co-coordinator of the global Humanitarian Food Security Cluster system. iMMAP has extensive expertise in Information Management and Humanitarian Coordination and has a strong presence in the sub-region affected by the Syria and Iraq crises.

Background

The large-scale humanitarian impact of the crisis drew in a considerable number of local and international actors, responding at various levels and capacities to meet life-saving needs. The principal coordination mechanism for emergencies, the humanitarian cluster approach, institutes coordination structures in crisis-affected areas to reduce gaps and avoid overlaps in assistance delivered by the humanitarian community. While the humanitarian clusters provided a much-needed coordination mechanism for partners, supported by various national technical working groups (TWGs) on assessments and information management, there was a gap in technical capacity that prevented a more
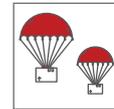
13.1 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance.
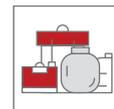
33% people in Syria were food insecure

(Source: HNO, 2019)

Better Data, Better Decisions, Better Outcomes

coordinated approach to food security analysis that allowed for improved food security information and a regional overview, critically needed for informing decision makers.

While various actions had been taken to address the lack of food security and agriculture-based livelihood information, a number of constraints still were evident including 1) shortage of food security and rural livelihood analysts in the sub-region among humanitarian and development partners and governments; 2) weak capacity of existing food security-related and early warning units in the crisis-affected countries and few ongoing capacity development efforts to redress the situation; 3) weak regional coordination mechanisms for food security & rural livelihood data and information exchange in a protracted crisis with regional dimensions; and 4) harmonization of data collection instruments, tools and indicators allowing for generating a consensus-based situation analysis, which has not been a priority.

Core components

- Providing timely and evidence-based food security and livelihoods information and analysis on the most vulnerable population groups, ensuring they are responded to and have access to safe and nutritious food;

- Identifying programming needs of the affected population that can be used as strong evidence for the design of livelihoods support programs;

- Providing technical expertise and support in areas such as survey design, sampling techniques, data collection, data management, analysis and dissemination;

- Reinforcing existing coordination structures such as the Food Security Sector/Cluster (FSS/C) system and provide technical support to implementing partners;

- Expanding the capabilities of partners engaged in food security and livelihood analysis and programming through institutional support and individual training;

- Raising awareness on the food security situation and information needs.

Areas of Support

Robust Information Products

- Food Security and Livelihoods Assessment reports and brochures
- Situation updates in hot spots, with a focus on Food Security
- Early Warning information reporting on the progress of the agricultural growing season, covering parameters such as rainfall, temperature, vegetation index, snow cover, and FAO's Agricultural Stress Index (ASI)
- Market analysis and agricultural commodity value chain analysis
- Price Monitoring data collation and harmonization reports and maps
- Information baseline on climate, soils, agriculture, water resources
- Detailed town maps for responding partners

Technical Assistance to Partners

- Support to the Humanitarian Program Cycle in terms of mid-year reviews, the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP)
- Actively participate in the TWG that agree on methods and approaches, collates data and analysis to calculate People in Need (PiN) numbers and severity or depth of food insecurity

Capacity Development

- Institutional support to mainly government institutions and gFSS/C; and
- Training of individuals, both FSS/C partners and government.

To learn more, please visit rfsan.info