



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

AGRICULTURAL RECOVERY FOR RESILIENCE

A PRELIMINARY FRAMEWORK

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A PRELIMINARY FRAMEWORK

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Agriculture Recovery for Resilience

A Preliminary Framework

*“Recovering and strengthening rural communities
to be better prepared to withstand future shocks”*

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Purpose of this Document

Post-crisis reconstruction has become a priority area for U.S. development assistance. One of the recommendations arising out of the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) 2006 Agriculture Recovery Workshop in Washington, D.C. was to develop an agricultural sector recovery assessment tool that would identify specific assessment questions to guide assessment team members when conducting a post-crisis agricultural sector recovery assessment.

This document begins by illustrating post-crisis environments, describing key post-crisis challenges identified in the literature, and highlighting specific components to address when designing interventions.

Section two identifies seven outcomes to consider that help to create the framework for a sustainable agricultural recovery. These outcomes were identified through review of post-crisis literature.

Section three identifies specific interventions, distinguishing between short-term (immediate) and longer term interventions. A list of interventions implemented in current and past crisis is included.

Section four contains sample agriculture recovery assessment questions to assess the seven identified framework areas. These assessment questions support personnel of USAID Missions and the USAID/EGAT/AG office when assessing and designing agriculture recovery programs in post-crisis situations such as post-conflict, natural disasters, pandemics and governance failure. Furthermore, the questions are designed to be asked during Phase 2 of the recovery cycle, in other words during the transitional phase of reconstruction, rehabilitation and institution-building. The questions focus on the agriculture sector even though it is recognized that other activities such as macroeconomic policy and pro-poor initiatives should be implemented along with sub sector initiatives.

The last three sections include additional identified programming issues, of references for further consultation and web sites with additional information.

Limitations

Data sources include project reports, research studies and documents generated by USAID and other agencies or groups, and a review of data available from web sites.

Section four, the sample agricultural recovery assessment questions, was circulated to and received feedback from Raise Plus Set Aside Subcontractors, Raise Plus IQC full-an-open contract holders, USAID personnel and sector specialists.

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We emphasise the preliminary nature of this paper. Some of the issues and views presented here need substantiation by field work. This assessment provides initial guidelines that should be “fine tuned” by testing in specific agriculture sector recovery situations.

1. Post-crisis Challenges

Post-crisis reconstruction has become a priority area for U.S. development assistance. In addition, renewed commitment to the agriculture sector from donors has highlighted the need for data on which interventions best support recovery of the agriculture sector?

Most of the literature describes three phases of recovery:

Phase 1-Post-crisis stabilization and humanitarian relief

Phase 2-Transitional phase of reconstruction, rehabilitation and institution building

Phase 3-Consolidation and longer term development

In this sequence, intervention for basic security and stability, and humanitarian relief are followed by essential physical reconstruction, the reestablishment of public institutions, economic stabilization and restarting the economy, and finally broader reforms to create a sustainable basis for long-term security, political stability and economic growth.

Experience has shown that while all three phases are essential, fully completing actions in one phase do not necessarily preclude beginning actions in a later phase. Post-crisis assistance is most effective when initiatives addressing security and humanitarian relief and economic revitalization are coordinated and implemented simultaneously.

This document concentrates on the interventions suitable to address Phase 2 of the recovery process.

The most common negative impacts of a crisis on the economy include raising transaction costs and breaking down linkages that allow economic activity to take place. The result is that production, investment and trading activities decrease, replaced by increased commercial activities, rent-seeking and profiteering (Bolnick, 2006).

This section describes some of the identified challenges for each of the four post-crisis situations as defined by USAID (Table 1).

Table 1 Identified Post-crisis Challenges

Post Conflict	Natural Disaster	Pandemic	Poor Governance
Security (Public order and safety)	Social Wellbeing	Public health (vaccinations and screening programs)	Governance and participation
Governance and Participation	Economic stabilization and infrastructure	Establish surveillance and epidemiology programs	Economic stabilization and infrastructure
Social Wellbeing	Governance and participation	Communication programs	Social Wellbeing
Economic stabilization and infrastructure	Environmental recovery and prevention programs	Economic stabilization and infrastructure	Justice and reconciliation of populations
Justice and reconciliation of populations	Communication for prevention programs	Social Wellbeing	
Disarming, demobilizing and reintegrating ex-combatants		Shifting gender roles	
Shifting gender roles			

As it can be appreciated from the table, the agriculture sector, and its related activities, is affected directly or indirectly by all the identified areas in the above table.

More specifically, some of the factors that influence crisis-affected people’s relationship to agriculture include:

1. Degree of access to suitable land
2. Availability of resources, including inputs, technical skills, and market information
3. Extent of viable production options
4. Prevailing time-horizon (long-term/short-term)
5. Extent of existing physical and institutional market infrastructure

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Most of these factors must be rendered favourable to profitable production if agricultural recovery is to take place. Post-crisis situations are a complex and challenging mix of many issues, which will affect these factors directly or indirectly.

In addition, the following issues should also be taken into consideration when assessing the agriculture sector:

Crisis affect vulnerable populations

A disaster/crisis occurs as the result of a hazard that strikes a vulnerable community or group whose inherent capacity is not enough to withstand or cope with its effects and impacts. The result is a general disruption of community functions, damage and loss of life, property, livelihood and the environment.

Vulnerabilities refer to long-term factors and conditions adversely affecting the ability of the community or society to respond, to cope or recover easily from the damaging effects of the occurrence of hazards or disaster events.

Address the root causes for the vulnerability

Identifying the reason(s) why the community is vulnerable is critical to targeting effective programming activities.

Vulnerability is a complex set of characteristics that include:

- initial well-being (nutritional status, physical and mental health, morale)
- livelihood and resilience (extent of available physical and financial assets, income, exchange options, qualifications, etc)
- self-protection (afforded by capability and willingness to build a safe home, use a safe site, etc)
- social protection (forms of hazard preparedness provided by society: building codes, mitigation measures, shelters, and preparedness)
- social and political networks and institutions (social capital, but also the role of institutional environment in setting good conditions for hazard precautions, people's rights to express needs and of access to preparedness)

Note that all the vulnerability variables are inherently related to the level of people's livelihoods. In most disasters the poor are disproportionately more vulnerable than other groups and much less capable of recovering easily. Programming that does not address the root causes for the vulnerability does not provide a sustainable platform for longer-term development activities.

Identifying and strengthening communities' capacities

Capacities refer to the strengths and resources that exist within the people and their community which are used to prepare for, cope with, and mitigate the damaging effects of hazards.

Vulnerabilities and capacities assessments are usually conducted after the emergency phase period in order to identify appropriate rehabilitation assistance and mitigation measures. They can be classified into three categories: physical/material, social/organizational and motivational/attitudinal.

The focus of recent debates has moved beyond issues of production and supply towards and understanding of poverty and vulnerability. There is a growing body of livelihoods thinking which emphasises asset vulnerability and the capacities of different groups to manage risk and cope with various types of livelihood shocks.

The changing understanding of disasters as more than short-term crises, but rather the expression of long-term vulnerabilities has shifted the focus from saving lives (a focus on production and consumption) to include the need to save livelihoods (a focus on vulnerability and capacities).

In addition, supporting rural producers affected by disaster requires going beyond the economics of production and exchange to look at political dimensions of vulnerability (Christoplos et al. 2004).

The agriculture sector is intrinsically linked to all aspects of rural development

Agriculture contributes to development as an economic activity, as a livelihood and as a provider of environmental and social services.

USAID's definition of agriculture recognizes the interconnectedness of agriculture and describes agriculture as "the science and practice of activities related to production, processing, marketing, distribution, utilization and trade of food, feed and fibers". The definition also includes family and consumer sciences, nutrition, food science and engineering, agricultural economics and other social sciences, forestry, wildlife, fisheries, aquaculture, floriculture, veterinary medicine and other environmental and natural resource sciences. The breadth of this definition blurs traditional sectoral boundaries –between agriculture and health-for example, it promotes a useful coherence of perspective for addressing the complexities of agriculture (USAID, 2004).

This interconnectedness was once again stressed in the recently released report by The International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD). A four year, multi-stakeholder and multi-disciplinary study released earlier this year.

The report, approved by over 50 countries, concluded that the interconnectedness of agriculture's roles and functions must be acknowledged. Agriculture is a multi-output activity producing not only commodities (food, fiber, feed, agro-fuels, medicinal products and ornamentals), but also

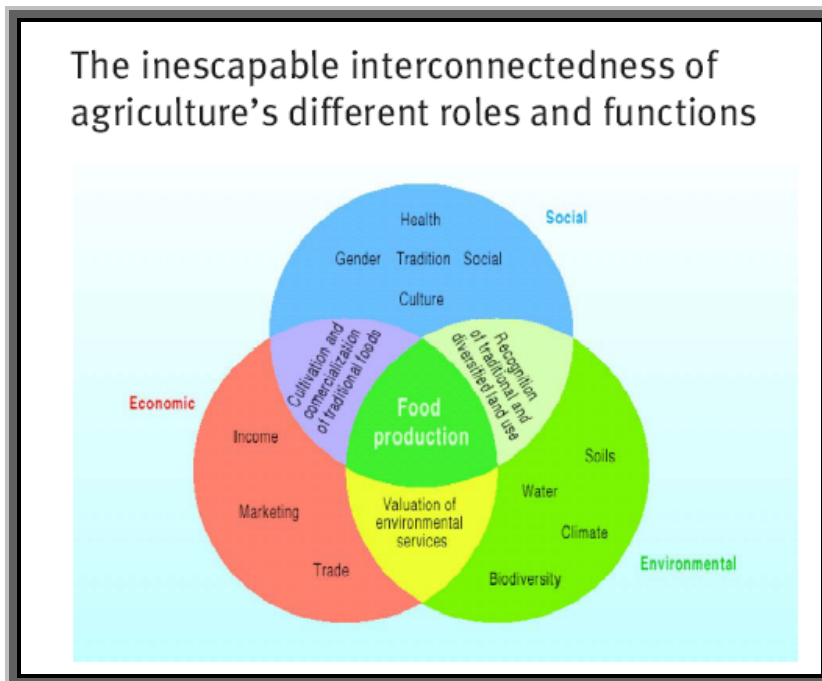
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non-commodity outputs such as environmental services, landscape amenities and cultural heritages. It recognized:

1. Agriculture's multi-output activities, accounting for the complexity of agricultural systems within diverse social and ecological contexts
2. New institutional and organizational arrangements to promote an integrated approach to the development and deployment of knowledge and science
3. Recognize farming communities, farm households, and farmers as producers and managers of ecosystems
4. Change incentive systems for all actors along the value chain to internalize as many externalities as possible
5. New policies and institutional changes should be directed primarily to those who have been served least by previous approaches: resource-poor farmers, women and ethnic minorities
6. Need for gainful non-farm employment for small-scale farmers
7. Need to increase public and private investment on knowledge and science
8. Development of supporting policies and institutions
9. Revaluation
10. Interdisciplinary, holistic and system-based approach to knowledge production and sharing.

The multi-output nature of agriculture when seen through the crisis-recovery lens translates into a multi-sectoral approach to agriculture sector recovery. Agriculture can no longer be seen as an independent economic activity. The environmental and social agendas are inseparable from the broader agenda of agriculture for development.

Diagram 1. The Interconnectedness of Agriculture



Source: IAASTD 2008

2. Post-crisis Agricultural Recovery Framework

Agriculture recovery should aim to protect, reinforce and develop livelihoods in such a way that people are able to become more resilient to future crisis. The challenge is to avoid interventions that enhance production in the short-term, but perpetuate livelihoods that are inherently vulnerable in the long-term.

The following agricultural recovery framework is based on specific outcomes that should be achieved when recovering the agriculture sector after a crisis. The seven outcomes target identified critical areas for recovery where interventions should be considered. Depending on the specific post-crisis environment, some outcomes are more important than others. However, all seven critical areas should be assessed to identify effective interventions.

The agricultural recovery outcome framework includes:

1. Understanding how the crisis affected the agriculture sector
2. Rebuilding and restoring agricultural enabling environments
3. Recovering and strengthening agricultural productivity
4. Recovering, increasing and protecting assets
5. Creating, recovering and strengthening rural non-farm activities
6. Reconnecting agriculture activities to the social and environmental areas
7. Creating resilience

1. Understanding how the crisis affected the agriculture sector

Clear understanding of the events (what happened, to whom and why) and how the crisis affected the agriculture sector leads to good programming. In addition, understanding of the cultural, social and political dimensions of the affected population is important to determine sensible programming options.

2. Rebuilding and restoring agricultural enabling environments

Agricultural policies, laws, institutions, financial services and markets have to be in place for equitable economic growth through agriculture, in addition to investments in technology, infrastructure at all levels and linking producers to markets. Policies should also address the creation of employment opportunities for the farm and non-farm sectors.

Restoring government's capacity to address the agriculture sector needs is important. Proposed policy interventions should be politically easy to implement and yield rapid results for the agriculture sector. Policies should be shaped to remove identified constraints to investment, production and trade.

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Land tenure and registration systems if they existed and were used before should be rehabilitated.

Financial systems such as credit, infrastructure and supply chains are critical to relinking fragmented and disrupted markets. Restoring and/or implementing financial options to increase credit to the agriculture sector and reduce its costs, along with reestablishment of the financial regulatory framework and institutions.

Input suppliers and markets, marketing institutions, systems and networks, including cooperatives have to be rehabilitated and strengthened to encourage effective access to resources.

3. Recovering and strengthening agricultural productivity

Higher agricultural productivity normally translates into higher revenues for producers and other value chain participants. Recovering productivity of an agricultural activity relates to how land, labour, other inputs and markets effectively produce outputs. Productivity constraints should be addressed as a priority when trying to recover the agriculture sector.

Crises affect productivity both directly (e.g. through drought, pests and diseases) and indirectly by restricting access to land, making labour unavailable or by shifting gender roles, by breaking the supply of inputs and disrupting the market.

4. Recovering, increasing and protecting assets

After a crisis, populations suffer substantial declines in assets. The emergency phase (Phase 1) addresses the sustenance needs of affected populations. However, the shift from humanitarian to economic activities should start as quickly as possible. Small-scale agriculture and non-farm activities to restore some level of economic activities should be started early in the recovery process.

Medium and longer-term development activities should be built on the emergency or humanitarian work already taking place.

5. Creating, recovering and strengthening rural non-farm activities

Creating jobs in rural areas is a huge and insufficiently recognized challenge. The basic ingredients of a dynamic rural non-farm economy are a rapidly growing agriculture and a good investment climate (WDR, 2008).

Linking the local economy to other national and international markets by reducing transaction costs, investing in infrastructure, and providing business services and market intelligence are

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critical both to the growth of local non-farm activities and to the encouragement of external investment in rural areas.

Recovery of value added activities through non-farm processing and other activities in the value chain should be considered.

In addition, alternative activities including agro-tourism, natural resource management and web-based occupations should be explored.

6. Reconnecting agriculture activities to the social and environmental areas

Agriculture contributes to development as an economic activity, as a livelihood and as a provider of environmental and social services.

The environmental agenda is inseparable from the broader agenda of agriculture for development. Both intensive and extensive agriculture face environmental problems-but of different kinds. Promising technological and institutional innovations can make agriculture more sustainable with minimum tradeoffs on growth and poverty reduction. Water management strategies, better technologies to manage inputs and getting the incentives right are steps towards sustainable resource management.

The social agenda includes culture, education and health. Greater access to production resources and assets by women must be addressed. More over, education is often the most valuable asset for rural people to pursue opportunities in the new agriculture, obtain skilled jobs, and start businesses in the rural non-farm activities, and to migrate successfully.

Health issues such as widespread illness and death from HIV/AIDS and malaria can greatly reduce agriculture productivity and devastate livelihoods. According to the 2008 World Development report, the majority of the people affected by HIV work in farming, and there is tremendous scope for agricultural policy to be more HIV-responsive in supporting adjustments to labour shocks and transmission of knowledge to orphans.

Zoonotic diseases such as avian influenza also pose growing threats to human health. Better coordination of agriculture and health agendas will translate in productivity and welfare.

Agriculture recovery contributes to development in many ways. If linked to other sectors, it can produce faster growth, reduce poverty and sustain the environment (WDR, 2008).

7. Creating Resilience

There is a high correlation between the chance of being harmed by a crisis and being poor. Much disaster relief and recovery assistance fails to take account of the need to support livelihoods and

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future resistance to hazards by reducing vulnerability as well as dealing with people's immediate needs (Cannon, 2008).

Recovery work should aim to protect and reinforce livelihoods in such a way that people are able to become more resilient to hazards, and better protected from them.

This protection must come either through:

1. Strengthening of people "base-line" conditions (nutrition, health, morale and other aspects of well being)
2. Reinforcement of their livelihood and its resilience to possible hazard impacts
3. People's own efforts (self protection) to reinforce their home and workplace against particular hazards
4. Or, by access to proper support (social protection) by institutions, government or civil society.

Providing safety nets and other social assistance to vulnerable populations can increase both efficiency and welfare. Safety nets, such as guaranteed work benefit programs and food aid or cash transfers, also have an insurance function in protecting the most vulnerable against shocks (WDR, 2008). In addition however, efficient recovery requires that initial investments through such programs can continue to grow beyond simple subsistence to a point of commercial sustainability. This requires on-going mentoring, which can be just as important a form of "economic insurance" as the initial safety net programs.

Efficiency gains come from reducing the cost of risk management and the risk of asset depletion in response to shocks. Welfare gains come from supporting the chronic poor with food aid or cash transfers.

3. Prioritizing Interventions

The literature review found that no one approach is applicable to all countries. Although there may be some fundamental principles that are common to most situations, in general case by case programming is necessary.

Nevertheless, it has been increasingly recognized that initial reconstruction efforts should be formulated in such a way that they can be integrated into longer-term development programs. In addition, the volume of finance available for post-crisis relief generally tends to substantially exceed that available for subsequent development. Consequently while relief programs may be broad in scope, they will tend to be replaced with recovery interventions that must be more focused.

Maximum impacts will be achieved by concentrating on agricultural activities in which large numbers of the affected populations operate and when possible, by focussing on cross-sector services that support several key sectors.

Short term interventions

Most agriculture rehabilitation activities should be implemented immediately after the emergency Phase 1 or during Phase 1 if possible.

Short-term responses include:

1. **Replacement of household assets**: This response is most appropriate when either assets have been directly lost as a result of the crisis (e.g. disease may have killed off livestock, drought may have decimated seed production), or when a household has sold off its assets as a coping strategy. Typical responses and key characteristics are shown in table 2.

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Table 2 Asset Replacement

Response	Key Characteristics	Recovery Opportunities
Seed distribution	Seed varieties should be able to generate future stock (i.e. not hybrids)	Recovery of local seed production and cleaning centers
Distribution of inputs	Preferably locally produced	Recovery of Farmer Service Centers
Provision of livestock	Training may be necessary. Support services such as veterinary services and medications should also be available	Recovery of local veterinary services and Farmer Service Centers
Distribution of farm tools and machinery, including animals and fishing tackle	Farm tools should be appropriate to the environment. If new tools are introduced, training should be provided. Spares and repairs should be easily available	Recovery of non-farm employment opportunities

The third column of table 2 gives examples of recovery initiatives that may complement the initial short-term responses. These will typically involve smaller numbers of beneficiaries than the initial responses might cover, but because they will support and strengthen the short-term response, such development initiatives will result in benefits beyond the limited number of farmers, vets or trainees that are directly supported.

2. **Repair of Community Assets:** This response is important in two ways. First, when community assets have been significant in maintaining livelihoods, (such as communal irrigation schemes, which may be instrumental in supporting whole villages), and secondly, when it is helpful to provide employment opportunities (see below). Typical responses might include:

- Rehabilitation of irrigation and drainage works
- Soil conservation works
- Rehabilitation of foot bridges and trails
- Revitalize fishing areas (restocking, dredging, weed removal)
- Rehabilitation of water supply systems

It is essential that the work to be undertaken incorporates priorities of the affected community. Many examples exist of communal assets that have been recovered without consulting the beneficiaries and which have not been properly used or maintained as a result. Secondly, it is important that repaired assets be recovered only to the maintenance capacity of the local community, unless subsequent development interventions will build upon these assets.

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3. **Protection of household assets:** This short-term response is a typical function of safety-net activities where beneficiary household's immediate survival needs are met (as food, medicine and/or cash) in return for participation in community projects. The supply of benefits allows households to avoid selling existing assets (hence "asset protection"). Community projects will commonly include the repair or new development of community infrastructures, where benefits are provided in return for employment, but may also include training (e.g. in nutrition or other health practices), where benefits are provided in return for participation. In both cases, a participatory approach to the design of such programs is key to their success.

Asset protection programs provide the benefits of short-term relief, but may also lay the foundations for subsequent development activities.

1. Recover and increase rural incomes

It is critical to recognize that the interconnections between agriculture and most other aspects of the rural economy require a holistic and wide ranging approach if the superficially simple goal of increasing rural incomes is to be achieved. Many approaches are possible, but the "value chain" provides a useful basis for describing the different aspects that recovery must put in place for sustainable rural development overall. This would begin with technical aspects of production, e.g.:

- Improve supplies of effective inputs (seeds, etc)
- Introduce and support improved technologies
- Diversify production to include higher value products

However, at the same time, it would be necessary to strengthen support services, e.g.:

- Increase financial services to the agriculture sector
- Restore agricultural research stations
- Develop effective training and extension services

In addition it would be important to develop down-stream markets, e.g.:

- Provide processing facilities and other value added facilities
- Develop improved storage and packaging systems
- Strengthen linkages between producers and markets through e.g. support of farmers' associations, training programs, market information systems and improved storage techniques
- Identify new markets/buyers for producers
- Provide education/training in simple numeracy/literacy and basic business practices

All of the above can only succeed within a developed physical infrastructure requiring:

- Rehabilitation of roads and bridges

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- Development of cold chain facilities
- Upgrading of other critical production related utilities.

There are many other more complex and sophisticated initiatives that could support the basic concept of increased rural incomes, but the above would be some of the simplest ways in which incomes could be raised through the medium of agricultural recovery.

2. Recover and create farm and non-farm employment opportunities

In addition to interventions that are directly related to increased agricultural production, there are interventions that can focus more on utilising and developing the human resource. Such initiatives would include:

1. **Provision of Resources** – these may be physical, technical or financial. However, the end result should be that removing the constraint of access to resources increases opportunities for communal and individual recovery, e.g.:

- Increasing access to land and other productive resources to ex-combatants and other affected populations
- Increasing access to finance to the same groups to enable them to develop other businesses
- Increasing access to new and relevant technologies that could generate employment and support competitive production or service provision

2. **Development of Human Resources** – this may frequently involve training or education of some form. It is important however that such activities be well researched with regard to ultimate markets and competitiveness:

- Developing and strengthening programs for employment creation. Activities include: vocational training, management training, apprenticeships, micro enterprise support and micro credit
- Changing attitudes regarding HIVAIDS. Gender or ethnicity to increase opportunities for vulnerable and minority groups
- Training in non-farm activities such as tile making, carpentry, furniture making, and services to the agriculture sector such as veterinary service providers, small scale implement manufacture, input supply center management, etc.

3. **Utilisation of Human Resources** – frequently through the creation of employment opportunities, either through the stimulation of investment, or through the direct provision of finance or through the creation of an enabling environment for business development:

- Investment in infrastructure and working capital to allow the development of support services to agriculture

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- Development of value added through non-farm processing. (Such activities usually provide longer-term employment, are labour intensive and low technology and frequently employ women)
- Development of employment in other activities in the value chain (e.g. product certification, transport, sales and marketing)
- Development of employment opportunities through encouragement of external investment (e.g. by offering tax incentives and low cost land, export promotion zones, etc)
- Development of alternative activities, including agro-tourism, natural resource management, and web-based occupations

Building resilience and longer term development

Whenever possible recovery initiatives should not simply restore the status quo before the crisis, but should ultimately lead to greater resilience and an elevated socio-economic status that will confer increased capacity to withstand future shocks. Capacity to withstand future shock can be achieved through:

1. **Developing resistance to expected crises** (Adoption of production technologies or livelihoods that are resistant to expected crises). This is often the first implemented approach to increased resilience, and is based on the introduction of new technologies to existing agribusinesses. Provided the financial resources and training capacity are available, this approach can usually be readily implemented and would include:
 - Propagation of disaster resistant crops
 - Development of livestock vaccination programs
 - Soil and water conservation measures
 - Implementation of irrigation schemes
 - Use of improved pest management techniques
 - Improved post-harvest storage facilities
 - Improved community health facilities
2. **Diversification** to minimise the impact of crisis (diversification of individual sources of income and community livelihoods). This is a longer-term development strategy, requiring changes in lifestyles and the way the individuals and communities think and work together. It requires greater emphasis on training, together with community participation and buy-in. Initiatives would include:
 - Introduction of different income generating activities to communities (e.g. fruit production, goat and sheep rearing, back-yard gardening, might be introduced to a household that previously grew one or two crops only)
 - Introduction of different crops with ranges of nutritional value, growing seasons and responses to drought
 - Strengthening and diversifying seed banks and nurseries

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- Development of trade capacity with external markets (domestic and international)

3. **Developing the capacity to absorb the impact of a crisis** (wealth and asset creation).

This requires that the majority of the community should achieve sustainable development beyond poverty. This will require broad-based training that relates not only to agriculture but also to economic development in general. The aim should be to create an enabling environment for investment that will result in equitable dividends. This will require:

- Development of effective resource administration and management programs.
- Adequate literacy and numeracy in the general community
- Provision of cost-effective utilities
- Development of effective governance and administration
- Development of competitive value chains (requiring cooperation both between stakeholders at a single level in the value chain and between stakeholders at different levels in the value chain)

In the initial stages of recovery, (late Phase 1, or early Phase 2) it is not practical to design a program for agricultural development that seeks to achieve the goals listed above in (3). The more immediate requirements of increasing production and employment must be met first.

Nevertheless, whatever programs are designed and implemented during the early stages of recovery should be compatible with these ultimate goals. If considered as ends in themselves, initial recovery programs will result in development benefits that may be unsustainable and lead both to donor fatigue and beneficiary cynicism as the cycle of crisis, relief and recovery continues to be repeated. A longer-term and holistic perspective is essential.

4. Sample Agricultural Recovery Assessment Questions

Overall these sample agriculture assessment questions assess who has been affected and why, since in most cases, the "lesser" disasters are not uniform in their impacts, but will hit some specific socio-economic groups harder than others. Generally a lack of entitlement amongst specific groups makes them vulnerable to the disasters.

These questions are provided as guidelines. In order to ask effective assessment questions, two things should be understood: first the specific context of how the agriculture sector or activity was affected by the crisis and second, the goal(s) that should be achieved after an intervention.

These sample assessment questions assume that they will be used when conducting rapid participatory assessments (e.g. guided interviews or focus discussion groups). Overall, the questions assess what happened, why, what is needed and what can be done to address the needs.

Understanding how the crisis affected the agriculture sector

1. Assess the fundamental nature of the community:
 - a. What is the local climate, topography, soil, vegetation and other geographical features, including proximity to protected, highly fragile or highly valued areas, rivers, lakes, etc. that will have direct bearing on the capacity of the area to support agriculture?
 - b. Who are the main socio-economic subgroups in the affected area? Describe them in terms of numbers, income levels and livelihoods.
 - c. What was the level of social cohesion before the crisis? Was the community united as a single entity, or subdivided into smaller (religious ethnic or other) social units?
 - d. How were roles and responsibilities and traditional activities divided between men and women prior to the crisis?
 - e. What are the main agricultural and non-farm activities in the affected area?
 - f. What are the staple and minor commodities consumed by the population? Are there any constraints to consumption?
 - g. How was the affected area linked to surrounding areas in terms of trade (both imports and exports)? Were trade linkages important to the local economy?
2. Determine the nature and extent of the crisis:
 - a. What happened? How was the community affected?
 - b. How were agriculture activities directly and indirectly affected?
 - c. How were non-farm activities directly and indirectly affected?
 - d. What is the size of the affected group?

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- e. What is the extent of the area occupied by the affected community?
 - f. Are there any security related issues? How so?
3. Assess the impact of and local responses to the crisis:
- a. What has been the impact of the crisis in terms of agricultural production?
 - b. What is the anticipated impact in terms of household food security?
 - c. What is the impact in terms of the overall community economy?
 - d. What is the current status of the community structure? (Consider possible fragmentation, isolation and both inward and outward migration)
 - e. How does the affected community do work together now? How strong are existing peer pressures within the community?
 - f. How has the community responded to the impact of the crisis and what have been the results?
 - g. How have the different socioeconomic subgroups responded to the crisis?
 - h. How has the crisis affected the roles and responsibilities of different genders?
 - i. What other donor programs or responses to the crisis are ongoing in the area?
How can these be leveraged to achieve maximum synergy?

Rebuilding and restoring agricultural enabling environments

Policy and Administration

1. Assess the current policy and administrative environment:
 - a. What is the national policy toward agriculture recovery, both nationally and in the affected area?
 - b. What is the national policy towards non-farm activities?
 - c. What is the policy regarding joint-venture partnerships and external investment?
 - d. How effectively are national policies implemented at the local level?
 - e. How gender-neutral are existing regulations in terms of land title, access to credit, inheritance and property rights?
 - f. Does the local/national government have the capacity to implement its existing policies and administer existing regulations effectively?
 - g. How effective is the administration of land tenure, individual property rights and other business rights?
 - h. How transparent is local/national government in its collection and distribution of levies and taxes?
 - i. How effective is the local administration in its implementation of policy and overall governance?
 - j. Is there a hazard preparedness plan? How can it be implemented?
2. Determine the extent to which policies meet beneficiary needs and what changes to both policies and administration are needed. It is critical that this section should be based on a

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highly participatory approach. Any changes to policy must reflect grass root requirements if they are to be either beneficial or sustainable:

- a. What do stakeholders think of the current policies for rural agricultural production (crops, livestock, veterinary services, import rules for veterinary drugs and vaccines, rules for meat inspection and market regulations? How can they be improved?
 - b. What policies do stakeholders consider necessary to create an enabling environment for the recovery of the agriculture sector? How can these be implemented? Is there an appropriate incentive structure in place?
 - c. Are investors attracted by current rural development policies? What changes in policy would such investors (in both agriculture and non-farm activities) consider necessary to promote rural development?
 - d. What do local stakeholders think the policies for rural development should be? What changes are required?
 - e. How effective do stakeholders consider the local administration to be in its performance (including the implementation of policy)? What changes/improvements would stakeholders consider most important?
 - f. How transparent are community decisions? Are resources openly and appropriately allocated?
3. Determine how improved policies can be developed and implemented:
- a. How can policy changes (if required) be most effectively brought about? What avenues should be developed? (E.g., local government training, development of forums for discussion, setting up of representative advocacy associations). What technical assistance might be required?
 - b. How can government capacity to develop and implement enabling policies be strengthened? (Consider training, manpower, financial and physical resources)
 - c. What are the recourses to have access to political and legal system? Is equal access available to all community members?
 - d. How can the regulatory capacity of key authorities be strengthened?

Financial services

1. Assess current levels of liquidity and access to financial resources:
 - a. How has the crisis affected the level of capital available within the community (savings and access to finance)?
 - b. What levels of household liquidity now prevail within the community? How does this compare with levels before the crisis? Are such levels adequate to sustain or increase agricultural production?
 - c. What types of credit are available within the affected area and who has access to these credit facilities? (Consider loan size, duration and costs on the one hand and business type and size, collateral and other factors on the other).
 - d. What is such credit normally used for?

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- e. What informal finance mechanisms are available? What are the interest rates? Are women able to obtain finance?
 - f. What is the balance between microfinance, conventional commercial finance and government finance within the area? Who can access each of these facilities and how much finance is available through each channel?
2. Determine the extent of financial constraints to economic growth:
- a. Do agricultural producers have adequate access to finance? If not, why? (Credit institutions not available, credit facilities not available, agriculture considered too high risk etc)
 - b. What are the main types of finance that producers need? Do they need working capital or finance for assets? Is there a need for grants or for loans?
 - c. How much finance of each type would be required by the community?
 - d. How much increased production could such finance generate?
 - e. Can traders access adequate finance to purchase crops effectively? If not, why?
 - f. What are the main types of finance that traders need?
 - g. Do non-farm activities have access to adequate finance? What are the main types of finance that they require? What level of economic growth might such finance generate?
3. Determine the constraints to increased availability of and access to finance:
- a. What are the main constraints to providing financial services to the agriculture sector? (Consider manpower, administrative costs, risk, term of loan, level of performance)
 - b. What are the main constraints to accessing available finance? (Consider interest rates, appropriateness of loan term, collateral requirements, credit worthiness, savings history).
4. Assess the most effective methods of increasing the availability of and access to finance:
- a. Is it necessary to introduce low cost finance in order to stimulate redevelopment:
 - i. Could the use of matching grants, competitive grant schemes or other forms of zero-cost finance play a role in the redevelopment of the economy?
 - ii. How could loans at subsidised interest rates be beneficial to agricultural development?
 - b. If such low-cost financial mechanisms were to be introduced, would their benefits to rural development offset their potential detrimental impact on the development of sustainable commercial facilities?
 - c. How could technical assistance assist existing loan institutions develop more appropriate loans for agriculture?
 - d. What role could microfinance play in increasing both the availability of and access to finance? Could MFI's in the area be assisted by technical assistance?
 - e. How could producer access to available financial packages be improved?

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- i. Is it necessary to develop enhanced business planning capacity for producers to access finance?
 - ii. How could better administration of land tenure improve the effectiveness of land as collateral?
 - iii. How could improved regulation of the business environment enhance loan repayment performance?
 - iv. What role could crop insurance play in attracting finance into the agricultural sector?
- f. What new systems (e.g. inventory credit, cooperative finance, etc) could be introduced to enhance producer liquidity? What buyer/supplier financial products could be introduced?

Support services

1. Determine the effectiveness of existing technical supports:
 - a. How relevant are the outputs of research stations to the needs of both producers (in terms of improved technologies) and consumers (in terms of new varieties suitable for both domestic and export markets)?
 - b. How well and through what mechanisms is research correlated with commercial requirements?
 - c. How effective are extension systems in assisting farmers to become both productive and profitable?
 - d. How adequate is the level of extension coverage?
 - e. How adequate is the level of training of extension agents?
2. Assess mechanisms that might strengthen the support provided by research and extension to enhance the process of technical development on the ground:
 - a. How can stakeholders be more engaged in technology development, research and dissemination processes? (Consider institutional reform, improved producer advocacy).
 - b. How can the effectiveness and relevance of research work be improved?
 - c. How can extension messages be most cost-effectively transmitted to farmers? (Consider elements of manpower, training, use of alternative media, use of different extension systems).
3. Assess the extent to which producers are effectively served by representative /advocacy institutions:
 - a. What business associations exist? How representative are they? How can they be more effective at supporting the agriculture sector?
 - b. How does government dialogue with such private sector associations? How can this dialogue be promoted?
 - c. How do existing business associations collaborate to improve overall competitiveness?

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Markets

1. Trade:

- a. Assess the pre-existing and current state of trade in agricultural produce:
 - i. What trading and processing opportunities existed both inside and outside the crisis affected area before the crisis?
 - ii. How important was such trade? (Assess in terms of volume or value)
 - iii. How has the crisis affected trading volumes? How have prices been affected?
 - iv. How have trading patterns changed since the crisis?
 - v. What new constraints exist to finding buyers?
 - vi. What other new constraints now exist to selling products?
 - vii. How were supermarkets, wholesalers, middlemen, local markets, road stalls, etc affected by the crisis?
- b. Determine how such trade can be effectively re-established and strengthened:
 - i. What are the main constraints to increasing local consumption? How can they be addressed? (Consider price, consistency of supply, dumping of imports and competitiveness)
 - ii. What benefits can be expected from increased exports?
 - iii. If it is beneficial, how can farmers be re-linked to export markets? (Consider competitiveness, quality and consistency of production, packaging, standards and certification, and promotional activities)
 - iv. What international trade measures need to be introduced to increase local consumption, and to promote exports?
 - v. How could technical assistance promote such exports? (Consider trade hubs, support to trade fairs and expositions and inbound buyer missions).

2. Market structure and regulation

- a. Assess the current state of agricultural markets:
 - i. Is the market highly concentrated or diffuse? Are there significant barriers to entry? What legal controls exist to protect against monopoly/monopsony situations?
 - ii. How vulnerable is the market to excessive speculation?
 - iii. Are effective market regulations in place?
 - iv. Are quality standards recognized? Do certification bodies exist? Are there appropriate facilities (e.g. laboratories) to verify product quality?
 - v. What proportion of trade fails? Do effective arbitration mechanisms exist?
 - vi. To what extent is the market open and transparent? Are transaction costs reasonable or excessive?

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- vii. Is the market in any way biased towards either producers or consumers?
- b. Determine what measures need to be introduced to improve the efficiency of markets:
 - i. How can transaction costs be reduced?
 - ii. How can appropriate standards be introduced that meet the needs of both local and export markets?
 - iii. How can the proportion of successfully completed trades be increased? How can arbitration mechanisms be strengthened?
 - iv. Do monopsonies/monopolies distort market prices, how could such distortions be minimized?
 - v. How can speculation be minimized without distorting the market?
- 3. Marketing institutions:
 - a. Assess the condition of existing institutional infrastructure:
 - i. How do farmers get access to marketing information?
 - ii. What is the quality of the information (in terms of timeliness, accuracy and relevance)?
 - iii. What are the sources of marketing information?
 - iv. How relevant and useful is the information provided to the needs of farmers in terms of decisions regarding where to sell, when to sell, what price to sell at or what crops to grow?
 - v. What additional information do farmers require?
 - vi. Is cooperative marketing practised in the area? How effective are cooperatives at marketing for farmers?
 - vii. What share of the market do cooperatives represent?
 - viii. Are there other organizations that facilitate linking producers and buyers? Who are they? How do they work? Should they be strengthened?
 - (ix) What market facilities exist? (Local markets, auction rings, exchange floors or national commodity exchanges), how effective are they? How much business is transacted through these facilities?
 - b. Determine what measures need to be introduced to strengthen marketing infrastructure
 - i. How can market information systems be made both cost effective and sustainable?
 - ii. Do cooperatives require strengthening? What assistance would be most cost effective in terms of increasing cooperative services and farmer profitability?
 - iii. Do other institutions require assistance to strengthen the development of value chains?

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- iv. How can linkages between producers and wholesalers/processors be improved to match production with market demand?

Infrastructure

1. Assess the condition of processing, post harvest and market infrastructure:
 - a. What post harvest infrastructure needs to be restored? (E.g. chilling facilities, packing sheds, collection and sorting points, etc) Is the technology efficient and sustainable?
 - b. What processing infrastructure needs to be restored?
 - c. What other types of public and private infrastructure need to be restored or strengthened in order to improve access to markets? (Consider utilities - mobile phone, Internet, transport, consistency of power supplies, and availability of fuel).
2. Determine how such infrastructure might be developed to improve access to markets for both buyer and seller, and reduce transaction costs:
 - a. What technological improvements could be cost effectively introduced to increase the efficiencies and reduce the costs of post-harvest handling?
 - b. How could such technologies be implemented? (Consider loans, matching grants, technical advice).
 - c. What further technical assistance might be required to ensure that the new technologies are effectively used?
 - d. How could utilities and services be rendered more efficient in the target area? What sort of programs would be required to reduce costs of transport, improve supplies of power and increase access to telecommunications?
 - e. How could existing market infrastructure be more effectively utilised? How can existing markets be rendered more efficient (improved management of covered stall facilities, improved services such as water and refuse collection etc). How can auction and exchange floor procedures be streamlined and managed more efficiently? How might national commodity exchanges be developed to achieve international functionality?

Recovering and strengthening agricultural productivity

1. Characterize the principal agricultural production systems before the crisis:
 - a. What were the main livestock activities?
 - b. What were the main crops grown? What were the growing and harvesting seasons?
 - c. Was production profitable before the crisis? What are the perceived constraints to profitability?

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- d. Who were the producers? What size of farm did they operate? What was their level of income? What was the balance between subsistence and commercial production for each crop and livestock activity and for the different farm sizes?
2. Determine the impact of the crisis:
 - a. Which producer groups have been most affected by the crisis?
 - b. Which products have been most affected in terms of volume produced quality and/or price?
 - c. How has the crisis impacted on production? What constraints has the crisis introduced in terms of:
 - i. Livestock, crops, fish, and value added activities?
 - ii. Input supplies?
 - iii. Knowledge and technical skills?
 - iv. Household assets and productive infrastructure?
 - v. Financial resources?
 - vi. Availability of labour?
 - vii. Community cohesion?
3. Identify key constraints to increased production and consider mitigating measures:
 - a. Livestock/crops –
 - i. Are livestock numbers sufficient to allow increased production?
 - ii. How could livestock numbers be increased?
 - iii. What were the crops?
 - iv. What value added activities took place?
 - v. Is the genetic base adequate?
 - vi. How could the genetic base be improved?
 - vii. Is animal disease a significant constraint to productivity? What measures could be taken to mitigate the risks and effects of disease? (Consider breeding, veterinary skills, government control programs, farmer training etc).
 - viii. What concomitant resources (veterinary skills, nutritional capacity, and disease control measures) are required to ensure the sustainability of such enhancements?
 - b. Input supplies – are these limited by availability or access?
 - i. Availability:
 1. Can inputs be sourced locally/redistributed from existing supplies or must they be imported to the locality?
 2. Is there scope for setting up seed banks/local seed production systems? How could this be done?

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3. How appropriate are conventional crops/varieties under the current circumstances? Could new disease resistant/drought tolerant crops/varieties be of benefit? If so, how could they be most effectively introduced?
 4. How could inputs supply systems be most effectively stimulated? (E.g. through the development of farmer service centers or similar institutions).
- ii. Access –
1. Would input supplies be increased if financial resources were made available to farmers?
 2. How could this be best achieved?
- c. Knowledge and Technical skills –
- i. What skills and organizations are available in the community? What are the gaps?
 - ii. Do individuals possess the necessary skills to make the best use of available resources?
 - iii. What level and type of skills must be introduced to have;
 1. the most immediate and
 2. the most long-term impact on productivity? (Consider whether previous skills were adequate for crisis prevention/mitigation or whether new skills and technologies are required to avoid repetition of the crisis)
 - iv. How can the necessary skills be introduced? Farmer field schools, enhanced extension services? Specifically focused TA supports?
- d. Household assets and productive infrastructure – are these adequate to support production? If not-
- i. Are new household assets required (if so, what are they?) or should old assets be redeveloped?
 - ii. How can household assets be redeveloped? How can they be protected from future shock?
 - iii. What productive infrastructure existed in the past? Is this now adequate to support production? If not, how could it be most effectively redeveloped/enhanced?
 - iv. What new community assets/productive infrastructure could be developed to enhance productivity?
- e. Financial resources - is the availability of finance a constraint to production? If so, see section on Financial Services.

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- f. Availability of labour – is adequate labour available to allow enhanced production?
 - i. What sort of labour is required?
 - ii. How could new technologies/mechanisation mitigate labour constraints?
 - iii. If additional labour were required, what mechanisms would be needed to attract it?
 - iv. Can additional labour be sourced locally or externally?
 - v. Does the labour force require retraining? How can this be done?
 - vi. Will additional labour resources require additional social services? If so, what additional services will be required and how can they be provided?
 - g. Community cohesion – How can the community work together to overcome individual producers' constraints to production? (E.g. Community land preparation or weeding of individual farms, or community ownership/management of a tractor for hiring to individuals)
 - i. Could community-based activities or operations significantly enhance productivity?
 - ii. What sort of community-based activities/operations would be most effective?
 - iii. How could such activities/operations best be introduced?
4. Assess the possibilities for increased profitability through strengthening of the value chain and value added activities, and consider the implications at the producer level.
- a. Which value chains provided the most benefit to add value, employment and income to the affected population
 - i. for the domestic market and
 - ii. for the international market?
 - b. How have these been affected by the crisis?
 - c. What constraints exist within these value chains? How could these be best mitigated?
 - d. Do new or additional value added opportunities exist (e.g. Food processing, new crops, new markets, new varieties) that have not yet been exploited?
 - i. If so, how could these be introduced?
 - ii. What would be required of the producers (in terms of quality, timeliness, reliability, new technologies, new assets) to take advantage of such opportunities?
 - iii. How could these new requirements be effectively met?

Recovering, increasing and protecting assets

1. Identify the pre-existing asset base both in terms of availability and access:

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- a. What was the nature and availability of physical household assets (e.g. seeds, tools, and livestock) before the crisis?
 - b. Are the productive assets of the affected community held privately or subject to communal ownership/redistribution?
 - c. What community assets existed before the crisis (e.g., irrigation systems, water harvesting systems, community owned buildings and machinery) and who had access to these assets?
 - d. What natural assets (land, water, fish etc) were available before the crisis? Who had access to these resources?
 - e. What human assets (labour, skills, knowledge) were available before the crisis? How was the availability of labour distributed? Who had access to skills? Who and what proportion of the population had access to relevant knowledge?
 - f. What financial assets (accumulated capital, access to credit,) were available before the crisis? Who had access to such capital and credit?
 - g. What social assets were available before the crisis? (-including kinship structures, religious groups, village councils and also formal and informal cooperatives, value chains, and business clusters).
2. Determine how assets have been affected by the crisis – both mechanisms and impacts.
- a. How have household assets been affected by the crisis?
 - i. If assets have been depleted, what was the cause of the depletion?
 - ii. What has been the direct impact in terms of the current extent and availability of assets?
 - iii. What has been the subsequent impact in terms of agricultural production in particular and livelihoods in general?
 - iv. Which community members (in terms of both poverty status and livelihood) have been most affected?
 - b. How have community assets been affected by the crisis?
 - i. If assets have been depleted, what was the cause of the depletion?
 - ii. What has been the direct impact in terms of the current extent and availability of assets?
 - iii. What has been the subsequent impact in terms of agricultural production in particular and livelihoods in general?
 - iv. Which community members (in terms of both poverty status and livelihood) have been most affected?
 - c. How have the community's natural assets been affected by the crisis?
 - i. If assets have been depleted, what was the cause of the depletion?
 - ii. What has been the direct impact in terms of the current extent and availability of assets?

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- iii. What has been the subsequent impact in terms of agricultural production in particular and livelihoods in general?
 - iv. Which community members (in terms of both poverty status and livelihood) have been most affected?
- d. How have human assets been affected by the crisis?
- i. If human resources have been depleted, what was the cause of the depletion?
 - ii. What has been the direct impact in terms of the current extent and availability of labour, skills and knowledge?
 - iii. What has been the subsequent impact in terms of agricultural production in particular and livelihoods in general?
 - iv. Which community members (in terms of both poverty status and livelihood) have been most affected?
- e. How have financial assets been affected by the crisis?
- i. If capital reserves have been depleted, what was the cause of the depletion? If credit has been reduced what was the cause?
 - ii. What has been the direct impact in terms of reduced capital availability and availability of finance?
 - iii. What has been the subsequent impact in terms of agricultural production in particular and livelihoods in general?
 - iv. Which community members (in terms of both poverty status and livelihood) have been most affected?
- f. How have social assets been affected by the crisis?
- i. If social assets have been depleted, what was the cause of the depletion?
 - ii. What has been the direct impact in terms of the current extent of social groupings?
 - iii. What has been the subsequent impact in terms of agricultural production in particular and livelihoods in general?
 - iv. Which community members (in terms of both poverty status and livelihood) have been most affected?
3. Assess the requirements for assets to sustain livelihoods in the short term and in the longer term.
- a. What assets require most immediate development in order to sustain household food security and maintain livelihoods in the short term? (These will most probably be household assets, financial assets and community assets).
 - i. What level of asset development is required? (Consider numbers of physical assets, amount of finance, numbers of trained personnel, etc).

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- ii. What is the timeframe for such development? (E.g. immediate, before next season, within two years etc).
 - iii. How can such assets development be achieved within available budgets and time frames?
 - iv. What is the most appropriate mechanism for such development (grants, loans, livestock multiplication schemes, provision of seed, TA, food for work – to protect assets, cash for work – to purchase assets, etc)?
- b. What assets require development in order to achieve development in both the agricultural sector and in non-farm activities? (Most probably, human resources, natural assets, and social assets).
- i. What sort of asset base is required at an individual and a community level in order to achieve enhanced production? How can this asset base be developed? (Access to finance, community works programs, development of seed grower groups, development of veterinary services etc).
 - ii. What sort of skills are required and how can these be best developed? (Development of training programs, training of trainers, linkages with educational establishments, curriculum development).
 - iii. How can such development be most effectively achieved within available budgets and timeframes? (Consider linkages with other programs, synergy with government institutions).
 - iv. What are the most appropriate mechanisms for such development?
- c. What asset development is required in order to achieve sustainable economic growth within the community and to reduce vulnerability to future crises? (Most probably natural assets, human resources, community infrastructure and social assets).
- i. What mix of activities is required to achieve sustainable economic growth? What additional skills are required – how can these be best imparted?
 - ii. How can natural resources and community infrastructure (including roads and utilities) be developed? What level of public/private investment is required? How can that be stimulated?
 - iii. What sort of social assets are required both to attract investment and to achieve long-term competitiveness? How can formal and informal business clusters and value chains be strengthened to achieve sustainable competitiveness? How can government policy at local and national levels enhance private sector growth?

Creating, recovering and strengthening rural non-farm activities

1. Identify pre-existing and current non-farm activities and their significance to agriculture and livelihoods in general:

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- a. What non-farm activities have been important to the community before the crisis? Why? Which ones are significant now?
 - b. What services to the agriculture sector were affected? How?
2. Identify non-farm activities that are required to sustain productive agriculture in the region and consider mechanisms for developing these activities:
- a. What non-farm activities are required to provide adequate services, supports and inputs to the different agricultural enterprises that are found in the target area?
 - b. What real opportunities exist for adding value to the available agricultural products? (Considering both opportunities for growth and risks including local and international competition, vulnerability to price fluctuations, variability of supply and other shocks)
 - c. How can such non-farm activities be stimulated in the short-term? (Consider issues of finance, technical skills, business management skills, availability of technology and labour, availability of inputs)
 - d. How can value chains be strengthened in the longer-term? (Consider the development of effective marketing channels, marketing information flow, development of business clusters, local and national government policies and trade agreements).
3. Identify opportunities for additional non-farm activities and employment and consider mechanisms for developing these activities:
- a. What real opportunities are there for further non-farm activities and employment based on the target area's potential advantages? (E.g. location, access to markets, climate, other natural resources, traditional skill sets and the quality of local raw materials and labour) and disadvantages? (Including external competition, risks of climate, disease or political instability).
 - b. What are the constraints to the development of such opportunities? (Consider quality of utilities and transport infrastructure, availability of finance, availability, quality and cost of labour, political and social climate for investment)
 - c. How can these constraints be best addressed in the short term? (Options might include vocational training, importation of labour, aggressive investment promotion (including grant or soft loan finance, tax benefits to offset utility costs and promotion of "Build, Operate and Transfer" schemes), improved labour regulations, and use of technical assistance to manage productive resources and provide marketing information.
 - d. How can these constraints be best addressed in the longer-term? (Options might include specific financial packages for rural businesses, tax benefits for employment generation and apprenticeship schemes, improved education, upgrading of utility infrastructure, improved social services)
 - e. What other donor/government programs are being implemented in this area? What synergies can be derived from these?

Reconnecting agriculture activities to the social and environmental areas

Health

1. Assess if the affected population working on the agriculture sector, has health/nutrition issues that affect their ability to work in agriculture recovery activities:
 - a. What is the nutritional status of the affected population?
 - b. What other public health issues might need to be addressed? (Consider HIV Aids, malaria, avian influenza, other livestock and crop diseases that might affect the local population)
 - c. What sanitation issues might need to be addressed? (Consider water quality, human and animal wastes that could spread disease, etc)
 - d. Are there other social issues affecting agricultural productivity? (Consider alcoholism, domestic violence, etc) How can they be addressed when implementing an agriculture recovery program?
2. Determine how agricultural recovery can address some of the identified health issues that affect agricultural productivity:
 - a. How can nutritional information be linked to crop production and post harvest practices? How can backyard gardening initiatives be directed to ensure nutritional balance in terms of the crops produced? How can such activities be incorporated into the agriculture recovery program?
 - b. What crops/foods could be introduced to address nutritional requirements? What new production or processing skills will be needed?
 - c. What crops/foods could be introduced to address the specific nutritional needs of HIV infected populations? Can agriculture recovery be linked to health providers to support this vulnerable group?
 - d. How can rural backyard gardening techniques be extended to urban HIV infected populations? How could this be achieved on a communal basis? Can specific low labour technologies be introduced?
 - e. How can nutritional training and advice be provided within the context of agricultural training exercises? Is it possible to combine nutritional training with crop extension? Can such information also include healthy food preparation and storage practices? Can this be extended to other areas of sanitation?
 - f. How could health centers address alcoholism problems of people working in the agriculture sector? What incentives could be introduced into the agriculture recovery program?
 - g. What training could be introduced to address domestic violence?

Gender

1. Assessment of gender issues and support groups:

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- a. What do women perceive as the constraints to their access to productive resources?
 - b. How do women's access to finance differ from that of men?
 - c. How do women's rights to property differ from those of men?
 - d. How do women participate in cropping marketing decisions?
 - e. How are labour responsibilities allocated between the sexes?
 - f. What gender-based support groups exist within the community?
 - g. Are existing training programs gender neutral in terms of intake/access, instructors and content?
2. Assessment of mitigating measures:
- a. How can existing constraints be mitigated to allow women equal access to productive resources?
 - i. What legal aspects of property law, financial regulation or the civil code require amendment to achieve equal access? How can this be achieved?
 - ii. What local perceptions need to be changed in order for equal access rights to be upheld by local authorities/financial institutions? How can this be done?
 - iii. What traditional practices/attitudes need to be addressed within the community for women to achieve equal access to productive resources? How can this be most effectively achieved?
 - iv. Do gender-based support groups require strengthening in order to promote women's equitable participation in agricultural development?
 - v. Is it necessary to create a preference scheme for either men or women in training programs to correct existing imbalances?
 - b. How can agricultural development programs be designed to promote gender equality?
 - i. If new crops or post-harvest practices are to be introduced, how will these impact on women's traditional responsibilities, workload or access to finance. Could potentially negative impacts in these areas offset the advantages of increased production?
 - ii. What training materials and training techniques are required to maximize women's participation in development programs? Are the timing, locality nature and presentation of training programs ideal for women to attend?
 - iii. What new agricultural or related technologies can be introduced that will reduce women's workloads (e.g. efficient wood stoves to minimize firewood collection, crop varieties that have low cooking requirements, minimal cultivation techniques that can be undertaken off-season).
 - iv. How can crop-processing technologies be adapted for women's use (e.g. the Bielenberg oil press, hand powered cassava mills)?

Vulnerable Groups (orphans, widows, female-headed households, people living with HIV/AIDS, ex-combatants, etc)

1. Determine the extent and nature of vulnerable groups:
 - a. Are there any vulnerable groups within the affected community?
 - b. Who are they, what proportion of the community do they represent?
 - c. What are the specific constraints upon vulnerable individuals in each group?
 - d. What is the immediate cause of their vulnerability? Are there more fundamental causes? If so, what are they?

2. Determine the status of vulnerable groups:
 - a. What is the current attitude towards vulnerable groups within the community? Are they accepted or isolated?
 - b. How are vulnerable groups informally supported within the community?
 - c. What specific formal programs exist to protect and support vulnerable groups?
 - d. How are vulnerable individuals coordinated or grouped within the affected community? Is there formal recognition of their status?
 - e. Do vulnerable groups have access to administrative rights; can they participate in community decision-making?

3. Assess the opportunities for incorporating vulnerable groups within agricultural recovery programs:
 - a. What specific activities can vulnerable individuals can undertake to participate in agricultural recovery?
 - b. What additional training or resources are required to allow vulnerable groups to undertake these activities?
 - c. What changes are required to traditional attitudes to allow vulnerable groups to optimise their role in community development? How can these changes be brought about?
 - d. What changes are required to local administration in order for vulnerable groups to be able to enjoy equal rights with other community members? How can such changes be introduced?
 - e. What specific training is required (for the community in general) to address both the immediate and the fundamental causes of vulnerability?

Environment

1. Assess the direct impact of the crisis on agriculture productivity:
 - a. Did the crisis create deforestation, soil erosion, desertification, or degradation of pastures and watersheds?
 - b. Did the crisis introduce new pests or diseases into the local environment?

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- c. Did the crisis result in biodegradable/non-biodegradable solid wastes?
 - d. Did the crisis affect marine coastal resources?
2. Determine how agricultural recovery can address some of the identified environmental issues that affect agricultural productivity
 - a. What specific environmental conservation programs should be put in place within the context of agriculture recovery programs (soil conservation, catchments protection etc)?
 - b. How can environmental sustainability be factored into each aspect of rural recovery planning and implementation? What training might be required and who should receive such training?
 - c. What water conservation programs exist within the community? Are they effective? How can they be improved?
 - d. How can local fauna/flora be promoted to enhance natural pest/disease control? How can IPM be introduced?
 - e. How can innovative recycling projects be developed to turn waste into saleable items?
 - f. How can coastal resources be restored?
 3. Determine what might be needed to implement good environmental practices within the context of agricultural recovery programs:
 - a. How can land tenure administration be improved to prevent overgrazing and deforestation?
 - b. How can improved land use planning promote fencing and shutting up of specific areas (especially vulnerable and/or catchments areas)?
 - c. Does the community have the resources to undertake conservation measures that might reduce food production in the short term? What is needed to persuade communities to implement environmentally sustainable development programs? (Consider safety net measures, institutional development, and training).

Education

1. Assess the existing knowledge and skills base for the affected community as they relate to agriculture productivity:
 - a. What agriculture skills exist within the affected community? Who has them? Who needs them?
 - b. What agricultural educational facilities are available?
 - c. Who has access to such education?
 - d. Is the available education relevant or adequate to sustain agricultural development?
 - e. What are the constraints to accessing agricultural skills? How can they be overcome?
2. Assess communications capacities:

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- a. How does the affected community access information? What are its sources?
 - b. What are the information gaps? What can be done about it?
 - c. How are extension messages spread? What factors promote adoption?
 - d. What are the most appropriate media/mechanisms for distributing training and educational information?
3. Determine educational requirements:
- a. What new knowledge or skills are needed to support agricultural recovery? (E.g. low level literacy/numeracy, basic business skills, technical knowledge, fundamental (research level) knowledge, management skills, technical skills, practical skills)
 - b. For how long and in what sort of fora should training take place in each case?
4. Consider different mechanisms for knowledge/skills development:
- a. How can such skills be provided? (Consider universities, vocational training centers, on-the-job training, conventional or innovative extension, radio messages, drama, mobile video units, weekly group lessons provided by contracted institutions and/or a combination of different approaches)
 - b. Do training programs or information packages already exist? If so, what (curricular) changes are required?
 - c. What level of technical assistance is necessary to impart new agricultural skills? How can training of trainers be used? What role can study tours/exchange programs play?
 - d. How can the Internet and distance learning be used to impart knowledge?
 - e. What other new technologies or approaches can be developed to promote sustainable agricultural skills? (E.g. mobile phone based learning systems).
 - f. How can agricultural training be linked with information dissemination components of other programs? Is there scope for leverage and synergy?

Creating Resilience

Safety nets

1. Assess existing formal and/or informal safety net strategies of the affected population:
 - a. How have stakeholders coped with past crises?
 - b. Which coping strategies are positive and should be strengthened in the recovery stage, and which ones undermine the natural resource base that supports agriculture?
 - c. To what extent has the liquidation of assets occurred as a coping response?
 - d. Are there any structured or formal safety net measures? How can they be utilized?

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- e. Are there any social structures (formal or informal) that can be used as the basis of a community safety net response?
2. Determine the most appropriate level and type of responses:
 - a. How should safety net beneficiaries be targeted? What is the estimated size of the target group?
 - b. What sort of assistance should be provided? (E.g. food, cash, a combination of both, medicines etc)
 - c. Is the immediate supply of food justified or will it distort a re-emerging market?
 - d. Should the safety net be designed to prevent further degeneration/protect assets, or should it foster positive economic growth as well?
 - e. What other donor/government programs are being implemented in the area? How can a safety net program achieve synergies with other programs?
 3. Determine the most appropriate safety net mechanisms:
 - a. What sort of mechanisms should be used to provide safety net benefits? (Cash or food for community works programs, attendance at nutrition classes, direct transfer etc).
 - b. What institutional capacity is needed? How can it be provided?
 - c. How long should the safety net program continue? What should be the criteria for graduating from the safety net?
 - d. What additional assistance will be required to achieve graduation of beneficiaries from the safety net? How will such assistance be provided?
 - e. What other insurance mechanisms can be used to protect the most vulnerable against future crisis?

Warning/Prevention

1. Assess existing warning mechanisms and capacities:
 - a. Is there an early warning system? What kind?
 - b. What is the institutional capacity for early warning?
 - c. Is there an emergency preparedness plan?
 - d. Are emergency foodstuffs, cold chain and vaccine available?
 - e. How could an early warning system be put in place? What would be required? How could it be cost effective? How could it be made sustainable?
2. Determine the most appropriate avoidance/mitigation responses:
 - a. What is required to forestall a crisis? Is this within the capacity of the community? If not, how can such capacity be developed?
 - b. Would an early warning system have prevented a crisis?
 - c. What additional responses, after early warning would be required? How could these be implemented?

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- d. What capacity exists for restocking seeds, livestock, etc? Are there facilities to redistribute lost germplasm, etc? How can these sources be supported?
 - e. Who should be the actors in crisis avoidance/mitigation and how would their response be triggered?
 - f. What institutional development at all levels (community, local authorities, national authorities, donor groups) would be required to implement an effective crisis avoidance response?
3. Assess options for preventing future crises:
- a. What were the fundamental causes of the existing crisis? Are they deep seated, requiring long-term fundamental change or are they immediate?
 - b. Can such crises feasibly be prevented in the future? (Famines might be a result of fundamental poverty issues that can be changed in the long term, while earthquakes are immediate and cannot be prevented).
 - c. Crisis prevention might require political/institutional/cultural changes that are beyond the scope of an immediate development response. Nevertheless, how can the development program design avoid perpetuating vulnerability to future crises?

5. Other Programming Issues

The following issues were also identified during our literature review:

Assessment Issues:

- Needs assessments require the clear definition of an overall vision and objectives.
- Assessments should be as participatory as possible during the assessment and programming phase. Be open and transparent in discussions and seek to triangulate response from different quarters.
- Assessments should be made in an informed manner; determine “who” has “what” interests and consider who should be consulted. The most appropriate way to clarify these issues are institutional mapping and stakeholder analysis.

Programming and Implementation

- Steps for a genuine participatory approach include: assisting communities to identify their own priorities; identifying key informants, considering different gender and age groups; studying the locality and facilities with reference to expressed priorities; checking the feasibility of the proposals, obtaining written agreement on beneficiary participation and contributions in implementation; and explaining the constraints of the assistance to communities and their leaders.
- Build on economic interdependence. Rely on respected representatives of the affected groups. They can interpret to their own people why others should have priority for aid and development funds.
- Consider a consultative informal group of local private and public actors who are key players in the local economy, important to ownership and sustainability.
- In shifting from supply-driven modalities of relief to longer-term rehabilitation interventions, is essential that the latter are designed according to actual needs and that programming decisions support a well defined goal.
- Donors and local partners should have a clear idea of what the problems are; what interventions have been considered; who the domestic allies and possible opponents are; which options have been chosen, in what order and for what reasons; and what investments are being considered in what areas and why.
- The generally accepted development programming concepts of sustainability, return on investment, risk assessment, technical standards, phasing out, institutional take-over

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capacity and criteria for monitoring and evaluation need to be adapted to fit the actual conditions of the crisis and recovery in specific situations.

Achieving Impact

- Focus on short-term effective interventions. Establish priorities that will quickly and effectively generate employment and stimulate the economy.
- Interventions should concentrate on sectors in which large numbers of the affected populations operate. Focus on cross-sector services that support several sectors. Try to deliver results that can be replicated by the community without further assistance.
- Procure goods and services from local sources as much as possible to generate jobs, but avoid distorting the economy in an unsustainable manner.
- Coordination difficulties are particularly evident in agricultural rehabilitation because activities that generally fall under initiatives for food security and agricultural support tend to cut across several sectors and government ministries. This can be mitigated by prompt, well-programmed assistance, which links together various assistance sectors..

Political Factors

- External aid input has potential political implications in post-conflict environments. Assistance should be programmed in a manner that is sensitive to the root causes of conflict. It should reach the victims promptly.
- Political and social issues cannot be avoided and if properly managed can be very helpful to any development initiative. However, care should be taken to avoid political distortion of such initiatives either by groups or by individuals.

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