

# FOOD AID TARGETING IN EAST AFRICA

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**Volume I:**

**Executive Summary,  
Cross-Country Issues  
and  
Recommendations**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report aims to provide recommendations on improving the targeting of emergency food aid, primarily in response to drought-induced, slow-onset food crises, in Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya. It also aims to identify issues of common interest and shared experience in the targeting of food aid, which could form an agenda for regional cooperation. Its findings are based on approximately three weeks' discussions in the capitals and selected food-insecure areas of each country during July-September 1998. Relief operations during the year of 1997/8 were taken as a reference period to focus discussion on recent experience.

The **Introduction** stresses that while the objectives of targeting are relatively easy to agree on in principle, they are always problematic to implement. In practical terms, targeting is not a separate activity but an objective which must be applied through all phases of a relief operation, from the initial needs assessment and design, through implementation and evaluation. A practical framework is set out for analyzing this complex process in three stages:

- At the national level (Stage 1), governments, donors and national Early Warning systems (including FEWS) are involved in decisions on identifying and prioritizing areas in need of food aid, and on the design of appropriate interventions (which kind of aid, how much, for how many people and for how long, what distribution mechanisms, which implementing institutions to use). At this level, information systems are central to targeting decisions.
- At the sub-national level (Stage 2), there is a further refinement of area targeting, in which local government and implementing agencies (NGOs and others) decide on the distribution within the Region or District, to community or village level.
- Finally, at the beneficiary level (Stage 3), households or individual recipients are selected by administrative systems or through the mechanism of distribution. It is at this stage that the choice of mechanisms such as Food for Work (applying self-targeting through the work requirement) or School Feeding (selecting beneficiaries primarily by age / demographic group) can determine who receives the aid.

For each of the three countries, the report reviews current targeting systems, including the policy and institutional context (particularly links between decision-makers and information-providers). The country reports are included as appendices in a separate document, so that readers may refer to the details as desired. Specific policy guidelines on the targeting of food aid, taking account of links to food security and development policy, are found to be absent in all three countries. The report recommends that the development of such guidelines would contribute to more focused targeting in future emergencies, and that there could be scope for discussion of a regional protocol on food aid (perhaps along similar lines to the draft Code of Conduct proposed for IGAD).

The major events and Stage 1 targeting decisions during the 1997 drought crisis and the El Niño floods which followed, are outlined for each country. Two focus areas were then selected in each country for more detailed discussions of a range of different targeting experiences at Stages 2 and 3.

For **Tanzania**, the main conclusions are that information systems are patchy and over-focused on balance sheets of grain production and consumption. A broader framework of analysis to take account of the economy and coping capacities in different areas needs to be integrated into the relief needs assessment process. Government directives on targeting at household / individual level are more developed than in the other two countries, but problems with their implementation point to the need for a review of food aid policy in general, and more detailed training and support for local government in food-insecure areas.

In **Uganda**, it was found that drought and flood were much less important determinants of food aid needs than refugees and internal displacement. However, vulnerability to drought and other shocks appears to be rising. The virtual absence of information systems to detect and assess potential food crises is therefore a matter of concern. In the medium to long term, a decentralized early warning system in selected Districts may be needed. In the short term, it is suggested that FEWS should focus assistance on the development of the institutional and analytical framework for inter-agency assessment missions, which are even more important than usual in a context of limited monitoring information.

**Kenya**, in contrast to its neighbors, has multiple sources of food security information and generally reliable data; but the linkage between available information and targeting decisions is weak. Recommendations are made in support of the proposed national Drought Management Secretariat, which could provide such a link by compiling and comparing information from vulnerable Districts, and ensuring that it reaches the right people at the right time. Significant quantities of food aid were provided by the Kenyan Government in response to the drought, and were targeted almost entirely separately from international aid. Any initiative to improve the beneficiary-level targeting of government food aid will need to come from the central policy level. Regarding the international relief system, examples of targeting through school feeding, Food-for-Work (FFW) and supplementary feeding programs are discussed.

Eight major issues which cut across country differences are discussed in Chapter 2. On **information systems** for national (Stage 1) targeting decisions, the report stresses the importance of analysis gaps rather than data gaps, and the often weak links between available information and targeting decisions, as areas where significant but relatively low-cost improvements could be achieved. One suggested approach to these problems is to develop agreed methodologies and procedures for inter-agency needs assessment missions, in advance of emergencies (i.e. as an element of national disaster preparedness). Such missions are very influential in determining the scale and initial targeting design of relief operations, yet relatively little technical work has been done on their methods and on ensuring that all available information (early warning and baseline/ vulnerability analysis) is accessible and used by them. The need for decentralization of national Early Warning capacity to selected food-insecure areas, in order to integrate analysis of vulnerability and coping capacity into the needs assessment and targeting process, is linked with the complementary need for a central unit to process, compare, and communicate decentralized analysis to the appropriate decision-makers.

On the subject of **alternative targeting mechanisms** at the beneficiary level, the report finds that each mechanism has its advantages and limitations. Free distributions should be supplemented or partially replaced by FFW, school feeding or other types of program where capacity exists, but are likely to remain an important element in large-scale emergency operations. Needs assessment missions should include an assessment of targeting possibilities at the earliest stage of response planning. The choice of less-preferred commodities as a targeting measure appears to have limited potential in emergency situations: no successful examples were found during this study.

The **comparative cost-effectiveness** of different targeting methods was impossible to quantify, partly due to a lack of monitoring and evaluation data on the impact of emergency food aid, and partly to the inherent difficulty of measuring targeting costs on the one side, and benefits to recipients on the other. Evidence suggests that there is no straight-forward correlation between the type of targeting method used and cost-effectiveness. Quality of management and planning are probably more important determinants of cost-effectiveness. Free distributions are not necessarily more expensive than other mechanisms, though they do tend to be larger-scale.

The need to plan for possible future relief operations in the context of **disaster preparedness** is considered under the three headings of policy development; institutional preparedness (which does not necessarily imply permanent relief infrastructures); and safety-net programming in vulnerable areas (designing development interventions which can expand to serve as a basis for relief assistance in crises).

Limited use was made of **market-based approaches** to targeting during the reference period. Carefully designed direct interventions (such as emergency livestock purchase in pastoralist areas) can help to limit relief needs, but probably a much greater potential for minimizing food aid lies in the promotion of efficient private-sector markets. The contrasting experience during 1997/8 of Kenya (where private commerce filled a large part of the food gap) and Tanzania (where the markets were partly restricted and were much less successful in equalizing and filling food shortages) illustrates the critical importance of the economic and policy environment to food security.

In all three countries, a similar pattern of constraints and problems with **local-government targeting** was identified. Capacity and resource limitations are a major factor, but it also appears inherently more difficult for government institutions than for outsiders to systematically select and exclude areas and population groups at each level of the administrative hierarchy.

Differences in targeting relief responses to **drought and flood** emergencies are briefly identified. While drought-induced food crises are by far the most important cause of relief needs in East Africa and are therefore the focus of information and response systems, the impacts of the El Niño floods (especially in Kenya) have usefully concentrated attention on the need for disaster preparedness to include an element of flexibility and readiness for the unexpected.

Finally, the study findings confirm that there are significant common interests and **regional dimensions** to the food aid targeting issues discussed, and recommends an initial meeting, perhaps convened under the EAC, to explore potential directions for collaborative work and joint initiatives.

The report makes a total of 29 specific recommendations, which are listed in a summary table in chapter 3, and checked according to whether action is needed by FEWS; USAID / Donors / UN; National Governments; or NGOs and other implementing agencies.

## ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

ACF	Action Contre la Faim (Action against Hunger)
ALRMP	Arid Lands Resource Management Project (Kenya)
AMA	Africa Muslim Agency
ASAL	Arid and Semi-arid Lands (Kenya)
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer (District governments, Uganda)
CMEWU	Crop Monitoring & Early Warning Unit, FSD, Ministry of Agriculture (Tanzania)
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CSB	corn-soya blend
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
DALDO	District Agriculture and Livestock Development Officer (Tanzania)
DFID	Department for International Development (UK government)
DPIRP	Drought Preparedness, Intervention & Recovery Programme, (Kenya)
DRSRs	Department of Resource Surveys and Remote Sensing (Ministry of Planning, Kenya)
DSDDC	District Social Dimensions of Development Committee (Kenya)
DSG	District Steering Group (Kenya)
EAC	East African Cooperation
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Office
ELCT	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania
EMOP	Emergency Operations Program (WFP)
EU	European Union
EW	Early Warning
EWS	Early Warning System
FASWOG	Food and Agricultural Sector Working Group (Tanzania)
FEA	Food Economy Assessment (SCF-UK methodology)
FEWS	Famine Early Warning System Project (USAID)
FFW	Food for Work
FSD	Food Security Department, Ministry of Agriculture (Tanzania)
GOK	Government of Kenya
GOT	Government of Tanzania
GOU	Government of Uganda
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (German Technical Co-operation)
IDEA	Investment in Developing Export Agriculture (USAID Project, Uganda)
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IFSP-E	Integrated Food Security Project - Eastern (GTZ project, Kenya)
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
IIRO	International Islamic Relief Organization
KFFHC	Kenya Freedom from Hunger Campaign
KMD	Kenya Meteorology Department
KRCS	Kenya Red Cross Society
LC	Local Council (Uganda)
MCH	Mother-and-child health programs
MSF/ B	Medecins sans Frontieres (Belgium)
MSF/ F	Medecins sans Frontieres (France)
MSF/ S	Medicos sin Fronteras (Spain)
MT	metric ton (1,000 kg)
MUAC	mid-upper-arm circumference (a rapid-assessment measurement of malnutrition)
NCPB	National Cereals and Produce Board (Kenya)
NEWFIS	National Early Warning and Food Information System (Uganda / IGAD)
NFRC	National Famine Relief Coordinator (Kenya)
NOC	National (Disaster) Operations Center (Kenya)
NPA	Norwegian People's Aid
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN)
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OP	Office of the President (Kenya)

OXFAM (UK /I)	Oxfam (United Kingdom and Ireland)
PHC	Primary Health Care
PMO	Prime Minister's Office (Tanzania)
RALDO	Regional Agriculture and Livestock Development Officer (Tanzania)
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SCF	Save the Children Fund (UK)
SF	Supplementary Feeding
SFP	School Feeding Program
SGR	Strategic Grain Reserve (Tanzania)
TANDREC	Tanzania Disaster Relief Committee
TCRS	Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service (Tanzania)
TFNC	Tanzania Food and Nutrition Center
UNDHA	United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs (replaced by OCHA)
UNDMT	United Nations Disaster Management Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
URCS	Uganda Red Cross Society
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAM	Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping Project (WFP)
WFH	weight-for-height (malnutrition measure)
WFP	World Food Program (UN)

<b>Administrative levels / hierarchies</b>				
Admin	1	<b>TANZANIA</b>	<b>UGANDA</b>	<b>KENYA</b>
Admin	2	Region	District (LC5)	Province
Admin	3	District	County (LC4)	District
Admin	4	Division	Sub-county (LC3)	Division
Admin	5	Ward	Parish (LC2)	Location
Admin	6	Village	Village (LC1)	Sub-location

# 1. INTRODUCTION

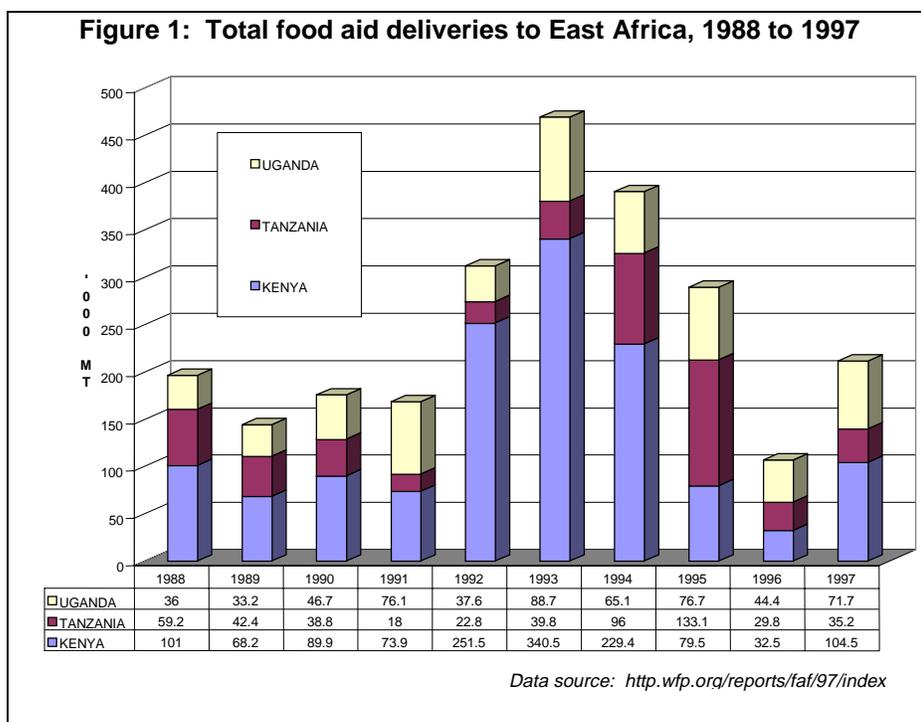
## 1.1. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The overall objective of this study, as defined in the Scope of Work, is “to produce a set of concrete recommendations on improving the targeting of emergency food aid in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda in order to improve its impact on vulnerable populations, to increase its cost-effectiveness and to reduce its negative effects on development<sup>1</sup>”.

The three neighboring countries of East Africa were chosen for a joint comparative study for three main reasons:

- Firstly, their food security is inter-linked, particularly by significant cross-border trade in staple foods and by the tendency for major climatic fluctuations (such as the droughts and floods of 1997/8) to affect the whole region. Increasingly, too, donors are seeking to assess regional as well as national contexts for the targeting of ever-scarcer food aid resources.
- Secondly, they share key features and dilemmas in relation to food aid targeting, including: how should recurrent but irregular emergency food needs be prepared for and managed? what kinds of institutional arrangements and information systems are best suited to this situation, especially where chronically vulnerable areas with frequent food needs are already clearly identified? Although there are also, of course, many differences among the three countries, these similarities and shared concerns make a comparison of experience valuable.
- Thirdly, with the revitalization of the regional organization which links the three countries, East African Cooperation (EAC), there is an opportunity for regional exchange and discussion of these issues in the framework of a constructive development-focused agenda.

Figure 1, by way of context, shows the fluctuating quantities of foreign-funded food aid received by East Africa over the past ten years. These figures do not include food aid provided by the national governments (or independent agents such as some NGOs and religious or community-based organizations): the coordination of government with donor /UN /NGO targeting is one of the issues addressed in the discussion of each country.



<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 7 for complete Scope of Work.

Other issues on which the report focuses include the types of targeting mechanism used for emergency food aid, particularly the alternatives to the dominant but always problematic practice of administrative targeting of free rations. The main emphasis of the study is on targeting decisions made at the national level (i.e. geographic targeting and the design of interventions to reach intended beneficiaries – see section 1.2 below), and on the information systems needed to support such decisions. The study deals with targeted food aid as a response to crises triggered by natural events impacting vulnerable populations (drought, and to a lesser extent flood): it does not address the very different problems of targeting assistance to conflict-displaced and refugee populations.

1997/8 was taken as a reference year, because the relief operations were mostly finished at the time of the study, but were recent enough for impressions and lessons learned to be fresh in people's minds; and because the sharp rise in regional relief food needs of that year (see Figure 1) had focused attention on information gaps, the need for preparedness, and the inherent unpredictability of emergencies.

## **Methodology**

In order to achieve the study objectives, the consultants spent approximately three weeks in each country: July 13 to August 4 in Tanzania (including a meeting with senior executives of EAC); August 5 to 21 in Uganda; and August 24 to September 12 in Kenya. In the capitals, discussions with key decision-makers and information-providers from government, donors, UN and NGOs focused on the policy and institutional context of food aid targeting at the national level, and on experiences and perceptions of targeting during 1997/8.

In each country, two focus areas were then selected for field-work. The areas chosen were among those severely affected by drought and/or flood in 1997/8, and had received food aid in response. Beyond that, the selection of areas aimed to cover a variety of different targeting mechanisms, agencies, and outcomes (successful and less so). The aims of the field-work were to give some depth and "reality-check" to the issues identified at the national level, and to spotlight some of the key constraints and factors for success in targeting at the implementation end of the process. Local government officers, staff of NGOs and other agencies<sup>2</sup> involved in food aid distributions, community leaders and food aid recipients were interviewed in each focus area. A semi-structured interview approach was used, with a check-list of topics (see Appendix 6) rather than a questionnaire. The people consulted and the documents collected, both in the capitals and the field-work areas, are listed in the Appendices.

After completion of the field-work, half-day debriefing workshops were held in Dar es Salaam (September 24) and Nairobi (September 28) to solicit feedback and discussion on the provisional findings.

## **1.2. TARGETING METHODS AND STAGES: A PRACTICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **1.2.a. Definitions of targeting**

There is a sizable literature on the concepts and principles of targeting welfare and aid programs to the poor and vulnerable, some of which is listed in Appendix 4<sup>3</sup>. This report does not go deeply into the theoretical background or the literature on targeting in other countries, but a brief introduction to the definitions and concepts used in the report will be helpful.

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<sup>2</sup> Such as the national Red Cross Societies and locally-based religious organizations.

<sup>3</sup> Literature reviews can be found in Lundberg & Diskin, 1994 [ref 153] and Sharp, 1997 and 1998 [refs 158, 159]

Two complementary definitions of 'targeting' itself are:

- "restricting the coverage of an intervention to those who are perceived to be most at risk, in order to maximize the benefit of the intervention whilst minimizing the cost" [Jaspars and Young 1995, ref 152], and
- "the practical process of defining, identifying and reaching the intended recipients of aid" [Sharp 1998, ref 159].

### **1.2.b. Objectives of targeting**

The reasons for attempting to target aid (rather than distributing to everyone) can be divided into *humanitarian* reasons (to ensure that the neediest are given priority and are adequately assisted); *efficiency* reasons (to maximize the impact, and reduce the waste, of limited resources); and *development* reasons (to minimize dependency and economic disincentives). Unfortunately, it is very much harder to implement targeting than to define it, and these three main objectives (particularly the humanitarian and efficiency aims) can sometimes be in conflict, since restricting entitlements to aid inevitably engenders competition (in which the vulnerable are almost by definition disadvantaged) and increases the likelihood that some needy people will be excluded.

Measuring the success of targeted programs in reaching these three objectives is quite problematic, due to gaps in baseline and monitoring information, frequent lack of funding for the evaluation of emergency aid, and the inherent difficulty of separating the effects of targeting from other factors in the overall management and outcome of relief interventions. Three key parameters which can be estimated (either qualitatively or quantitatively) to indicate the effectiveness of targeting are exclusion errors, inclusion errors, and leakage, as defined in the following paragraphs.

The exclusion of some members of the target group from the distribution (*'exclusion error'*) and the inclusion of some non-target group members (*'inclusion error'*) are the two main ways in which the design or implementation of targeting can fail. A perfect targeting system, of course, would include all the needy (zero exclusion error), and only the needy (zero inclusion error). However, it is more realistic to think in terms of trade-offs between the two types of error. In general, reducing one will tend to increase the other: their relative importance depends very much on the objectives and context of the program in question. High inclusion errors in food aid distributions frequently have the effect of reducing the quantity of food received by each beneficiary to the point where it may have little or no impact on the plight of the neediest.

The term *'leakage'* is used in this report to mean resources which are channeled into the distribution system but do not reach the beneficiaries. This can be due to any of a range of factors - poor management, in-storage losses, in-kind payments for transport or handling, theft, corruption, etc.

### **1.2.c. Targeting methods**

There are four basic types of targeting method:

1. *Administrative targeting*, in which areas and/or beneficiaries are selected by outsiders (such as project managers or government officials), using pre-defined criteria or indicators which should be as objective, measurable and standardized as possible. This is the type of targeting method used in welfare systems in developed countries. However, it has major weaknesses when applied in situations where management capacity, accountability procedures, and the feasibility of collecting and analyzing the necessary standardized data are limited. At the beneficiary level of targeting, it gives considerable responsibility and power to decision-makers, laying them open to risks of bias, corruption, intimidation, theft or honest error due to poor information. At the geographic area level, there is no alternative to administrative targeting: data and information systems for this level are therefore crucial.

2. *Self-targeting*, in which beneficiaries themselves decide whether or not to take up the offer of aid. In order to achieve this, the intervention needs to be designed so as to offer a benefit which only the target group are expected to want (such as a low-preference commodity or a small ration) and /or to

incur a cost which only the target group will be willing to pay (such as the work requirement in FFW projects). Successful self-targeting removes the need for costly and potentially biased administrative selection, and self-targeting elements in program design tend to limit the number of beneficiaries, thus saving on food aid quantities. However, it does not remove the need for good information and analysis, which are needed in order to determine the cost and benefit factors which will attract the intended target group. Inclusion and exclusion errors can both be high if the design is wrong, or if limitations on the number of beneficiaries produce competition for entry among the eligible.

3. *Market targeting*, in which there is no direct selection of individual recipients, but interventions are made in the market to manipulate price, supply, or demand either of food or of commodities sold by the target group in exchange for food. Examples are releasing strategic grain stocks onto markets in targeted areas (to increase the supply and therefore bring down or stabilize the price); or purchasing livestock from pastoralists during a food crisis (to maintain demand for this vital asset and keep up the price, thus supporting the purchasing power of livestock owners). A disadvantage of such market-based targeting is that it tends to be quite indiscriminate in its effect, benefiting broad groups such as all maize-purchasers or all livestock-sellers in the area. It is therefore generally more advantageous to the better-off (who are likely to buy and sell larger quantities) than the poor. Well-designed market interventions can, however, provide an alternative to food aid by strengthening people's own capacity to cope with a crisis, and price stabilization in food-insecure areas is a common objective of government food sales (e.g. in Tanzania – see appendix 1). It is rare for *food aid* resources as such to be used directly in markets with the aim of reaching particular target groups<sup>4</sup>, particularly in emergencies. A broader but related issue is the role of efficient markets in redistributing food shortages, ensuring availability for those who can purchase, and thus minimizing the overall need for food aid.

4. *Community targeting*, in which beneficiaries are selected not by outside managers but by insiders – community members who are themselves potential beneficiaries. Selection criteria tend to be more subjective and less standardized than in administrative targeting. The institutional features and the effectiveness of community targeting vary enormously, but it is a widespread and important element at the final (end-user) stage of targeting. Governments, WFP and NGOs (in the three countries studied here and more widely in Africa) frequently stress the importance of community decision-making, often through committees, in food aid distributions. It is, however, important to realize that beneficiaries and their communities may have quite different concepts of vulnerability and fairness from those assumed by the outsiders designing food aid programs.

In practice, these four targeting types are often combined. Food aid distribution programs usually include elements of two or more targeting methods at different stages (see below). Area/geographic targeting is entirely administrative, while beneficiary targeting often features a combination of administrative, self-targeting and community selection elements. The various *distribution mechanisms* for food aid (selective free distribution, food-for-work, school feeding, etc.) also, in practice, tend to include elements of more than one type of targeting. For example, free distributions are primarily targeted by administrative or community decision, but self-targeting elements can be introduced through the choice of commodity distributed, the timing or location of distributions, etc. Food-for-work, on the other hand, is generally considered self-targeting because the non-needy will exclude themselves by choosing not to work, but in reality a degree of administrative selection is very often added (due to limited resources or other factors).

#### 1.2.d. Targeting stages

In practice, ***targeting is not a separate activity, but an objective or principle which runs through all phases of a relief operation.*** To be successful, the targeting principle needs to be integrated into the needs assessment and design phases, the implementation (including beneficiary identification and the actual distribution arrangements), and the monitoring and evaluation of impact. This makes targeting particularly difficult to analyze and to improve, as multiple activities and actors are involved at different stages of the process. Table 1 suggests a practical breakdown of this complex process

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<sup>4</sup> Monetization, where food aid is sold to non-target markets (such as urban flour mills) in order to generate funds for other purposes, is not considered a method of targeting food aid.

into three main stages (two stages of geographic area targeting, and the final stage of beneficiary selection).

- *Stage 1*, geographic area targeting at national level, involves national governments, donors, UN, some international NGOs, and early warning systems (FEWS and government systems) in answering the basic planning and allocation questions (*what* is needed? *where?* *how much*, for *how many people?* *when* and *for how long?*).
- At *Stage 2*, geographic area targeting within Regions or Districts, the main actors are usually local government and implementing agencies (NGO and others). FEWS and the national EWS may also play a role at this stage, depending on the level of detail and disaggregation attainable in their information and analysis, though their more central role is at the national level.
- Finally *Stage 3* targeting, the selection of individual or household beneficiaries within targeted areas and communities is usually carried out by local government (at village or equivalent level), community leaders or representatives, and the field staff of implementing agencies.

Area targeting at Stages 1 and 2 is an essential first step in most food aid operations, whatever delivery mechanism is to be used within the assisted areas. Usually some form of beneficiary selection (at Stage 3) is aimed for *in addition* to area targeting, although in some circumstances a *blanket distribution* (to everyone in the area selected during Stage 2) may be appropriate.

National-level decision-makers and information-providers are remote from the implementation of Stage 3 targeting, in which the logistics and practical constraints of distribution become very important. However, they do make key design decisions on *how* beneficiary targeting should be carried out: in particular, the definition of *who* the intended target group are and how they might be identified; the choice of implementing agency; and the choice of the appropriate distribution mechanism(s) to ensure that the intended target group are, as far as possible, the actual recipients.

**Table 1: Three Main Stages of Targeting**

	<b>AREA (GEOGRAPHIC) TARGETING</b>		<b>BENEFICIARY TARGETING</b>
	<b>▽ STAGE 1. FROM NATIONAL TO REGIONAL /DISTRICT LEVEL</b>	<b>▽ STAGE 2. WITHIN REGIONS/ DISTRICTS (OR PROGRAM AREAS)</b>	<b>▽ STAGE 3. WITHIN COMMUNITIES – FINAL RECIPIENT LEVEL</b>
<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification and prioritization of areas needing food aid [<i>WHAT &amp; WHERE?</i>]</li> <li>• Determination of quantities needed [<i>HOW MUCH, HOW MANY PEOPLE?</i>]</li> <li>• Determination of timing and duration [<i>WHEN?</i>]</li> <li>• Allocation and delivery of resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• division of quantities received among sub-districts / communities/ broad economic groups</li> <li>• supervision and implementation of distribution, including beneficiary-level targeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• selecting, identifying &amp; distributing to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ groups (demographic or socio-economic)</li> <li>➤ households</li> <li>➤ individuals</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>ACTORS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National government</li> <li>• Donors / UN</li> <li>• National EWS</li> <li>• FEWS</li> <li>• Some international NGOs / agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional / District governments</li> <li>• implementing NGOs / agencies</li> <li>• (<i>National EWS</i>)</li> <li>• (<i>FEWS</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local government (down to village level)</li> <li>• community structures</li> <li>• implementing NGOs / agencies</li> </ul>

### 1.2.e. Information needs

Different types of information are needed for the different stages of targeting. For geographic area targeting (Stages 1 and 2), a comparative overview is ideally required of the situation in all vulnerable areas, provided by a combination of:

- **early warning** (monitoring) information to detect trends and danger signals;
- **baseline** (vulnerability or food economy) analysis, which forms the context for interpreting monitoring signals;
- **assessment missions** to areas of concern. Such missions are often inter-agency, and are often very important in producing a consensus on feasible planning figures and thus triggering a response from government and/ or donors.

Basic statistics (especially disaggregated population figures and production estimates) are also important in the central planning of targeted distributions.

By contrast, the information needed for beneficiary (Stage 3) targeting is, by its nature, very decentralized and is often not formally collected at all. Early warning and other information at the design stage can help to define the characteristics of the target group, but the practical task of matching these indicators to actual households and individuals is often carried out within communities or by field staff of implementing agencies, with little scope for cross-checking. Major disconnects can arise between the definition of the intended target groups in program design, and the reality at distribution level, as discussed in some of the focus area examples. Objective comparable data for this stage of targeting is an unrealistic goal in most emergency food-aid contexts.

### 1.3. STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The report has been divided into two volumes. The three individual country reports have been placed in Volume II, along with the appendices. Readers may wish to read the full country reports (Appendices 1-3) before proceeding to the next chapter, so that the national level context is clear before the conclusions and recommendations are presented.

After this Introduction, Chapter 2 summarizes the key themes and conclusions from the three countries, and suggests some cross-country action priorities. Recommendations are made throughout the report, highlighted in bold text and flagged by a framed number in the left-hand margin: they are also summarized in table format, for ease of reference, in Chapter 3.

Appendices 1 to 3 in Volume II discuss the study findings in Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya respectively, highlighting major issues and giving country-specific recommendations. References, persons contacted, the interview checklist and the Scope of Work can also be found in the Appendices.

## 2. CROSS-COUNTRY ISSUES

### 2.1. INFORMATION NEEDS FOR AREA TARGETING (STAGES 1 and 2)

Table 2 summarizes the key weaknesses in each country's information systems for area targeting decisions. As discussed in detail in Appendices 1 to 3, there are various gaps in data availability (such as agricultural production estimates in Tanzania, standardization of nutritional assessments in Kenya, etc.). However, for short-term affordable improvements in targeting, it is **RECOMMENDED that FEWS and other donor technical assistance should focus on the analysis gaps rather than the data gaps, and on the linkage of available information to targeting decisions at the national level.**

1

**Table 2: Key information gaps**

	<i>Tanzania</i>	<i>Uganda *</i>	<i>Kenya</i>
<b>EARLY WARNING</b> <i>monitoring &amp; prediction</i>	<b>PATCHY</b> (over-centralized)	<b>WEAK</b>	<b>GOOD</b>
<b>VULNERABILITY / BASELINE</b> <i>analysis (context for interpreting EW signals)</i>	<b>WEAK / PATCHY</b>	<b>WEAK</b>	<b>GOOD</b>
<b>BASIC STATISTICS</b> <i>(population, production etc.)</i>	<b>PATCHY</b> (eg poor communication of agricultural data)	<b>WEAK</b>	<b>GOOD</b>
<b>LINKAGE</b> <i>of available information to targeting decisions</i>	<b>GOOD</b> (but hampered by patchy information and analysis)	<b>?</b> (information too limited for national targeting decisions: assessment missions important)	<b>WEAK</b>
<small>* Uganda comments refer to drought/ flood- triggered food problems, not conflict-related needs (see Appendix 2)</small>			

One immediate way of approaching this is through the development of methodologies and protocols for inter-agency needs assessment missions, on the 'RAT' (rapid assessment team) model, as recommended for each of the three countries in the attached appendices. It is further **RECOMMENDED that these protocols should integrate an assessment of Stage 3 targeting and distribution options with the estimation of food aid needs** (compare WFP's draft guidelines, ref. 163). Relatively little investment has so far been made in developing assessment-team methodologies, despite the fact that their findings are frequently the decisive factor in setting planning figures for relief responses. Such missions generally spend very limited time in the field and are very dependent on the quality of existing information.

2

The assessment and quantification of food aid needs remains a very inexact science with a large measure of judgment and estimation. A margin of error is inevitable, both because of incomplete information and because there is an element of prediction involved in forecasting needs over the period of a relief operation. The examples of Tanzania and Uganda in 1997/8 illustrate this: in both cases, initial planning figures for the drought relief operations were later drastically reduced in the light of better evidence and unfolding events. As stressed in the introduction, targeting is not a one-off separate activity but involves continuous re-assessment throughout the planning, implementation and evaluation cycle.

Current lines of work relating to area targeting and **needs assessment**, by FEWS (based on vulnerability assessment), WFP /VAM (with an emphasis on vulnerability and geo-referenced data), and SCF-UK (using their Food Economy Assessment method <sup>5</sup>) share the core common ground of aiming to integrate a wider economic perspective into the analysis of food crises, moving away from the over-narrow focus on food-crop production and balance sheets which still dominates much of the initial assessment of food aid needs, particularly at sub-national government level. Factoring in the “coping capacity” of populations in the face of droughts or other shocks to the food system is a critical area where implementation is lagging far behind the understanding of famine processes which has emerged from research and experience over the past three decades.

One of the most important implications for information systems is the need for **decentralization**. Vulnerability, coping capacity or food economy (whichever approach is taken) cannot be analyzed or monitored at aggregate national levels. It must be based in a more detailed and location-specific understanding of people’s livelihoods. In order to be affordable, such decentralized systems should not aim for national coverage but focus on selected food-insecure areas – at least in East African countries where the geographic scope of vulnerable areas is relatively well-known and static. Kenya’s DPIRP / ALRMP system is a good model of such an approach: it also highlights the need for a central coordination and information-screening capacity to balance the decentralized analysis and link it to national and international response mechanisms (see Appendix sections 3.1.c. and 3.3.) .

## **2.2. ALTERNATIVE MECHANISMS for BENEFICIARY TARGETING (STAGE 3)**

### **2.2.a. Targeting free distributions**

Within selected areas and communities, the targeting of free food aid distributions is always highly problematic and often fails. One of the major problems encountered in all three countries during the 1997/8 drought relief operations was the widespread tendency to share allocated rations among larger numbers of people than planned for in the needs assessment. Often, quantities of food aid allocated on the basis of targeting a percentage of the population are in fact distributed on a blanket basis within communities. The result of this *‘thin blanket syndrome’* is a dilution of the impact of the food aid, to the point where it may have little effect on the food situation of the neediest. Within communities, there is often strong resistance to the idea of excluding some people from distributions.

One response to this problem is to focus on alternative mechanisms for food aid distribution, as discussed below. However, since free distributions are likely to remain important in large-scale relief operations, it is also important to consider ways of improving their impact.

*Defining the target group* for free distributions is the first obstacle. In principle, it is now widely accepted in the aid community that vulnerability to famine is primarily an economic condition, and that the people most in need of aid are those members of communities hit by a food crisis who are least able to cope, due to lack of assets and earning potential. In practice, selecting beneficiaries by relative poverty using socio-economic indicators is the most difficult kind of targeting to implement and is often resisted by beneficiary communities, on the grounds that everyone is poor, and that selective distributions cause conflict and undermine established social support networks. Different perceptions of “vulnerability” and need also imply different approaches to targeting assistance, as summarized in Table 3. Interestingly, nearly all the beneficiary informants interviewed during this study, in all three countries, saw vulnerability in social terms and felt that the old, widows, orphans etc. should be prioritized for aid, while the aid agencies defined it in either economic or nutritional terms.

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<sup>5</sup> See refs 142, 156 and 157 for a description of this methodology

**Table 3: Vulnerability: targeting implications of different concepts**

<i>concept of vulnerability</i> <sup>7</sup>	<i>→ targeting criteria</i>	<i>→ targeting unit</i>	<i>→ type of distribution mechanism</i>
<b>ECONOMIC</b> vulnerability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ assets / income</li> <li>▪ dependency ratio</li> <li>▪ situation-specific indicators of coping capacity</li> </ul>	household	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ targeted free distribution</li> <li>▪ FFW</li> </ul>
<b>NUTRITIONAL</b> vulnerability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Demographic characteristics (age groups, pregnant/ nursing mothers)</li> <li>▪ Anthropometry</li> </ul>	individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ supplementary / MCH feeding</li> <li>▪ school feeding</li> </ul>
<b>SOCIAL</b> vulnerability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ people unable to support themselves &amp;/or without adequate social support</li> <li>▪ traditional “charity cases” – old, widows, orphans, etc</li> </ul>	individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ targeted free distribution</li> </ul>

*Institutional arrangements* for targeting are the second major difficulty. Some factors in the choice of government or non-government institutions are discussed below, but experience suggests that socio-economic targeting at beneficiary level is unlikely to succeed unless communities are actively involved in the management and targeting of food aid. This is by no means an easy or inexpensive option, and requires a long-term commitment to capacity development. If appropriate community structures are not already in place at the beginning of a relief operation, they are unlikely to be successfully established.

Overall, this study is unable to provide any new or easy answers to the problem of targeting free food distributions at household level. All experience shows that in order to be successful, it requires close management and community involvement. Even then, differing local perceptions of fairness and vulnerability may lead to redistribution and widespread sharing of aid within communities. The recommendations are to focus national-level resources on refining area targeting, while pursuing established best practice for free distributions where resources and capacity allow, and at the same time incorporating alternative distribution mechanisms in relief planning wherever possible.

### **2.2.b. Targeting through Food for Work**

The potential targeting advantages of FFW compared to free distribution are:

- the restricted number of beneficiaries, usually (though not automatically) combined with greater quantities of aid per recipient – i.e. the concentration of food aid resources on a smaller number of people;
- the assumed self-targeting effect of the work requirement, such that only people who really need the food will be willing to work for it;
- a further self-targeting effect from keeping the rate of payment low in relation to the labor market, so that people with better earning opportunities will choose to work elsewhere (this is much more problematic to implement, as discussed below).

In addition, successful FFW has the bonus effect of creating useful physical outputs, thus making visible use of relief resources and ‘linking relief and development’.

None of these benefits are automatic, however, and not all FFW projects are successful. The improved targeting associated with FFW is partly due to the greater intensity of management and supervision: this, of course, depends on the particular project and agency involved. It also has costs and needs resources.

<sup>7</sup> adapted from the classification in Jaspars and Young 1995, ref.152

There are a number of factors to beware of in the Stage 3 targeting effects of FFW. In community-based projects, in areas and times when the local labor market may be limited, experience in places like Mwingi (see Appendix 3.2.c.) shows that the self-targeting aspect of work and payment often do not work in the way theory suggests. Due to the scarcity of real alternative employment and / or the tradition of community contributions to community-owned infrastructure, people who are not among the poorest often choose to participate in FFW projects. On the other hand, people who are unable to work (due to age, sickness, disability, etc.) are automatically excluded from FFW, whereas they are often specifically prioritized in free distributions. In food-insecure areas where labor markets are limited and highly seasonal, setting a FFW payment rate in relation to the labor market is problematic, is least likely to work during times of food crisis, and often conflicts with the principle of basing food aid rations on nutritional needs. Gender effects should also be considered: for example, in Mwingi there were concerns that women were being overburdened by the FFW labor, and that child-care was suffering. More generally, the opportunity cost to the beneficiaries of participating in the project should be weighed against the benefits of the work: what would the participants be doing if they were not engaged in FFW? If the answer is farming, or other productive work, it may be preferable to provide free food.

Area (Stage 2) targeting – locating the FFW projects in the communities needing food, and at the same time where worthwhile work can be done – may be more important than aiming for perfect control of who benefits at household or individual level. This can be a constraint, particularly for emergency food provision, since the most vulnerable places are not always those where FFW is feasible. In pastoralist communities, particular care should be taken with this distribution mechanism in order to avoid creating dependent settlements around FFW sites. In many pastoralist contexts, FFW is completely unsuitable.

Other reasons why FFW is more often programmed for development than for emergency programs, and why it cannot always or entirely replace free distributions, are:

- *scale* - the smaller number of people who can be reached by FFW compared to free distribution may be a targeting advantage or it may be an unacceptable constraint on relief provision, depending on the size and urgency of relief needs.
- *seasonality* - when the peak of food aid needs falls in the rainy / hungry season, as it often does, FFW requirements may obstruct farming activities or place undue burdens on malnourished beneficiaries.

#### **Box 1: Gender considerations in targeting**

Gender relations and social organization differ from place to place and should always be assessed in context. In general, stage 3 targeting (i.e. the selection of household and individual beneficiaries) should explicitly consider women in the following roles:

- as **household food managers** - the preferred working definition of a “household” unit for the purpose of food aid allocations is a woman and the people (sometimes specifically children) for whom she provides or manages food. Cross-country experience shows that food delivered to women rather than men is less likely to be sold, and more likely to be given to children;
- as **mothers** (and therefore the main point of access to children, the most nutritionally vulnerable demographic group);
- as a **nutritionally vulnerable group** themselves, especially when pregnant or breast-feeding;
- as an **economically vulnerable group** in many (though not all) societies, especially when they are household heads;
- as **decision-makers** – women are often excluded from community representation in the management and distribution of food aid, unless their participation is actively promoted;
- as **workers** – it is important to consider the additional burdens that can be placed on over-worked women by traveling and waiting in line to collect food aid, and by participating in projects such as FFW;
- as **informants** – both in needs assessment and impact evaluation, women’s special knowledge of household food supplies and receipts (as well as farming conditions in many societies) should be specifically sought, otherwise they can easily be left out of information gathering.

- *planning and management* (for technical supervision of the work, as well as food aid management) need to be in place before the emergency. It is rarely possible to mobilize FFW from scratch in an emergency context. During this study, the examples found of FFW being used as a mechanism for relief distribution were NGO or WFP safety-net projects already under way. Technical planning of shelf-projects in advance of emergencies is one of the key requirements of a safety-net approach to FFW.
- *other (non-food) resources* needed for the work (such as tools, construction materials etc.) are usually not provided for under relief food aid budgets – again, this needs contingency planning.

Despite all these limitations, there is clearly a role for FFW in relief situations, in contexts where the necessary capacity, additional resources, and technical planning are available. Shelf-project planning in vulnerable areas should be supported. The planning of major food relief operations should routinely include an assessment of feasible options for distribution through such pre-planned FFW activities.

### **2.2.c. Targeting through School Feeding Programs**

The critical question to be asked about the targeting impact of regular school feeding programs is, quite simply, who goes to school in the area concerned? The answer to this varies widely among countries and communities, and even between seasons and good or bad years. In the areas discussed in this report, for example, it was found that the children of relatively rich families are more likely to be in school in agricultural Kitui (Kenya), but that the opposite was true in pastoralist Garissa (Kenya) and Karamoja (Uganda). The commonest criticism of school feeding as a targeting mechanism (leaving aside its educational objectives) is that it frequently fails to reach the poorest and most vulnerable children.

In emergency operations, this concern can be mitigated if there is scope to expand the provision of meals to include children of the appropriate age-group (usually primary and pre-primary) who are not registered at the school. It is generally not feasible to apply socio-economic screening, so in this case the objective becomes blanket coverage of a specified age group in a targeted location or catchment area. School feeding can thus be classed as a type of demographic targeting, since its target group is defined primarily by age-group. This effect is likely to be weakened, however, in times of general food shortage because the child who is fed at school will probably be given less food at home (thus effectively sharing the benefit of the meal among the household members).

In both Uganda and Kenya, school feeding has been used by WFP as a safety-net program able to expand in periods of relief need (see Appendices 2.2.a. and 3.2.a.). In Tanzania, school feeding was not used as a channel for relief distributions in 1997/8, but was introduced by WFP as a post-emergency quick-action project for food-insecure areas (see Appendix 1.2.a.). It was also noted that local government officers in Dodoma had used some government relief food for temporary school feeding, and would have liked to be able to continue this with subsequent WFP aid (see Appendix 1.2.c.). It is suggested that in planning future relief distributions consideration be given to proposals for local emergency school feeding to partly replace general distributions. Care must, however, be taken to assess the targeting outcome in the specific conditions of the area in question, so that such an approach does not distort area targeting or exclude children from poor and vulnerable families.

### **2.2.d. Targeting through Supplementary Feeding and MCH programs**

Supplementary feeding for nutritionally vulnerable children and mothers through feeding centers or mother-and-child health facilities is a form of demographic targeting often combined with nutritional screening to further target the most malnourished members of the age group. As outlined in Appendix 3.2.d., this type of food aid program is by definition *supplementary* or additional to general rations, and cannot therefore replace general free distributions in a food crisis.

### Box 2: Targeting food aid to pastoralists

A number of key differences must be considered in targeting to pastoralist populations, as compared to sedentary rural or urban groups:

- the **timing of food aid needs**: livestock:grain terms of trade, and therefore access to staple foods, can collapse very suddenly. Pastoralists keep little or no grain in stock, so food shortages and relief needs can arise more quickly than among farmers affected by drought. Some agencies (notably Oxfam) also argue that relief needs to be continued longer at the end of a drought crisis than for farmers, to allow time for recovery of herds.
- different **distribution mechanisms** may be appropriate: school feeding and emergency livestock purchase have been found to be effective, whereas great care is needed with FFW to avoid creating dependent settlements, or encouraging the splitting of households.
- **splitting of households** is a common coping strategy, in which women, children and the old are likely to be left at distribution centers while men migrate with the herds. This may make short-term targeting of vulnerable groups easier, but risks creating aid-dependent settlements and urban destitution.
- **clan redistribution** systems may make household targeting impossible or ineffective, by sharing out whatever is received.
- the **mobility** of pastoralist communities necessitates dispersed distribution centers and different registration procedures.

#### 2.2.e. Commodity choice in emergency operations

Providing a less-preferred or lower-value commodity as food aid is one mechanism to promote self-targeting, using the market-based principle that only the poor and hungry will apply, while people who have adequate access to higher-status foods will voluntarily screen themselves out of aid distributions. However, this study found no examples where commodity selection had been successfully used as a targeting mechanism for emergency relief operations. Discussions with decision-makers suggested a number of reasons for this:

- In the planning stage, **other considerations** may outweigh the targeting potential of commodities. For example, in Tanzania USAID proposed supplying sorghum in 1997 for targeting reasons: however, the final choice was maize, because it was more internationally fungible and easier to switch into other operations if the scale of relief needs in Tanzania turned out to be smaller than projected (which it did). In some places, also, a commodity which is low-value to beneficiaries (such as wheat in northern Kenya and elsewhere) may nevertheless be relatively high-cost to donors, so that overall cost factors may be the dominant factor in the decision.
- Selecting aid commodities which are unfamiliar or not usually eaten by target groups, which may have some targeting impact, is likely to clash with the **nutritional objectives** of the distribution. WFP as a general principle tries to provide food which is familiar to beneficiaries.
- Familiar commodities which are less-preferred by the better-off but will be eaten by the poorer target groups are the ideal self-targeting food-stuffs, but such commodities can be **non-existent or very localized**. For example, in Mwingi (Kenya) millet is a low-status food in some areas but a preferred one in others, within the same District. GTZ has used some locally-purchased millet in its food-aid operations, but for nutritional reasons and in order to promote the cultivation of a more drought-tolerant cereal (compared to maize), rather than for any expected targeting effect.
- For **free distributions**, there is no evidence that the value of the food offered has a significant targeting impact: if it is free and can be sold (or in extreme cases fed to livestock), then there is little incentive to refuse a handout. In Garissa (Kenya), for example, the relief food aid commodity (maize) was clearly disliked and rarely eaten by the local beneficiaries, who generally

prefer the more expensive rice and pasta (which require less fuel and water for cooking). However, this does not appear to have discouraged people from registering for the free maize, which could easily be sold (albeit at low prices) in exchange for more preferred foods or other necessities. Such sales do not necessarily indicate that the beneficiaries were not in need of food (see Box 3).

- For **FFW**, on the other hand, selecting a lower-value cereal can be an effective way of cutting the value of payments compared to the labor-market, while keeping the calorific value constant. No examples of this were found in East Africa during this study, but in Ethiopia CARE has used commodity choice to distinguish between development and relief projects (the former being paid in maize, and the latter in lower-value sorghum). For the other distribution mechanisms discussed above, targeting is achieved by other means and no selection effect would be gained from using less-preferred foods: for school-feeding and supplementary feeding, nutritional and cost factors are more appropriate criteria than targeting impact for determining the composition of meals.

### 2.3. ASSESSING THE COST-EFFECTIVENESS OF TARGETING OPTIONS

In choosing among the options outlined above, relative cost-effectiveness is, in theory, an important criterion: however, in practice it is extremely difficult to quantify for food aid operations and is rarely systematically assessed. For the relief operations discussed during this study it was not possible to compare cost-effectiveness, for three reasons:

1. Lack of monitoring and evaluation data on costs and benefits (monitoring systems for relief tend to focus on logistical tracking of food aid movements). This is partly due to a frequent lack of funds for impact monitoring in relief operations, and partly due to:
2. the inherent difficulty of separating targeting costs from general management on the costs side, and of quantifying the benefit (impact on target groups) on the effectiveness side.
3. Successful targeting depends as much on the quality of planning and management as on the type of targeting method used: it is not possible to generalize that one mechanism is more cost-effective than another. A well-managed large-scale free distribution may be more cost-effective than a poorly-managed FFW project – or vice versa.

In making a qualitative judgment on the relative cost-efficiency of targeted interventions, the main factors to weigh are the direct costs of the targeting / distribution measures (such as nutritional screening, or design and management of FFW, etc.); the impact of the proposed targeting method on the quantity and therefore the cost of total food aid resources needed; and the total expected benefits to recipients in terms of the intervention's objectives (whether impact on nutritional status, livelihoods, development, etc.). Each of these three should be judged against the practical alternative, which may be an untargeted distribution but in most cases is more likely to be a different distribution mechanism or institution.

Improved targeting does not automatically cut the total quantity of food or number of beneficiaries: it may leave the total resource costs unchanged but increase their impact by reaching the target group more accurately or more exclusively. In some cases improved targeting may even raise the total quantity of food aid needed, if it identifies beneficiaries who were previously excluded.

To sum up, successful targeting is by definition more cost-effective than unsuccessful targeting. Unfortunately, however, it is not possible to make easy generalizations about which *methods* of targeting are more successful or more cost-effective. Planning, management, and appropriateness of the design for the objectives and circumstances of the intervention are critical factors. Free distributions tend to be larger-scale than project-based mechanisms such as FFW, and therefore appear more expensive: however, they are not necessarily less cost-effective. The most practical course may be simply to select the distribution mechanism most appropriate to the objectives and context of the proposed food aid operation, and then seek the least-cost means of implementing it.

3

One **RECOMMENDATION** to increase the current knowledge and expertise in assessing the cost-effectiveness of targeting is **that donors should systematically provide resources for the monitoring and evaluation of targeting success and impacts on beneficiaries, when providing emergency food aid.** It should be noted that this is quite different from monitoring the logistical and accounting management of food aid distributions, which is nearly always much better recorded than who received the aid and what effect it had.

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It is also **RECOMMENDED that accessible and up-to-date data on food aid distributions by area would greatly facilitate the monitoring of targeting and the assessment of impacts in the context of general food security conditions.** Compiling, making available, and reporting on such data is potentially a role for WFP or FEWS, although this will differ according to the situation in each country. In Tanzania, for example, WFP's VAM office has already established a detailed village-level data-base on distributions (and very little is distributed outside the WFP/NGO network); in Kenya, such data are currently scattered and fragmented; while in Uganda, WFP had no staff available to process and analyze distribution data.

#### 2.4. TARGETING AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Planning and preparation for possible food aid needs, in advance of relief operations, greatly helps to improve targeting. It is important to integrate targeting issues into the general process of disaster preparedness in each of the three countries, as discussed in the appendices. This can be approached from three main angles:

- *policy and guidelines;*
- *institutional preparedness;* and
- *safety-net approaches* to food security planning.

From the **policy** angle, the priority is for governments to specify general principles for the use and limitation of food aid that are consistent with development strategies and with minimizing the use of emergency food aid. Food aid should be a last resort and not a first response to a developing crisis. Targeting principles and procedures can then be developed in line with policy, and communicated to local authorities in food-insecure areas (see section 2.6.).

**Institutionally**, preparedness does not necessarily mean permanent full-time structures. In the East African countries, where there are recurrent but irregular relief needs, it may make more sense economically to base preparedness on well-prepared guidelines, procedures, and (where appropriate) training, for people who can be called on when needed to form temporary committees or teams with defined powers and responsibilities. The dictionary definition of "*ad hoc*" is "special, formed for a particular purpose": it need not mean unplanned. Examples of *ad hoc* emergency institutions based on prior planning, agreed methods, and past lessons are the inter-agency RAT teams recommended above, and the back-up teams for nutritional surveys suggested for Kenya (Appendix 3, section 3.2.d.). At decentralised (e.g. District) levels, a temporary committee convened for the duration of an emergency, operating on pre-agreed principles and well-organized information and with adequate resources for the purpose, is often a more appropriate institutional structure for recurrent but irregular relief needs than creating expensive and self-perpetuating "relief infrastructures".

Finally, **safety-net** approaches, establishing long-term development programs with the explicit capacity to expand and provide a management base for targeting emergency food aid in crises, can significantly improve preparedness and targeting in chronically vulnerable areas. Safety-net design for food aid is particularly suited to FFW, school feeding, and MCH clinics.

## 2.5. MARKET-BASED APPROACHES TO FOOD AID TARGETING

Market-based targeting approaches, as outlined in the Introduction, include a spectrum of options ranging from broad macro-economic policy on liberalization or control of food markets, through targeted interventions in non-food markets (such as livestock or labor markets) to support the economic access of target groups to purchased food, to direct use of market channels to distribute food aid (such as targeted and/ or subsidized sales to target groups).

### **Box 3: Selling food aid rations - a signal of poor targeting?**

Large quantities of food aid appearing on local markets or being transported out of the distribution area by traders are a clear sign that something is wrong with the targeting or composition of the distribution. However, at the recipient level, selling part of a food aid ration does not necessarily mean that the individual or household was not in need of food. In fact, it is often the poorest and neediest who are most likely to sell food aid.

For example, in Wajir (Kenya) SCF-UK found that *“the poor reported selling or exchanging their rations after distribution to meet immediate cash needs. Neither the ‘middle’ nor the ‘rich’ groups sell or exchange their rations”* [ref 130]. Oxfam further observed that *“The poor benefit less than other groups because they are forced to sell part of their relief grain at extremely low prices.”* [ref 82]

The potential of efficient markets to minimize the need for food aid was demonstrated in 1997 by the contrast between private-sector responses to the harvest shortfall in Kenya and Tanzania. Both governments (and Uganda) temporarily waived import taxes on maize as a response to the crisis, and encouraged private traders to import food. This was successful in Kenya, but not in Tanzania where very little was commercially imported (see Appendix 1, section 1.2.a.).

The study found few examples of direct market interventions during the 1997/8 relief operations. In Tanzania, as discussed in detail in Appendix 1, commercial sales from government (SGR) stocks were used to stabilize prices and in some areas to augment market supplies in selected areas, but neither the targeting impact nor the extent to which the private sector would have fulfilled the same functions in the absence of government regulation and sales were clear.

Emergency livestock purchases have been successfully used in Kenya in the past to support the purchasing power of pastoralists (see, for example, Buchanan-Smith 1993, ref.89), but no such projects were found during the period focused on. Market-based elements in the targeting of FFW, and some general points about selecting aid commodities according to their market value to beneficiaries, are discussed above.

Overall, the findings of the study suggest that direct interventions in markets can reduce the need for distributed food aid in carefully planned and limited circumstances, but that much greater potential for minimizing food aid and promoting food security lies in the development of efficient private markets. This is, of course, an issue of general economic policy rather than food aid management.

## 2.6. GOVERNMENT versus NON-GOVERNMENT TARGETING

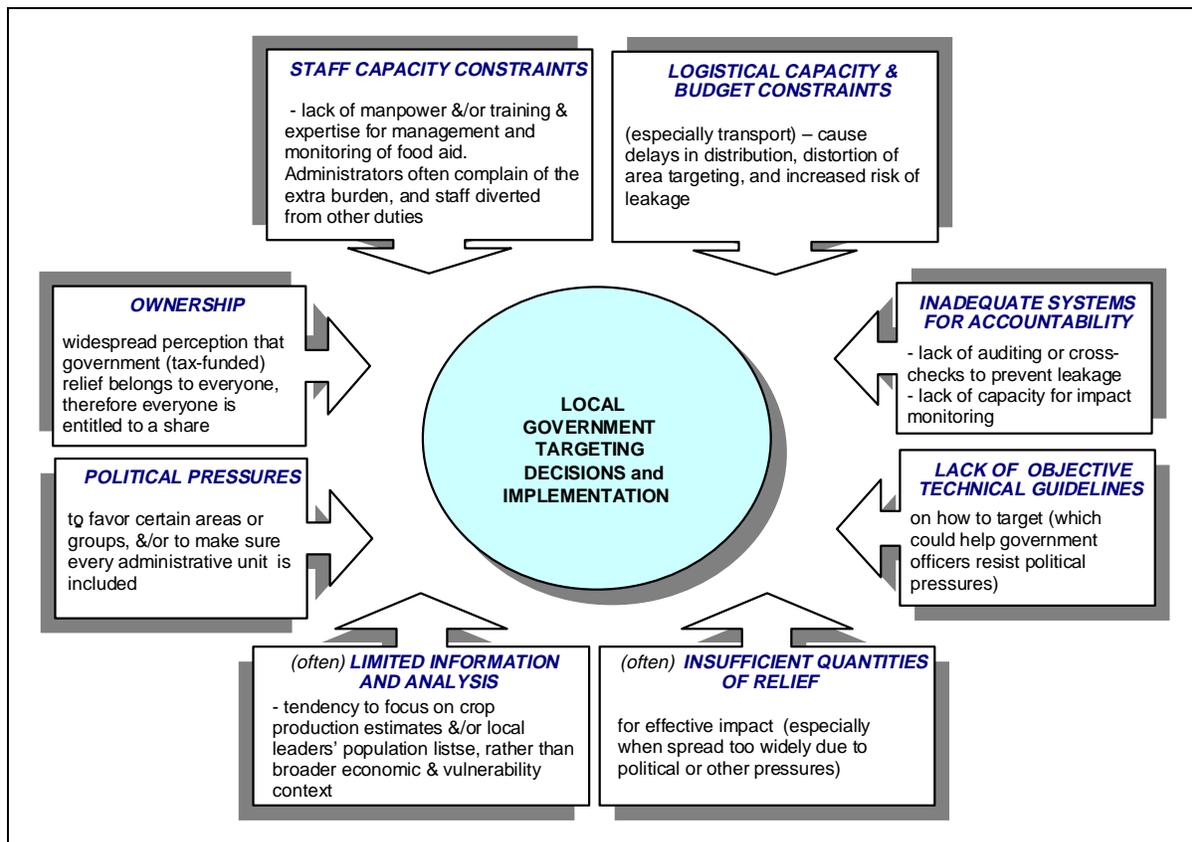
The choice between government and non-government institutions for the distribution of food aid is a constant dilemma, as the examples discussed in Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya show. In all three countries, local (especially District-level) government played a key role in providing information for needs assessment (informing Stage 1 targeting) and in the management and local allocation of food aid (Stage 2 and 3 targeting): but this role was in most cases mismatched with capacity and resources.

NGOs are often preferred by donors and UN as implementing agencies, as they are seen to be more accountable and in many cases have special expertise in managing food aid. Nevertheless there are strong arguments for involving local government institutions in order to build permanent sustainable capacity for the future. The Tanzanian example in Appendix 1, section 1.2.c. also makes the point that not all NGOs are equally successful in food aid targeting. Experience and resources (including skilled staff) are key requirements for NGO targeting as well as for government targeting.

The most difficult aspect of implementing targeting in most situations is not so much identifying people or areas that need assistance, as excluding those who are less in need. This is partly a technical problem (due to incomplete information and the difficulty of setting thresholds), and partly a political one in the broad sense that there are always competing interests involved. The findings of this study suggest that it is generally more difficult for government distributions, which tend to pass through each level of the administrative hierarchy, to exclude areas and groups at each level. Outside agencies such as NGOs or the UN, by contrast, can often channel aid (both in logistical and management terms) directly from the center to targeted areas. Among the pressures which make government-controlled distributions more likely to be widely spread is the basic dilemma that area targeting inevitably excludes poor people living in food-secure (non-targeted) areas. Government officers, who have responsibility for the whole population of their areas, are more likely to try to spread assistance to include these pockets of the poor in relatively well-off areas, thus blurring the already difficult line between emergency relief and welfare support. This line is particularly difficult to draw in drought-related food crises, where a whole District is likely to be “drought-affected” and it is problematic to select only communities or groups who are “drought-affected and unable to cope without external aid”.

Figure 2 sums up a common pattern of constraints to local government targeting of food aid. Even assuming good will and total honesty, local government officers charged with managing food aid distributions face constraints in staff and resources (usually no extra staff are assigned, and often no

**Figure 2: Common constraints to local government targeting**



extra funds for transport beyond the District level); lack of training and experience; lack of established systems and staff for detailed supervision and accountability; limited information and/or analytical expertise; and lack of objective guidelines on how to carry out targeting. Thus they are often very poorly equipped to resist pressures for blanket distribution from political lobbies or from arguments that everyone is entitled to a share of government resources.

Some of these problems can be addressed from the policy angle, and some from the capacity angle. Central governments (as recommended in the country chapters and above) need to revise and clarify general policy directives on the use and targeting of food aid (bearing in mind the problems of poor impact, wasted resources, and potential economic disincentives from over-wide blanket distributions). In conducive policy environments, it is also suggested (as recommended for Tanzania, Appendix 1, section 1.3.) that detailed operational guidelines and training be provided to local government officers in selected vulnerable areas to enhance capacity and strengthen the technical basis for implementation of targeting policy.

## **2.7. DROUGHT versus FLOOD RELIEF**

Drought-induced failures in crop and livestock production, plus their domino effects on food access and general livelihood security among the poor and vulnerable rural populations who rely on these rain-dependent economic systems, are by far the most frequent cause of food emergencies in East Africa. Early Warning and preparedness systems therefore focus on monitoring vulnerability to drought shocks, and experience in food aid management and targeting also relates mainly to drought situations. Major floods are much less common in this region, and less predictable: however, the recent experience of emergency relief needs related to the El Niño phenomenon has focused attention on floods as a potential cause of disaster, and more broadly on the need for disaster preparedness always to include an element of readiness for the unexpected.

The effects of the 1997/8 floods in all three countries included serious damage to transport infrastructure, temporary disruption of both relief and commercial food supplies, and losses of crops and food stores. By far the most serious flood-related humanitarian and food security emergency was in the normally arid areas of North-Eastern Kenya (see Appendix 3). In considering the differences in relief targeting, drought and flood can be seen as archetypes of slow-onset and rapid-onset emergencies:

“Rapid onset emergencies occur with little or no warning and require immediate, swift action to ensure survival of affected population(s). Slow onset emergencies on the other hand, build up over time and may be more difficult to determine when or how to intervene” [Actionaid 1997, ref. 78]

In the 1997/98 flood disaster areas, food aid was urgently needed for people who had suddenly lost food stocks, homes and assets, and/or were cut off from normal market supplies. However, in the worst-hit areas, the overall impacts of the flooding (and therefore the types of assistance needed for relief and recovery) were more complex and longer-lived. They included destruction of infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and community buildings (schools, clinics etc.); loss of crops in the fields, and seeds and tools for the next planting; catastrophic livestock losses, mainly from disease (especially in N.E. Kenya); and acute human health crises due to water-borne diseases, proliferation of vectors, collapse of sanitation systems and contaminated water supplies (especially in N.E. Kenya).

Table 4 summarizes some key differences in targeting food aid in this context, compared to the more familiar and better-documented drought emergencies.

**Table 4: Drought versus flood (differences in food aid targeting)**

<b>DROUGHT</b>	<b>FLOOD</b>
1. <b>slow onset</b> , problems can be seen developing, giving preparation time and some leeway in the timing of interventions	1. <b>sudden impact</b> – little or no warning, and immediate relief needs
2. <b>logistics are relatively easy</b> in dry conditions (though remoteness, transport costs, & rainy-season isolation regularly inhibits targeting of vulnerable areas)	2. <b>disruption of normal transport routes is a major obstacle</b> to reaching flood-affected areas; shelf-life of food commodities (especially Unimix) can be reduced by wet conditions
3. <b>large areas may be ‘drought affected’</b> – it can be difficult to draw the line between areas and groups that do and do not face an emergency	3. <b>areas affected can be very localised, &amp; easier to identify</b> (i.e. area targeting is more clear-cut)
4. <b>definition &amp; identification of vulnerable groups within targeted areas can be difficult &amp; contentious</b> – especially with early interventions aimed at <i>preventing</i> acute food-crisis impacts such as severe malnutrition	4. <b>affected groups are relatively easy to define &amp; identify</b> - either whole communities are cut off from food access (eg Garissa, Kenya), or families who lost homes & farms are well known & easily distinguished (eg Mbale, Uganda)
5. <b>vulnerability or resilience to drought impacts is largely determined by relative poverty</b> , and by coping capacity based on access to economic assets and strategies	5. in a severe flood situation, relative wealth within an affected community may have little relation to vulnerability: <b>even the rich can starve</b> if all food sources are cut off
6. <b>some food sources / livelihood &amp; coping strategies are still available</b> in most drought-induced food crises - food aid is assumed to supply only part of the diet, so smaller rations and/or staple grains only can be an option	6. if <b>all food sources are lost or cut off due to severe flooding</b> , food aid must provide full dietary requirements of calories, protein, fats, & micro-nutrients (as in many refugee / IDP situations)
7. <b>food needs may be chronic</b> – withdrawal of food aid in chronically food-insecure areas can be difficult to time	7. <b>food aid needs are immediate, but relatively short-term</b> (until market access & normal economic activity are restored)
8. <b>a range of different delivery mechanisms</b> can be considered during all stages of drought (depending on specific circumstances) - school feeding, FFW, market support, free distribution, etc.	8. <b>immediate needs are for free general distributions</b> (probably with supplementary feeding for children) - FFW (or CFW) may be particularly appropriate in post-flood rehabilitation (eg infrastructure repair).
9. Emergency needs are mainly for food and/ or income to purchase food	9. Medicines, shelter, clean water etc. may be needed as urgently as food
10. <b>long-term impacts</b> of successive droughts are fairly predictable and slow-developing – can be integrated into long-term area development plans	10. <b>long-term food-security impacts</b> of floods (due to sudden loss of livestock, seeds, food stores, etc.) may be unexpected, calling for additional funds and planning

*Source: Study Team interviews & discussions*

## 2.8. REGIONAL DIMENSIONS

This report has shown that there are many issues relating to food aid targeting where the three countries of the EAC have overlapping experience and interests, and could gain from a regional exchange of views and discussion of potential areas for collaboration or joint action. Some provisional suggestions for items on the agenda for such a meeting would be:

- policies to support the role of liberalized markets in reducing the need for food aid, especially in the context of cross-border grain trade among the three countries, and of the EAC’s general commitment to liberalization;
- areas for potential collaboration and exchange in early warning information, such as regional climate and price monitoring; harmonizing methodologies for needs assessment missions; and exchange visits / regular communications among EWS technical staff ;

- the development of national policies on food aid targeting, and possibly of a regional food aid protocol or code of conduct such as those introduced by CILSS in West Africa and proposed for IGAD [refs 142, 121].



It is therefore **RECOMMENDED** that an initial regional EAC forum be organized, to discuss the targeting issues identified by this study and to identify appropriate ways forward for collaboration and exchange in these areas.

### 3. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The following table repeats the recommendations made throughout the report, including the country reports which appear as appendices, in order of appearance in the text (not in order of priority). The second column refers the reader to the relevant section of the report for discussion and background.

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>			<i>For action by:</i>			
			FEWS	USAID /UN/ DONORS	GOVERNMENTS	NGOS / AGENCIES
# = order of appearance in the report (number in margin of text) ref. = relevant section of the report						
#	Ref.	<b>CROSS-COUNTRY / GENERAL</b>				
1	2.1.	FEWS and donor technical assistance should focus on the <b>analysis gaps</b> rather than the data gaps, and on the linkage of available information to targeting decisions at the national level	✓	✓		
2	2.1.	Methodologies and protocols should be developed for inter-agency Rapid Assessment Teams for <b>needs assessment at national level</b> , and should integrate an assessment of Stage 3 targeting and distribution options with the estimation of food aid needs	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	2.3.	Donors should systematically provide resources for the <b>monitoring and evaluation of targeting success and impacts</b> on beneficiaries, when providing emergency food aid.		✓		
4	2.3.	WFP and FEWS should work with partner agencies in each country to compile and report on up-to-date <b>data on food aid distributions</b> by area. This would facilitate the monitoring of targeting and the assessment of impacts in the context of general food security conditions	✓	✓		
5	2.8.	An initial regional EAC forum should be organized, to discuss the targeting issues identified by this study and to identify appropriate ways forward for collaboration and exchange in these areas	✓	✓	✓	
#	ref.	<b>TANZANIA</b>				
6	A1.1.c.	FEWS and the FSD Early Warning Unit should seek invited status at appropriate meetings of the <b>Food Emergency Sub-Committee</b>	✓		✓	
7	A1.2.b.	A study should be commissioned on the targeting impacts of <b>SGR commercial operations</b> during food shortages		✓	✓	
8	A1.2.c.	The terms of reference for <b>Village Relief Committees</b> should be defined, and support provided in pilot vulnerable areas to develop their capacity and authority to make decisions on relief distribution within the community			✓	✓
9	A1.2.d.	The GoT should revise its <b>directives on the registration of food aid beneficiaries</b> , so that local authorities have clear instructions to take account of household rather than individual circumstances, and to identify only those areas and people <i>unable to cope</i> with the impacts of drought (or other disasters) rather than listing everyone 'affected'.			✓	
10	A1.3.	Some <b>decentralization of the EWS</b> is needed, and should focus on selected Districts which are known to be food insecure and vulnerable to the impacts of shocks such as drought. Where possible the training and skills transfer already initiated by some NGOs should be built on. If funding can be obtained, an Early Warning Officer should be appointed and trained in each selected vulnerable District.		✓	✓	✓
11	A1.3.	Priority should continue to be given to <b>FEWS capacity building and collaborative work with FSD</b> to broaden the analytical scope of the Early Warning System at national level	✓		✓	
12	A1.3.	The Food Security Task Force should work on developing an agreed analytical framework and procedures for <b>joint needs assessment missions</b> to at-risk areas in any future food crises	✓	✓	✓	✓

RECOMMENDATIONS, CONTINUED			For action by:			
			FEWS	USAID/ DONORS / UN	GOVERNMENT	NGOs / AGENCIES
<b>#</b>	<b>Ref.</b>	<b>TANZANIA, CONTINUED</b>				
13	A1.3.	The GoT should develop specific <b>policy guidelines</b> for the use and management of food aid, as an important and logical extension of its ongoing UNDP-supported review of disaster preparedness policy in general		✓	✓	
14	A1.3.	<b>Technical guidelines and training</b> on the management and targeting of food aid should then be provided to the relevant Regional and District government offices in vulnerable areas.		✓	✓	
15	A1.3.	Future food aid distributions coordinated by the WFP and GoT should be implemented by experienced NGOs, but with a more formalised requirement to <b>work jointly with District government officers</b> wherever possible.		✓	✓	✓
		<b>UGANDA</b>				
16	A2.1.a.	A separate study should be funded on the problems of targeting <b>refugees and the displaced</b> in Uganda		✓		
17	A2.3.	The feasibility of establishing an <b>early warning / needs assessment capacity</b> within the government structure of selected vulnerable Districts should be explored.	✓	✓	✓	
18	A2.3.	FEWS should work with partner agencies to establish a framework and procedure for <b>joint assessment missions</b> in the future, ensuring the best use is made of available baseline data, monitoring information, and prior reports	✓	✓	✓	✓
19	A2.3.	<b>Institutional links and responsibilities regarding food aid</b> should be clarified between the Department of Disaster Management in the PMO's office, the recently created post of Minister for Disaster Preparedness and Refugees, and authorities at the District level			✓	
20	A2.3.	Terms of Reference for the <b>District Disaster Management Committees</b> should be developed, and in any future food aid distributions donors should consider attaching funds for additional expert staff or other management resources as appropriate			✓	
21	A2.3.	GoU should develop <b>policy guidelines</b> on the use and targeting of food aid as a supplement to its general review of disaster preparedness		✓	✓	
		<b>KENYA</b>				
22	A3.1.c.	<b>Drought monitoring information</b> from the DPIRP / ALRMP should be systematically used for government relief targeting at District level (by the DSDDC) as well as for development project planning (by the DSG).			✓	
23	A3.1.c.	Donor support for the proposed <b>partnership to sustain the DPIRP</b> drought monitoring system could significantly contribute to improved information use in both government and international targeting decisions.		✓		
24	A3.2.d.	National guidelines should be established on <b>standard methodologies for nutritional assessment</b> in the context of relief needs assessments, and if funding allows, a core team of nutritionists should be established to provide technical training and back-up.		✓	✓	
25	A3.3.	Priority should be given to establishing a <b>national-level capacity to screen and compare information from different areas</b> within the proposed Drought Management Secretariat in the government system		✓	✓	
26	A3.3.	The DMS together with counterpart/ partner organizations in the international food security community should develop a <b>national-level 'RAT' (rapid assessment team) capacity</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓
27	A3.3.	WFP Kenya (possibly under its new VAM unit), and/or FEWS, should establish an accessible <b>food-aid distribution data-base</b>	✓	✓		
28	A3.3.	A study should be funded to compare the targeting and distributional effects of the two main <b>alternative approaches to assisting pastoralists</b> during food crises (extended food aid deliveries to prevent de-stocking, or market intervention to facilitate controlled destocking)		✓		✓
29	A3.3.	The GoK should develop a <b>disaster preparedness policy</b> , including principles for the use and targeting of food aid		✓	✓	