

Action Fiche n°5 for Bangladesh

1. IDENTIFICATION

Title/Number	Food Security 2009 Programme: Food and Livelihood Security (FLS) DCI-ASIE/2009/020-455		
Total cost	Total Cost: €24 214 647 EC contribution : €24 000 000 Implementing partners contribution: €214 647 GoB contribution in kind, to the counter value of €600 000		
Aid method / Method of implementation	Project approach - partly decentralised management.		
DAC-code	52010	Sector	Food aid/food security programme

2. RATIONALE

2.1. Sector context

Over the past ten years, many positive developments have occurred in Bangladesh. The economy has grown steadily and quickly, with an average of 5-6 % per annum and agricultural production has shown a yearly growth rate of 4.8%. Several safety net provisions have been widely launched and, whilst not sufficient, do reach a significant part of the population.

As a result, poverty incidence, which was as high as 57% at the beginning of the 1990s, has declined to 51% in 1995, to 49% in 2000 and to 40% in 2005 (Planning Commission, March 2008). Per capita income advanced by 3.3 % per year (FAO – Food and Agriculture Organisation, 2008). A large part of the population appears thus to be on their way to move gradually out of poverty, although set-backs as the recent increase in number of food insecure people due to the global food price hike have shown that the positive development of many years can be wiped out quickly due to external shocks.

Whilst the World Bank (2008) reports that inequality, as measured by the Gini coefficient of consumption, remained stable, it was also observed that certain groups are not or less able to participate in the positive developments and that the incidence of poverty is disproportionately higher in certain areas than in others. The eastern half of the country has made more progress in poverty reduction and the number of ultra-poor has decreased less in the north-western part. Other reports highlight the fact that even though the percentage of undernourished decreased, the number of undernourished has actually increased due to population growth.

Another study performed by the World Food Programme (WFP) in 2006 found that a relatively large group of extremely poor rural households does not participate in virtually any aspect of the movement toward development and are falling further behind other groups or households. The FAO/WFP crop and food supply assessment mission to Bangladesh (August 2008) estimates that the prevalence of undernourishment in Bangladesh deteriorated in 2007/08 and is now affecting nearly 35 million people. This highly food insecure population,

also referred to as the ultra-poor, has an average daily caloric intake of less than 1,805 kcal and spends >80% of its disposable income on food.

With respect to food security, the WFP study showed that more than half of the food insecure suffer from year-round food insecurity and another 20% had only during one to six months of the year access to adequate food. Most households only ate two meals per day and typically consumed poor quality diets (low in essential macro- and micro-nutrients). The WFP report further mentions that 17% of the children throughout Bangladesh are severely stunted, the vast majority of them belonging to the ultra-poor households. It is also worrying that women are increasingly disadvantaged and the female-male gap for the severely stunted has increased from 10% in 1996/97 to 16% 1999/00. About a third of the women in Bangladesh have chronic energy deficiency (Body Mass Index – BMI – of less than 18.5). It was thus observed that though there are achievements in visibility and mobility of the women in Bangladesh, there still exist serious constraints, gaps and challenges for a more gender balanced development.

2.2. Lessons learnt

Lessons learnt, as well as the overall design of the programme, are based on the findings of a formulation mission which took place between end of 2008 and beginning of 2009. During the mission, extensive consultations were held between the consultants and the Delegation. The consultants also interacted with several actors and projects in the sector, in particular with central and local government entities. During field visits in the programme area, the mission met with local stakeholders including the two District Commissioners of Nawabganj and Naogaon Districts. Both District Commissioners also participated in a wider consultation workshop held in Dhaka at the end of the formulation process.

Several Social Safety Net Programmes are being implemented in the country. The total allocation in the GoB budget for targeted social empowerment, social safety net, poverty reduction and employment generation for financial year 07-08 was € 458 million. Programmes under the social safety net include, amongst others, old age allowance, allowances for widows and deserted women, programme for assistance to the fully retarded, fund for the rehabilitation of acid burnt women and the physically handicapped, etc. Other safety net programmes such as GoB funded Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) do not allow for inclusion of the very vulnerable, elderly women as the selection criteria specify that the VGD card holder should be in the 18-49 age group. (Note that the EU supported VGDUP programme does not have this specific criterion).

Furthermore, the study by WFP found that a substantial proportion of VGD cards have reached the non-deserving households and that only 20% of all cards had been distributed to the ultra-poor.

EU supported programmes linked to VGD have successfully targeted the poorest of the poor households and evaluations have proven that this group can be effectively assisted to overcome food insecurity. Much experience has been gained in this field. The recently launched EC funded VGD for Ultra-Poor (VGDUP – 20M euro) features a significant asset transfer component, besides Income Generating Activity (IGA) training, because previous experiences demonstrated the necessity for beneficiaries to generate sustainable incomes to overcome the constant cycles and burdens of indebtedness. Experiences from CFPR (Challenging the Frontiers of Poverty Reduction – project implemented by BRAC since 2002) have shown that the transfer of productive assets to ultra-poor women can be an effective means to kick-start self-empowerment and socio-economic development of the poorest.

The EU funded FOSHOL (Food Security for Sustainable Household Livelihoods) programme has been able to obtain significant results with homestead farming. Whilst no hard data are available at this moment, the nutritional status and income of the beneficiaries have reportedly significantly improved due to homestead farming.

The focus on ultra-poor women is important as they are the most vulnerable. Of all female headed households in the recent WFP study, 43% belonged to the category of the ultra-poor as compared with 15% for male headed households.

2.3. Complementary actions

The proposed programme will be directly complementary to the on-going EU funded programmes targeting ultra-poor women, which are being implemented either through GoB agencies such as the Local Governance Division (FS 2004-REOPA) and the Department of Women Affairs (FS 2005-VGDUP) or directly by NGOs and IOs (FS 2007) but which are implemented in other areas.

The upcoming intervention will also be complementary to the ECHO funded post flood 2007 support (ending early 2009), the food security interventions under the FS 2003 programme, the Soil Fertility Component of the FS 2006 programme, the NGO co-funded Haor Initiatives for Sustainable Alternative Livelihoods (HISAL) and the Char Livelihoods Programme (CLP) funded by DFID which are all implemented in locations other than the proposed target area.

The multi-donor funded Phase II of the CFPR programme implemented by BRAC includes 2 districts in the area, but only targets 5,300 ultra-poor women headed households in those districts. The proposed programme will have to take care not to duplicate but learn from the lessons and experiences gained under CFPR.

As the Implementing Agency (DWA) is also in charge of the VGD national programme, strong linkages between the two interventions will be possible. The programme design already incorporates lessons learned from previous VGD interventions and complements them with best practices established by other interventions in the sector. The national VGD programme will not overlap with the present action and will not include FLS beneficiary households, but it set to benefit from the best practices and lessons learnt under VGDUP and FLS.

Interventions to be implemented through the Food Facility, by targeting ultra-poor households and by promoting agricultural productivity and capacity building, will complement the present programme, especially in terms of vulnerability reduction.

The programme focuses on two key areas of intervention of the 2008-2015 National Food Policy Plan of Action: a) income generation for women and the disabled; b) effectiveness of targeted food security programmes and other safety nets.

2.4. Donor coordination

Coordination of food security efforts by the government is still weak, and in spite of the mentioned studies, the extent and spread of poverty is not adequately mapped (level of details and frequency of update). Recent studies only distinguish between divisions, not districts or Upazilas. The only detailed mapping, by WFP and BBS, is actually based on 2001 census data. This mapping is currently being updated and will in principle be completed in April 2009. GoB FS programmes further tend to cover a large number of districts through numerous implementing partners, resulting in a thin spread, high overhead costs, and failure to address the majority of the hard-to-reach ultra-poor.

The Local Consultative sub-group on Agriculture and Rural Development is in place and covers food security issues. Donor funding, relevant policies and interventions in the food security sub-sector are discussed during the regular meetings of this group and information is disseminated on programmes that are being implemented. The ADB has also performed a rapid exercise to this effect in November 2008, mapping all on-going and upcoming interventions in the food security sector. Danida is also working on a more elaborated mapping of all agricultural and rural development interventions (including FS programmes). Information from these mapping exercises was used during the formulation of the proposed programme.

3. DESCRIPTION

3.1. Objectives

The overall objective of the programme is *‘Improved food security of rural ultra-poor households in the North-western districts of Bangladesh’*.

The programme purpose is defined as *‘Fifty thousand ultra-poor female headed households, and thirty thousand ultra-poor marginal farmer and share-cropper households in the south-western part of Rajshahi Division have improved food security and livelihoods and are mainstreamed in the overall development process’*.

3.2. Expected results and main activities

Strategy

To achieve high efficiency and quick and measurable impact, a limited geographical area with high level of food insecurity is targeted. The selection of the area is based on the incidence of poverty (percentage of ultra-poor), general food insecurity, present development activities and investment targeting ultra-poor, estimated resources to eliminate extreme poverty and poverty trend as reported in the 2008 poverty assessment by World Bank.

Applying the above criteria, the districts located in the south-western part of Rajshahi Division are the most vulnerable. Within this area, the Districts of Naogaon, Nawabganj and Natore will get priority as they are ranked first for most criteria. The project area may also cover adjacent Upazilas with high food insecurity in neighbouring districts.

The approach to be used is a two pronged approach, combining the strengthening of human capital and productive assets. To assist the beneficiaries to fully benefit from the capacity building activities, they will receive subsistence support (cash transfer), as a substitute for lost income earning possibilities while they participate in those activities.

The programme will initiate activities that will reduce or remove obstacles to poverty reduction, equip ultra-poor with tools and means for improved household food security, and promote mainstreaming in development activities. The target beneficiaries will improve their availability, access and utilisation of food through group-based on-farm and off-farm income generation through trials, training and asset transfer. The effect will be enhanced by nutrition, hygiene and health education, by functional literacy and numeracy training, and by improved share cropping arrangements, access to lease land, and registration of ancestral lands in the name of ethnic minorities. To ensure the sustainability and support from the wider society and to tackle social exclusion due to disability, ethnicity or gender, and poverty, the programme will build on the positive experience of CFPR and assist the target beneficiaries and their communities in establishing self-help community committees, conduct advocacy and

awareness raising training, and strengthen the support links between the target group and service providers from government and private sector.

The expected results and activities will be the following:

Result 1 Increased production and consumption of nutritious food

Although the availability of food grain might be considered more or less adequate at national level, the situation is different for other types of foods (proteins and fat in particular). To help fill this gap, improve the availability and enable rural ultra-poor to better access essential nutrients, the production of livestock, fish and protein rich pulses will be promoted as will be multi-layered home gardens (n.b. although sizes of available homestead land and ownership of homestead land will vary, virtually all target households are living on homestead land which can be used to produce additional food and income). The objective of home garden farming will therefore be to supply extra nutritious food as well as to earn income from the sale of their produce.

To achieve the result, access to appropriate technologies and inputs will be provided. In addition, the target group will receive training on nutrition and the benefits of a balanced diet. The programme will enhance the level of awareness and practice of good sanitation, hygiene and health through specific training that will enable the target group to create optimal conditions for sustained utilization of increased food production. Considering the particular vulnerability of the targeted group, capacity building will be supported by social transfers.

Result 2 Improved household income and livelihood from non-agricultural activities

An important problem of the poorest is food accessibility. The level and sustainability of household income is critical for ensuring food access, especially for landless households who fully depend on employment as day labourers. This problem has become more acute in the last year as a consequence of the food price crisis. Landless households will be encouraged to increase and diversify their income sources and livelihood options by taking-up one or more Income Generating Activities in addition to home gardens. Support will be provided in the form of training and transfer of income-generating assets for animal husbandry and non-farm activities, together with supporting measures to help in their management and protection. Where available, the programme will assist beneficiaries to access "Khas"-land (public land) and water bodies. It is expected that by the end of the first two years, some of the households will be able to consider farming land other than their own homestead.

Social transfers will ensure beneficiaries access to basic nutritional and household needs. The beneficiaries will be encouraged to engage in regular savings activities to cushion periods of crisis or increased financial needs and also to facilitate the access to micro-credit. A similar "graduating" process has been successfully tested by BRAC during the first phase of CFPR (Challenging the Frontiers of Poverty Reduction) and is further refined during the on-going second phase of this programme. The programme will also include activities to build preparedness and resilience to disasters to reduce overall vulnerability and avoid falling back into food insecurity after disasters have struck.

Result 3 Improved revenues and productivity for marginal farmers and sharecroppers

Marginal and indigenous farmers and sharecroppers in most cases are not able to ensure adequate household food security because of the many limitations they face. The programme

is aiming to address the most prominent constraints faced in view of achieving maximum impact on the household food security.

Often marginal farmers are not included in agricultural extension activities, such as Farmers Field Schools. The programme will therefore provide intensive agricultural extension for all beneficiaries under this target group, and will progressively establish sustainable linkages with the existing service providers.

Sharecroppers will be trained on improved sharecropping and leasing practices, arrangements, rights, and advocacy. Guidance for sharecroppers in ensuring improved arrangements will consist of monitoring and occasional legal and other support for problem cases.

Ethnic marginal farmers will receive special training in issues with respect to land ownership that are particular for the indigenous communities.

Each household will be supported in at least two different agricultural activities and will benefit from technical training, transfer of assets and input supply provision, marketing training and support. Special emphasis will be placed on the production of crops that are suitable to the dry, sandy conditions of the High Barind Tract and, considering the limited availability of land, on labour intensive high value crops. Organic farming, environmentally friendly cultural practices, and the production of protein rich pulses (which will also improve soil fertility) will be particularly promoted.

Training will be provided at community level in the above mentioned topics and will also include leadership training and group training to ensure integration and mutual collaboration.

Issues such as land ownership, property rights on Khas land and share-cropping will be increasingly relevant for the specific target group.

Result 4: Increased social inclusion and community coherence

Social exclusion is a major problem for the disadvantaged groups. Not only are they disregarded by their own or surrounding communities, even NGO and GoB staff is sometimes found to be reluctant to work with them.

Studies have also revealed that the very poorest experience most difficulties in securing support from social safety nets because of their low status in society. They will therefore have even more difficulties finding credit in times of emergencies and, if they do, will have to pay extra high interest rates because of the large risk they constitute. For the same reason they are by-passed and excluded from accessing micro-finance services otherwise widely offered by many NGOs and MFIs in Bangladesh.

Activities under this result will therefore specifically aim to reduce these barriers and to focus on building relationships and links with different categories of service providers. Advocacy and awareness raising campaigns will include topics such as causes of disability, specific issues for ethnic minorities, HIV/AIDS and the benefits of social cohesion. Special adult functional education package could also be provided.

Another tool in obtaining this result will be the establishment of self-help community committees, as successfully tested and promoted by BRAC under CFPR.

It is expected that by the end of the programme, the women and their household members will be gradually removed from their position of social exclusion and will be mainstreamed in overall development interventions.

3.3. Risks and assumptions

One of the main assumptions is that 50,000 ultra-poor FHHs can be identified in the target area. The percentage of people below the poverty line is based on Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics data from 2001, which might have changed since then. Based on these data it is estimated that 75,000 ultra-poor FHHs are living in the three priority districts. The PTF, with support from the TA team, will organise a baseline survey during the first six months of the programme to identify the potential beneficiaries and their location. Final selection will be done in consultation with the implementing partners.

Another assumption is that the available resources and programme duration will prove to be sufficient to reduce the poverty level and ensure sustained mainstreaming in the overall development process. Considering the relatively large amount of funding available per household and the limited geographical coverage, measures are put in place to ensure a sufficiently intensive programme to attain sustainable results. This will be further enhanced by the close Monitoring and Evaluation activities that will be performed by the coordination unit.

Other assumptions include:

- No major impact of possible disasters affecting the beneficiaries (mainly as a result of activities strengthening beneficiaries' preparedness and resilience to disasters);
- Political stability is maintained and disturbances remain limited;
- No major shift in GoB's development policies and plans;
- The world economic downturn does not result in a protracted economic instability/deep recession in Bangladesh;
- No renewed global food crisis with further out of control spiralling food prices will emerge;
- No epidemic affecting income generating activities such as bird flu.

With respect to implementation, it is assumed that the timely completion of government approval will ensure quick implementation and DWA is enabled to play an effective coordinating and monitoring role.

3.4. Crosscutting Issues

The programme will not only have major positive impact on gender equality and women emancipation but also on the emancipation and empowerment of people with disabilities and other people suffering from discrimination and social exclusion such as ethnic minority groups. As a result of other activities using a right-based approach (access to Khas land, water and sanitation), the human rights situation of the same groups will also be much improved and strengthened. Environmental concerns and sustainability will also be addressed under result 3, because the agricultural extension activities under this result will include Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices and the introduction of organic farming and environmentally friendly practices.

3.5. Stakeholders

Stakeholders include the GoB, donors, International Organizations, local and international NGOs, the private sector and the ultimate beneficiaries, the ultra-poor households who are the most food insecure and vulnerable.

The target group are all ultra-poor women-headed households, marginal farmer and small scale share-cropper households in Naogaon, Natore and Nawabganj districts and bordering Upazilas in Rajshahi Division in north-west Bangladesh. As this group is hard to reach and

often left out from development programmes, the geographical area has been limited. It is estimated that 500,000 ultra-poor households exist in the three priority districts, including 75,000 ultra-poor female headed households. Among the target group, special attention will be given to households with persons with disabilities as well as ethnic minorities.

The primary or main stakeholders of the programme – the target groups at programme area level - include:

The female headed households as the main target group. A total of 50,000 households will be included.

Marginal farmers typically own very small parcels of land (ranging in total from 0.02 – 0.2 ha) which cannot ensure household food security while share-croppers cultivate the land of absentee landlords. Their limited technical know-how and the lack of financial resources severely affect their productivity, leading in turn to food insecurity at the level of the household. The present intervention targets 30,000 marginal farmer and sharecropper households as the second main target group.

Estimating the average household size of the targeted households at 4.7 (average household size in the North and North-western region – BBS), the number of secondary or indirect beneficiaries should reach 375,000.

GoB agencies are the biggest group of secondary stakeholders and those include a number of Ministries (such as Ministry of Women and Children Affairs - MoWCA, Ministry of Food and Disaster Management - MoFDM, Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development - MoLGRD, Ministry of Social Welfares - MoSW, Economic Relations Division – ERD, (Ministry of Planning), Departments and Divisions (namely Department of Women Affairs - DWA, Department of Social Services - DSS, Directorate General of Food). EC and other development partners like FAO, WFP, are also important stakeholders under the programme. Other stakeholders include NGOs, both national and international, directly working with the target group, as well as private sector service and input providers.

4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

4.1. Method of implementation

The method of implementation will be partly decentralised management, through the signature of a financing agreement with the Government of Bangladesh. The project will be implemented through the signature of the procurement contracts for services and supplies, following a call for tender and through the signature of the grant contracts following a call for proposals.

The Commission controls ex ante the contracting procedures for procurement contracts > 50.000 EUR and ex post for procurement contracts • 50.000 EUR. The Commission controls ex ante the contracting procedures for all grant contracts.

Through the programme estimates, payments are decentralised for operating costs and contracts up to the ceilings indicated in the table below:

The Authorising Officer ensures that, by using the model of financing agreement for decentralised management, the segregation of duties between the authorising officer and the accounting officer or of the equivalent functions within the delegated entity will be effective, so that the decentralisation of the payments can be carried out for contracts up to the ceilings specified below.

Works	Supplies	Services	Grants
< 300.000 EUR	< 150.000 EUR (Budget)	< 200.000 EUR	• 100.000 EUR

The Department of Women Affairs will establish a fully integrated Programme Task Force (PTF) comprising GoB staff and supported by external TA. In line with the EC backbone strategy on Technical Cooperation principles, the PTF will operate within the structure of the Ministry of Children and Women Affairs, to which it will report. The main responsibilities of the PTF will be ensuring effective implementation, coordination and management of the programme through supervision, support, facilitation and liaison with other activities of the Department.

The direct support to the target beneficiaries will be provided by international/local NGOs and/or IOs that have been selected through a call for proposals, under decentralized management, by the PTF. This unit, strengthened by TA staff, will ensure exchange of experiences between the implementing NGOs, both with similar and other relevant programmes operating in the area (EEP, CFPR, DAE projects), as well as with those operating at national level such as the national VGD programme and including those that have been funded by EC (VGDUP, FS2007, Nutritional Surveillance etc). The role of this unit will therefore be one of facilitation. The PTF will ensure that implementation is efficient and effective by coordinating and involving the stakeholders at different levels.

All grants under the programme will be implemented through decentralised ex-ante management. Experiences from VGDUP have proven that the GoB, with appropriate TA support, is capable of implementing programmes under this management structure. This is also in line with the Community commitment in the context of the Aid Effectiveness Agenda. The responsibility for finalising the tender documents, submission to the EC Delegation for approval and the execution of the tendering procedures will be the responsibility of the Department of Women Affairs.

The TA support services for the PTF will be contracted through centralised management.

4.2. Procurement and grant award procedures

1) Contracts

All contracts implementing the action must be awarded and implemented in accordance with the procedures and standard documents laid down and published by the Commission for the implementation of external operations, in force at the time of the launch of the procedure in question.

Participation in the award of contracts for the present action shall be open to all natural and legal persons covered by the REGULATION (EC) No 1905/2006 establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation. Further extensions of this participation to other natural or legal persons by the concerned authorising officer shall be subject to the conditions provided for in articles 31(7) and (8) DCI.

2) Specific rules of grants

The essential selection and award criteria for the award of grants are laid down in the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EC external actions. They are established

in accordance with the principles set out in Title VI 'Grants' of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget. When derogations to these principles are applied, they shall be justified, in particular in the following cases:

- Financing in full (derogation to the principle of co-financing): the maximum possible rate of co-financing for grants is [*indicate rate, which normally should not exceed 80%, if full financing provide the justifications for it*]. Full financing may only be applied in the cases provided for in Article 253 of the Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities

- Derogation to the principle of non-retroactivity: a grant may be awarded for an action which has already begun only if the applicant can demonstrate the need to start the action before the grant is awarded, in accordance with Article 112 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget.

3) Specific rules on programme estimates

All programme estimates must respect the procedures and standard documents laid down by the Commission, in force at the time of the adoption of the programme estimates in question.

4.3. Indicative Budget and calendar

Category breakdown	EC contribution €	Other contributions €	Total €	Paying authority	Contracting authority
Component 1:					
1. Grants					
1.1. Call for proposal					
1.1.1 Capacity building beneficiaries	1 900 000			EC	DWA
1.1.2. Social transfer (cash)	7 000 000	0		EC	DWA
1.1.3. Input supplies	1 950 000	0		EC	DWA
1.1.4. Asset transfer	10 400 000	0		EC	DWA
	21 250 000	214 647	21 464 647		
Component 2: PTF: Programme Task Force					
2. Services (TA to PTF)	1 500 000			EC	EC
3. Supplies and equipment	50 000			DWA	DWA
4. Operating costs	380 000			DWA	DWA

5. External Monitoring and Evaluation	200 000		EC	EC
6. Audit	100 000		EC	EC
7. Visibility / Communication	20 000		DWA	DWA
8. Contingency	500 000			
Grand total	24 000 000	214 647	24 214 647	

GoB contribution is in kind – office space, vehicles, equipment and local staff etc – estimated to be around € 600 000

The GoB contribution will be provided in kind, and will constitute mainly of deputed staff, provision of office space and other facilities so that sustainability will be ensured. It is also envisaged that at the time when the FLS programme starts, the EC funded VGDUP programme has ended so that equipment and vehicles that were used under this programme and which are still in working conditions can now be re-assigned to the current programme.

The tender procedure for the selection of the TA service provider will be launched immediately after the signature of the Financing Agreement.

The call for proposals for the selection of implementing partners will be done after a 6 month inception period during which the GoB planning documents will be finalised and the PTF put in place.

The contracts with the implementing partners selected through the call for proposals should be concluded about a year after the signature of the Financing Agreement. The duration of these contracts will be 30 months, during which a 24 months intensive support package will be delivered to the beneficiaries. The operational duration is 42 months as from the signature of the Financing Agreement by the last party

4.4. Performance monitoring

At the level of Programme Purpose the following three main indicators have been defined:

- a) increased income
- b) improved nutritional status
- c) enhanced empowerment and participation in communal activities

Exact baseline data will be determined during the baseline survey, which will be performed by the PTF as soon as implementation starts and the beneficiaries have been selected. Based on the observed data, a decision will be made on the expected growth of these. The final impact and evaluation study that will be performed at the end of the programme will show to what extent the baseline data have changed and whether this was in accordance with the targets set.

During implementation, regular monitoring will ensure that activities will indeed lead to the expected results. The data collected will be presented at the Annual Review meeting so that planned activities and the LFM can be adjusted accordingly.

Special efforts will be made to build upon capacity and experiences built under previous projects in this sector, notably FSVGD and especially VGDUP. The latter is already making use of a MIS and intense monitoring system. Also experience gained in the Food Security Nutritional Surveillance Project will be called upon and used wherever required.

Participatory monitoring with target beneficiaries will also be done on a regular basis.

Methodology

The baseline survey will include questionnaires to be completed during interviews with a randomly selected sample of the selected beneficiaries and their household members and which will be large enough to ensure that analysis will lead to statistically reliable results.

Knowledge, Attitude, Practice (KAP) studies will be done in a selected number of communities, with both community members and beneficiaries to assess to what extent the knowledge of people has changed (for instance with respect to the nutritional value of the different food groups) and to what extent this has led to a change in attitude and practices.

Standard indicators

In line with EC instructions, and with respect to Food Security, two standard indicators have been defined: i).number of meals per person per day amongst vulnerable groups (serial no 603); ii) number of targeted people to whom food aid and non-food aid is distributed (serial no 604).

The programme will assess and monitor these indicators on a regular basis and will provide the data in the progress and annual reports.

4.5. Evaluation and audit

A mid-term evaluation will be performed mid-way through the implementation period of the grant contracts. The final evaluation will be performed in the last six months of the programme, during the closure phase. Both evaluations will be performed by external independent consultants directly contracted by the Commission.

External audits of the implementing agency accounts will be performed on a six-monthly basis by an internationally recognised and approved auditor. The audit will review compliance with the Financing Agreement and EC procedures and will be transmitted to the EC and the Implementing Authority.

4.6. Communication and visibility

Communication and visibility will be an integral part of the programme. All the programme equipment, logistics, facilities and documents will bear the logos of EU and GoB. For example, signboards of the programme will have the logos of these two partners (refer to visibility manual). The programme will prepare six-monthly progress reports, and distribute them to all concerned on a regular basis. Brochure and profile of the programmes will also be prepared, updated and circulated. A website of the programme containing all necessary information and features will also be developed and hosted, and updated regularly.

Staff at all levels will maintain relations and liaison with all stakeholders and keep them informed and updated with the progress, special attainments and problems of the programme. The programme will keep close cooperation with the media, both printed and electronically, and will try best to expose the activities of the programme. Workshops, sharing meetings, both in formal and informal fashions, will be arranged to keep all concerned informed.