

**ACF-INTERNATIONAL  
POLICY**

# **ENHANCING CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND FOOD & NUTRITION SECURITY**

ACF approach to face climate change, hunger and undernutrition in at-risk communities





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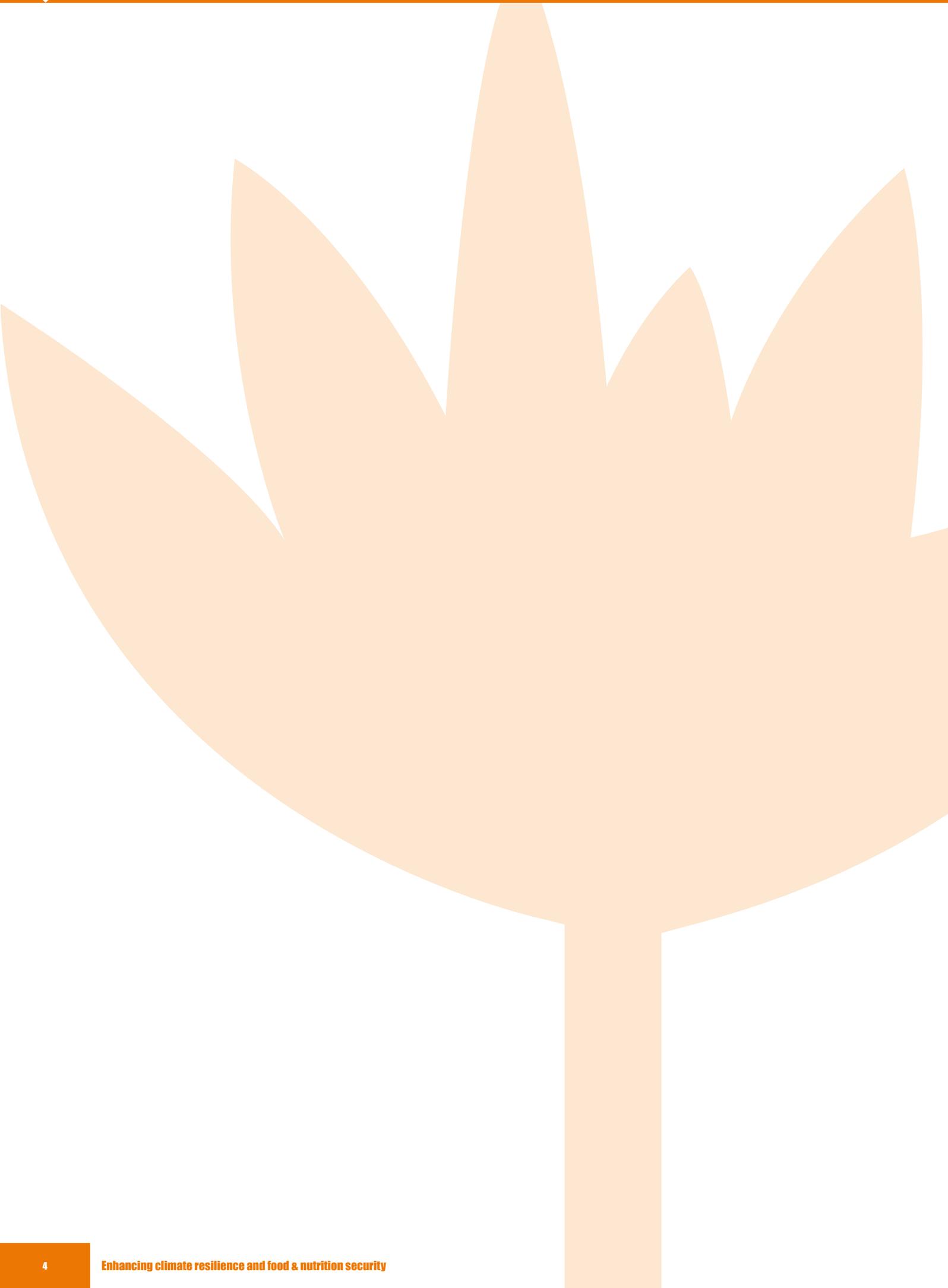
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Design Graphic: Céline Beuvin  
All photos: Gao, Mali 2009 © Samuel Hauenstein Swan  
Printed in December 2012, by CAP Impression, 9 rue Salvador Allende – ZI des Glaises, 91140 Palaiseau  
Recycled paper Cyclus Print  
Legal registration: December 2012

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# HOW CLIMATE CHANGE EXACERBATES HUNGER AND UNDERNUTRITION?

## Current global hunger and undernutrition challenges

Hunger and undernutrition remains widespread. An estimated 870 million people experience hunger in 2012<sup>1</sup>: they lack access to sufficient of the major macronutrients (carbohydrates, fats and protein). Perhaps another billion are thought to suffer from 'hidden hunger', in which important micronutrients (such as vitamins and minerals) are missing from their diet, with consequent risks of physical and mental impairment<sup>2</sup>.

Undernutrition remains one of the world's most serious but least addressed socioeconomic and health problems<sup>3</sup>. The human and socioeconomic costs of undernutrition are enormous, falling hardest on the poorest, especially on women and children<sup>4</sup>.

The millions of world's people who have experienced undernutrition early in life face many challenges as they grow up. They encounter increased risks of illness and death when young, experience difficulties at school and are often not able to make a full contribution to the social and economic development of their households, communities and nations when they become adults<sup>5</sup>.

The recent food, financial and economic crises and economic downturn have magnified the challenge of hunger and undernutrition. These crises combine with others issues, such as the increasing impact and threats of climate change - the focus of this paper.

A long-neglected and under-resourced problem, the issue of undernutrition has been enjoying a greatly increased profile over the last 4 years, following the 2008 food crisis and as a consequence of influential research, such as the Lancet Maternal and Child Undernutrition Series (2008). As a result, there is now a much greater focus on the problem, and increased recognition of the fact that it must be tackled at a grand scale. Global, regional, national and local food and nutrition security initiatives are progressively developed to measure up the issues.

### KEY TERMS RELATED TO UNDERNUTRITION

**Hunger** is a term which literally describes a feeling of discomfort from not eating, and which has also been used to describe undernutrition, especially in reference to food insecurity<sup>6</sup>.

**Undernutrition** is caused by inadequate dietary intake and disease which in turn stem from food insecurity, poor maternal and child care practices and inadequate access to clean drinking water and safe food, sanitation and quality health services. Undernutrition can result in the following: underweight for age, short for age (stunted), thin for height (wasted), and functionally deficient in vitamins and/or minerals (micronutrient malnutrition or 'hidden hunger'). Stunting (or 'chronic malnutrition') reflects shortness-for-age, an indicator of growth retardation. Wasting (or 'acute malnutrition') reflects a recent and severe process that has led to substantial weight loss; wasted children are very susceptible to infections and death.

**Food security** exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life<sup>7</sup>.

**Nutrition security** exists when food security is coupled with a sanitary environment, adequate health services, and proper care and feeding practices to ensure a healthy life for all household members<sup>8</sup>.

### KEY FIGURES ON UNDERNUTRITION

- Maternal and child undernutrition is the underlying cause of **3.5 million deaths** each year and 35% of the disease burden in children younger than 5 years;
- For all developing countries, nearly one-third or **178 million of children** younger than 5 years are stunted (low 'height-for-height');
- There are **55 million** acutely **malnourished children** globally (10%) and 19 million children severely acutely malnourished or 'severely wasted' (3.5%)<sup>9</sup>.

1 - FAO, WFP and IFAD (2012) The State of the World Food Insecurity 2012

2 - Foresight (2011) The Future of Food and Farming

3 - Horton et al (2009) Scaling Up Nutrition: What Will It Cost? and Scaling Up Nutrition (2010) Scaling Up Nutrition: A Framework for Action

4 - Ibid.

5 - Nabarro (2010) Introducing the policy brief 'Scaling Up Nutrition: A framework for Action'

6 - Black et al (2008) Maternal and child undernutrition - Global and regional exposures and health consequences

7 - FAO (2002) The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2001; FAO (2009) The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2009; UN Standing Committee on Nutrition (2010). 6th Report on the World Nutrition Situation

8 - Shekar M (2006) Repositioning nutrition as central to development; UN Standing Committee on Nutrition (2010). 6th Report on the World Nutrition Situation; Scaling Up Nutrition (2010) Scaling Up

Nutrition: A Framework for Action

9 - Black et al (2008) Maternal and child undernutrition - Global and regional exposures and health consequences

## Climate change exacerbates hunger and undernutrition and undermines current efforts to address food and nutrition insecurity

Adverse effects of climate change are already with us. The number of climate-related disasters – droughts, floods, cyclones – has more than doubled in the former decade compared to the nineties. Rainfall is reported to be more erratic, shorter and more violent<sup>10</sup>. Climate-related shocks and stresses will continuously increase in the coming years – at a pace and scale that might be outstripping even the most sobering predictions of the last report of the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change<sup>11</sup>.

More severe and frequent climate-related shocks, changing seasons and gradual changes increase the overall risk of hunger and undernutrition through various causal pathways that relate to livelihoods; food security; maternal and child care and feeding practices; and water, sanitation and health<sup>12</sup>. The Figure below intends to illustrate these multiple pathways. It is important emphasizing that climate change acts in conjunction with others factors, and thus is best viewed as a threat multiplier.

The Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change (IPCC) fourth assessment report concluded that undernutrition linked to extreme climatic events may be one of the most important consequences of climate change due to the very large numbers of people that may be affected<sup>13</sup>. According to IFPRI, calorie availability in 2050 is likely to decline throughout the developing world resulting in an additional 24 million undernourished children, 21% more relative to a world with no climate change, almost half of which would be living in sub-Saharan Africa<sup>14</sup>. Climate change will eliminate much of the progress made in terms of tackling undernutrition.

### KEY TERMS RELATED TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate variability denotes deviations of climate statistics over a given period of time compared to the long-term climate statistics relating to the corresponding calendar period. Examples include fluctuations that occur from year to year, the statistics of extreme conditions, and conditions that result from periodic El Niño and La Niña.

**Climate change** refers to any change in climate over time (decades or longer), whether due to natural processes or as a result of human activity.

Climate-related hazards are manifestations of climate variability and change. They can be broadly defined as events or conditions that may cause harm to people, communities and the systems on which they depend. They include • shocks or extreme weather events • inter-annual and seasonal fluctuations and hardships – such as unusually hot seasons, shorter or delayed rainy seasons, and • gradual changes, such as changing rainfall patterns, deterioration of the natural resources and sea level rise.

**Resilience** refers to the capacities of people, communities and the systems on which they depend to resist, absorb, cope and adapt when exposed to a hazard or a set of hazards – while preserving, restoring or enhancing their food and nutrition security.

**Risk management** refers to actions, measures and processes taken by people, communities and institutions to anticipate and prepare for ('preparedness'), avoid ('prevention'), lessen or transfer ('mitigation') the potential adverse effects of a hazard or a set of hazards.

**Climate change adaptation** refers to actions, measures and processes taken by people, communities and institutions which might ultimately reduce vulnerabilities and build resilience to actual or expected climate-related hazards and their effects, within the broad context of sustainable development.

**Climate change mitigation** refers to actions, measures and processes taken to reduce the sources of or enhance the sinks of greenhouse gases.

10 - Oxfam (2009) What happened to the seasons?

11 - UNEP (2009) Climate change science compendium 2009; Allison et al. (2009) The Copenhagen Diagnosis, 2009: Updating the world on the Latest Climate Science

12 - Easterling et al. (2007) Food, Fibre and Forest Products and Confalonieri et al. (2007) Human Health, In: Parry et al. (eds.), Climate Change 2007: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability, Contribution of Working Group II to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change; Costello et al. (2009) Managing the health effects of climate change. The Lancet 373: 1693–733; Nelson et al. (2009) Climate Change Impact on Agriculture and Costs of Adaptation; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) (2008) Climate Change, Bioenergy and Nutrition. FAO High Level Conference on Food Security and the Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy; UNICEF (2007) Climate Change and Children; World Health Organization (2008) Protecting Health from Climate Change; WFP (2009) Climate Change and Hunger: responding to the Challenge; UN Standing Committee on Nutrition (2010). 6th Report on the World Nutrition Situation

13 - Confalonieri et al. (2007) Human Health

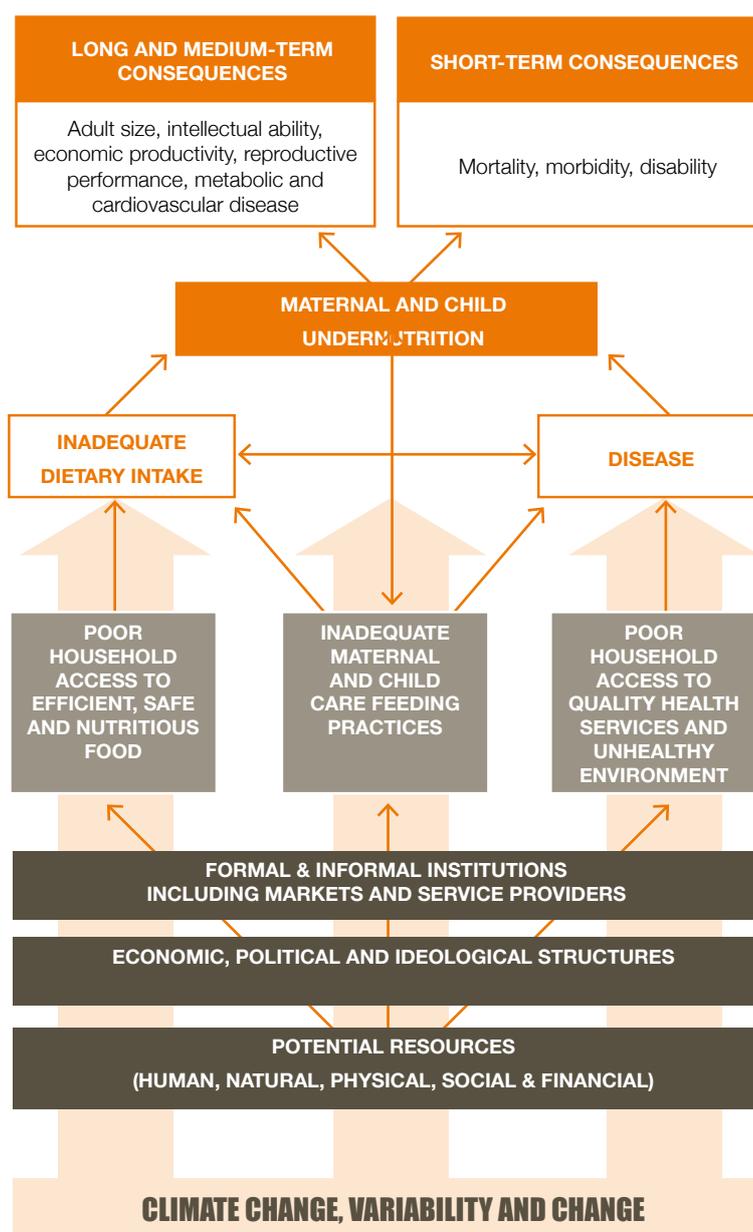
14 - Nelson et al. (2009) Climate Change Impact on Agriculture and Costs of Adaptation

## CLIMATE CHANGE INFLUENCES NUTRITION SECURITY THROUGH MULTIPLE 'PATHWAYS'

Climate change acts as a multiplier of existing threats to food security and livelihoods. Although there may be beneficial effects at higher latitudes, agricultural production is expected to drop significantly in regions where it is already low. Declining agricultural production reduces employment and income, diminishing poor people's purchasing power and limiting their ability to invest in assets that increase their resilience<sup>15</sup>. In combination with other factors, climate change is expected to increase price volatility and prices for the most common staple crops<sup>16</sup>. Recent studies suggest that climate change could also significantly influence global food prices in the near future, and that price spikes will be a devastating blow on the most vulnerable households. At the same time, more extreme weather events will have serious impacts on livelihood assets in both rural and urban areas and threaten the stability of food supply. Competition over increasingly scarce resources will also increase the risk of conflicts and migration patterns, which in turn will again increase the risk of food insecurity.

Water resources are predicted to be strongly impacted by climate change, with wide-ranging consequences for human societies and ecosystems<sup>17</sup>. Hundreds of millions of people risk being exposed to a growing scarcity of water<sup>18</sup>. Climate change-related alterations in rainfall, surface water availability and water quality will impact on the incidence of water-related diseases<sup>19</sup>. Closely interlinked with water scarcity is agricultural and food production, which will become riskier in many developing countries as the climate continues to change.

Climate change also negatively affects nutrition through its impacts on health. According to the Lancet<sup>20</sup>, climate change is the biggest global health threat of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and is already contributing to the global burden of disease and premature death. Important future trends for human health include an increase in the number of people suffering from death, disease and injury from heat waves, floods, storms, fires and droughts; changes in the range of infectious disease vectors; and an increase in the burden of diarrhoeal diseases<sup>21</sup>. Climate change impacts on health eventually both increase nutritional needs and reduce the absorption of nutrients and their utilization by the body. Climate change will also put further strain on the already heavy workload of women with negative impacts on their ability to provide proper care to infants and young children, heightening the risk of undernutrition<sup>22</sup>.



*Climate extremes, variability & change and maternal & child undernutrition: an analytical framework*

15 WFP (2011) Climate change and hunger – Towards a WFP policy on climate change

16 Oxfam (2012) Extreme Weather, Extreme Prices: The Costs of Feeding a Warming World

17 Bates et al. (eds.) (2008) Climate change and water. Technical paper of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

18 Pachauri and Reisinger (eds.) (2007) Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

19 Confalonieri et al. (2007) Human Health

20 Costello et al. (2009) Managing the health effects of climate change. The Lancet 373: 1693–733

21 Based on Confalonieri et al. (2007) Human Health

22 UNSCN (2010) UNSCN Newsletter #38 – Climate Change: Food and Nutrition Security Implications

## Who are the most vulnerable population groups?

Vulnerability to climate-related hazards and climate change varies within countries, communities and even households. Understanding who is vulnerable and why requires a context-specific and field-based analysis. That said the poor, hungry and undernourished people and marginalised groups in developing countries – particularly the women and young children – are typically amongst the most vulnerable social groups to climate-related hazards and climate change, mainly because:

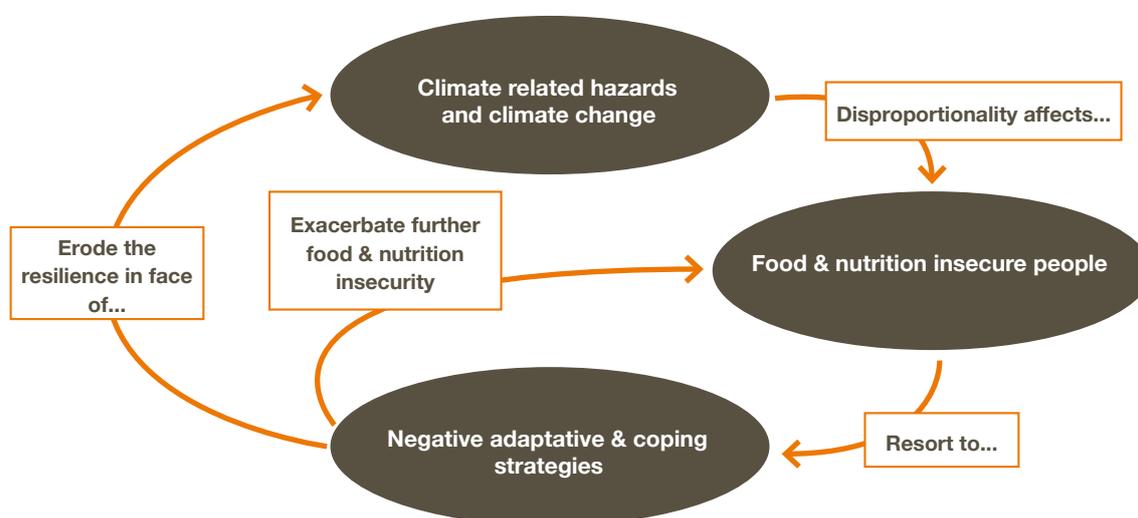
- They are more likely to live in areas that have greater exposure to climate-related hazards, such as slums, flood plains or others marginal environments;
- They generally rely on climate-sensitive resources and natural resource-based livelihoods – such as small-scale rainfed farming systems, pastoralism and fisheries; forest-based activities; and agricultural labour;
- They lack access to assets and services that would enable them to cope and adjust with climate-related crises and climate change, and they have limited capacity to innovate and adjust in the long-term, struggling already on a daily basis to meet their basic needs;
- They often have to resort to negative adaptive and coping strategies that further exacerbate food and nutrition insecurity (e.g. reducing food intakes; selling productive assets; etc.).

Hungry and undernourished people may become trapped in a vicious cycle: increasingly exposed to climate-related shocks, seasonal fluctuations and stresses, they have to resort to negative strategies that further exacerbate food and nutrition insecurity and erode their resilience in the short- and long-term.

### A VICIOUS CIRCLE OF HUNGER & UNDERNUTRITION IN FACE OF CLIMATE-RELATED SHOCKS & STRESSES

Climate-related hazards and climate change exacerbate hunger and undernutrition. In turn, food and nutrition insecure people are more sensitive, less able to cope and adapt or less resilient to climate-related hazards and climate change. For instance, when your children' nutrition is poor before a hazard hits, their limited nutritional stores are soon depleted, increasing their risk of undernutrition, disease and death.

Already-food and nutrition insecure populations have fewer options to cope and adjust to climate-related shocks and stresses. They have to resort to negative adaptive and coping strategies that further exacerbate food and nutrition insecurity or lessen their resilience. These strategies include for instance the reduction of food intake; the consumption of poor-quality water; the reduction of time allocated to child care; the sale of key productive assets; the migration in flood-prone slums; the degradation of natural resources through charcoal-making and firewood marketing, etc.



## New paradigms for a changing climate world

The increasing impact and threats of climate change called for a triple-track approach:

- Addressing the threats (anticipatory or ‘ex-ante’ measures) through climate risk management and adaptation – which relate to climate resilience building;
- Addressing early the impacts of climate crises (reactive or ‘ex-post’ measures) – i.e. early responses to climate-related shocks, seasonal hardships and gradual changes;
- Addressing the drivers of climate change through climate change mitigation, in order to minimise the extent of future negative and potentially disastrous impacts induced by climate change.

# HOW DOES ACF RESPOND TO CLIMATE CHANGE?

ACF responds to climate change by enhancing the resilience of the most vulnerable populations and communities in face of climate-related shocks and stresses. ACF’s climate resilience approach bridges elements from disaster risk management and climate change adaptation. It includes a set of interconnected and complementary approaches, respectively:

- Better understanding climate-related challenges on hunger and undernutrition;
- Strengthening food and nutrition security surveillance and early warning systems;
- Linking early warnings to early response mechanisms;
- Enhancing preparedness in face of climate-related shocks and seasonal hardships;
- Managing climate-related risks and enhancing people and community resilience;
- Conducting advocacy and shaping policies;
- Reducing carbon footprints.

### IMPORTANT NOTES

- ACF’s climate resilience approach does not solely focus on climate change, but as well on climate variability, including climate-related extremes.
- Most ACF’s food and nutrition security interventions reduce underlying vulnerabilities in face of climate change – but as well in face of other shocks and stresses, such as high food prices. Such actions and many others help to buffer people and communities from nearly all shocks and stresses. For instance, nutrition and health interventions can reduce the vulnerability to climate-related hazards – children with a good food, health and nutritional status are better able to face a drought compared to undernourished children. Livelihood diversification programs generally allow as well households living in an exposed area to spread the risks of specific climate-related hazards. The actions considered in this paper are specifically designed to address climate-related risks.

## Better understanding climate-related challenges on hunger and undernutrition

ACF played a key role in understanding the multiple threats of climate change on food and nutrition security. It provided one of the first multi-sectoral analysis of the impact and threats of climate change on undernutrition and nutrition security. This analysis served as a knowledge base for diverse policy briefs.

### THE THREATS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON UNDERNUTRITION

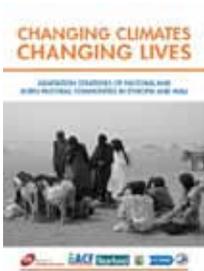


The United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition (UNSCN) Newsletter #38 highlights how climate change further exacerbates the enormous existing burden of hunger and undernutrition. It proposes policy and practical orientations to tackle these issues. ACF produced the lead article of this newsletter entitled 'The Threats of Climate Change on Undernutrition – A Neglected Issue That Requires Further Analysis And Urgent Actions'. It is available at:

[http://www.unscn.org/files/Publications/SCN\\_News/SCN\\_NEWS\\_38\\_03\\_06\\_10.pdf](http://www.unscn.org/files/Publications/SCN_News/SCN_NEWS_38_03_06_10.pdf)

ACF also conducts analyses in at-risk communities and countries in order to better understand food and nutrition insecurity risks induced by climate variability and change, and to identify policy and programming options to support vulnerable households to cope and adapt to these shocks and stresses.

### ANALYSES AND STUDIES IN AT-RISK COMMUNITIES AND COUNTRIES



An applied research project entitled 'Changing climates, changing lives' was conducted in Ethiopia and in Mali in partnership with the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), Tearfund and national partners. It revealed that pastoral households in Ethiopia and Mali are finding it increasingly difficult to tackle current climate risks and meet their food and nutrition needs. The report made a number of recommendations for NGOs, governments, donors and academia, such as to ensure policy coherence and balancing development goals that can help increase the resilience of pastoralists and agro-pastoralists. It is available at:

<http://www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/publications/v.php?id=14381>

ACF – in partnership with IISD and national partners – also carried out a regional study on 'Climate Resilience and Food Security' in Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Supported by CDKN (Climate Knowledge and Development Network), this project aims at developing tailored frameworks and practical indicators for a better understanding of food system climate resilience among vulnerable communities.

### CLIMATE RESILIENCE ACTION #1

**ACF will analyse and monitor climate-related risks and vulnerabilities and their interplay with food and nutrition security – in priority in communities and countries highly exposed to climate-related shocks and seasonal trends. These analyses will support ACF policy-making, country strategies and programming.**

## Strengthening food and nutrition security surveillance and early warning systems

ACF conceptualises and implements food security and nutrition surveillance systems in diverse communities and countries at risk of climate-related shocks and stresses – particularly in areas where such a monitoring is lacking. These surveillance systems also integrate data directly or indirectly linked to seasonal or interannual climate information.

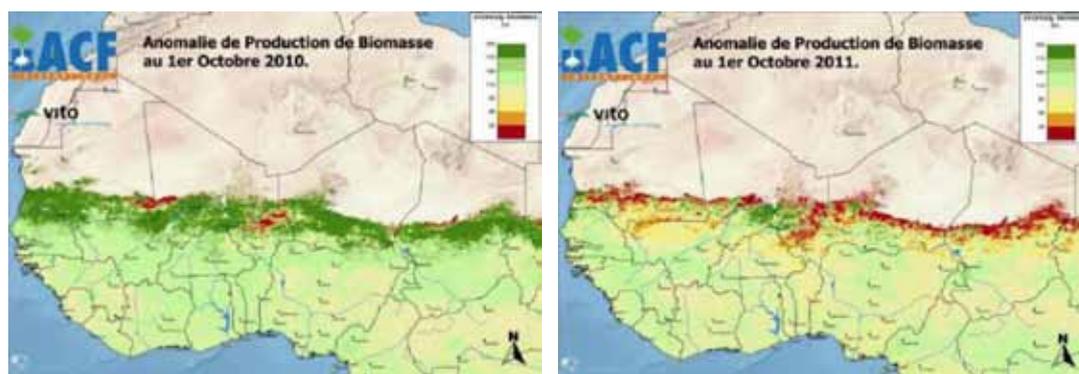
### SENTINEL SITES IN CENTRAL AMERICA

In Guatemala and Nicaragua, ACF and partners developed an innovative network of community-based sentinel sites, in complement to the national surveillance system. These ‘sentinel sites’ – located in high vulnerability areas – act as remote sensors to alert local and national decision makers and to trigger adequate measures to prevent food and nutrition crises. Such community-based monitoring and early warning systems also serve to empower vulnerable population and to strengthen institutions and advocacy groups.

ACF uses the information produced by these surveillance systems to inform or alert authorities, humanitarian and development stakeholders about food and nutrition situations.

### AN INNOVATIVE SURVEILLANCE AND EARLY WARNING SYSTEM IN PASTORAL AREAS OF SAHEL

In West Africa, the existing food security surveillance and early warning systems mainly focus on sedentary populations and Sahelian pastoral areas and remain relatively inadequate. ACF and its partners have progressively developed an innovative pastoral surveillance and early warning system at national and regional levels, firstly in Mali and Niger and second in Mauritania, Burkina Faso and Chad. This system monitors the relative abundance or scarcity of biomass (a proxy-indicator of pasture availability) and of surface-water bodies at national and regional level, using remote sensing data and geographic information systems technologies. ACF and partners’ surveillance system provides timely and reliable information and early warning, which can be used to prevent or mitigate food and nutrition crises in Sahelian pastoral areas. This system was used to inform local, national and international stakeholders before and during the 2004-2005, 2009-2010 and 2011-12 crises affecting Sahelian pastoral communities and regions<sup>23</sup>.



*Legend: Areas in red relate to biomass production deficits compared to an average production*  
*Source: 2012 Strategic Document – Response plan addressing the food and nutrition crisis in the Sahel*

## CLIMATE RESILIENCE ACTION #2

**ACF will develop or consolidate integrated and effective food and nutrition surveillance and early warning systems at local, national or regional levels – in priority in areas where such warning is lacking. It will monitor early warning information provided by others authoritative stakeholders in its areas of operations.**

## Linking early warnings to early response mechanisms

Providing early warning information is an important pre-condition to prevent or mitigate food and nutrition crises, but it can be considered as useless information if it doesn't trigger early action. An early response, particularly to slow-onset disasters such as droughts, is not only cheaper but more effective. By responding early, the less the lives, livelihoods and nutrition statuses of the exposed children and populations will be affected or deteriorated, the more families are in a stronger position to cope and recover, and the less vulnerability to future crises increases.

### INVESTING IN EARLY RESPONSES FOR NUTRITION

Climate-related crises have long-lasting effects on nutrition and children. Take the droughts in Africa:

- In Ethiopia children aged five or less in drought-prone areas are 36 per cent more likely to be malnourished and 41 per cent more likely to be stunted if they are born during a drought year.
- In Kenya, being born in a drought year increases the likelihood of children being malnourished by 50%.
- In Niger, children aged two or under who were born during, and affected by, a drought year are 72 per cent more likely to be stunted<sup>24</sup>.

In Niger in 2005, it would have cost \$1 a day per child to prevent acute malnutrition among children if early warning information had been followed up. By July 2006, the cost of saving a malnourished child's life in an emergency response operation was \$80. Vulnerability analysis systems exist in some form in many countries but often they are not as effective as they should be at communicating the right types of information, at the right time, and in the right way to achieve action<sup>25</sup>.

Failures to respond early have been observed again and again, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa and during slow-onset crises. Take the Horn of Africa, where droughts are no surprise at all – there were droughts and crises in 1999/2000, 2002/3, 2005/6, 2008/9 and 2011/12: each time the response has been the same – late and inadequate<sup>26</sup>. The latest crisis has captured attention only in July 2011 – more than 9 months after the first warnings, and when over than 10 million people were in alarming situations.

### EARLY ACF RESPONSE TO PREVENT MULTIPLE FOOD AND NUTRITION CRISES SAHEL

Throughout the first half of 2012, ACF played key roles in alerting and mobilising stakeholders regarding the risks of severe food and nutrition crisis in Sahel. ACF also contributed to the 2012 Sahel response strategy document, in partnership with FAO, OCHA, WFP and UNICEF; this framework document intends to outline a strategy to address unfolding food and nutrition crises in Sahel. ACF implements a series of early responses throughout Sahel, with the aim to prevent further deterioration of local and regional food and nutrition insecurity. This multi-sectoral programming embraces disaster risk management, livelihoods, and food & nutrition components.

### CLIMATE RESILIENCE ACTION #3

**ACF will link early warning information with its internal contingency mechanisms. It will encourage or trigger early response mechanisms among local, national, regional or international stakeholders in face of (climate-related and others) shocks and seasonal hardships – particularly when early warning information is not considered as required.**

24 - UN Human Development Report, 2007/8; in: Anderson (2011) Climate change and poverty reduction  
25 - Save The Children (2009) Hungry for Change. An eight-step, costed plan of action to tackle global child hunger  
26 - Based on Levine (2011) Here we go again: Famine in the Horn of Africa. An opinion in the ODI Blog Posts series

## Enhancing preparedness in face of climate-related shocks and seasonal hardships

Implementing early responses in face of shocks and hardships require a certain level of preparedness or response capacity, and this, at multiple levels (e.g. in a community or a country) and among multiple stakeholders (e.g. with a local institution, a governmental agency or a non-governmental organisation). For the past decade, ACF has progressively enhanced its preparedness to adverse events at national and international levels. ACF's preparedness focuses primarily on food and nutrition security response capacities.

### ENHANCING PREPAREDNESS OF ACF MISSIONS TO FOOD AND NUTRITION CRISES

ACF uses a specific tool in its areas of operations to enhance its preparedness to food and nutrition emergencies. This tool is called the Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan (EPRP). The operational advantages of this tool include:

- Potential humanitarian risks are clearly identified for ACF missions;
- ACF national and international staff are trained and ready to respond;
- All tools for assessing and responding to emergencies are available;
- Partnerships with other operational actors are identified and formalized;
- Contacts and prepositioning with donors are formalized;
- Genuine deployment capacity is in place even with remote management;
- Pre-positioning of emergency stocks or formalised access to emergency stocks belonging to partners.

ACF supports communities and institutions in enhancing their preparedness and their capacities to deal with disasters and food and nutrition crises.

### ENHANCING COMMUNITY AND INSTITUTION PREPAREDNESS: AN ILLUSTRATION FROM ETHIOPIA

ACF implemented a community-based disaster risk management project in pastoral and agro-pastoral areas of Borena (Southern Ethiopia), which are increasingly exposed to drought events. Specific activities of this project focused on community and institution preparedness. For instance, activities included strengthening and building the capacities of disaster risk management committees at woreda and kebele levels with relevant institutions; defining or strengthening contingency plans in collaboration with partners; and linking these plans vertically with existing response mechanisms in place.

#### CLIMATE RESILIENCE ACTION #4

**ACF will further strengthen the preparedness of its missions and operational headquarters. It will increase its understanding of local capacities and coping strategies. Based on this analysis, ACF will continue supporting community and institution preparedness in face of food and nutrition crises, climate-related and others shocks and stresses. In particular, ACF – along with partners – will further enhance the management of the caseloads of wasted children during shocks and seasonal hardships.**



## Managing climate-related risks and enhancing people and community resilience

ACF implements multi-sectoral programming to manage risks and enhance the resilience of people and livelihoods in face of climate-related shocks, seasonal hardships and gradual stresses. This programming combines elements from sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture and livelihoods approaches; disaster risk reduction; hunger and undernutrition safety nets and social protection; and climate change adaptation. The three boxes below provide an illustration of unfolding good practice in at-risk communities.

### **SUPPORTING LIVELIHOOD RECOVERY IN FLOOD-AFFECTED VILLAGES WHILE STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY AND INSTITUTION CAPACITY TO FACE THE NEXT CLIMATE SHOCKS, BURKINA FASO**

In 2010 several municipalities of the Gnagna province in eastern Burkina Faso were affected by floods. These localities are also regularly exposed to droughts. Supported by the European Union, ACF and partners developed a programme aiming at restoring flood-affected livelihoods and enhancing climate resilience of affected communities. Activities related to resilience building included livelihoods diversification and natural resource management activities on one hand, and capacity building and local institution strengthening activities on the other hand, with a specific focus on preparedness and local risk management.

### **ENHANCING RISK MANAGEMENT CAPACITIES OF WOMEN AND LANDLESS IN COASTAL VILLAGES ON THE FRONTLINE OF CLIMATE CHANGE, BANGLADESH**

ACF and Sangram (a local NGO) implement an innovative disaster risk reduction project in 10 coastal villages of Barguna, Bangladesh. These villages are exposed to sea level rise, coastal flooding, erosion and frequent cyclones. As such, they can be considered as being on the 'frontline' of climate change. ACF and Sangram' pilot project aims at enhancing risk management capacities among poor women and landless households. Various tools are mobilized, including small-scale disaster mitigation activities, training, best practice sharing among coastal communities and experience-sharing with the broader practitioners community.

### **CLIMATE RESILIENCE ACTION #5**

**ACF will scale up its risk management and resilience building activities considering good practice and lessons learned, and this in priority in the most vulnerable, food and nutrition insecure communities. It will also implement new resilience building approaches and continuously innovate with partners.**

## Conducting advocacy and shaping policies

For the past years, ACF has led or contributed into various policy briefs and advocacy documents focused on nutrition security in a changing climate. It has also conducted nutrition-focused advocacy with partners targeting key climate change-related stakeholders and policy fora – particularly the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

### KEY POLICY BRIEFS AND ADVOCACY IN THE FRAME OF THE UNFCCC



This UNSCN policy brief proposes directions to address the nutrition impact of climate change for consideration by the Parties to the UNFCCC. According to this policy brief, building resilience and tackling food and nutrition insecurity in a changing climate requires a well-coordinated, multi-sectoral, ‘nutrition-sensitive’ approach that involves: direct nutrition-specific interventions, food assistance and safety nets; climate-resilient agriculture and livelihoods interventions; social protection schemes; maternal and child health care, water supply, hygiene and sanitation; education for women and girls and empowerment and disaster risk management, within in the broader of context of sustainable development. It is available at: [www.unscn.org/files/Statements/Bdef\\_NutCC\\_2311\\_final.pdf](http://www.unscn.org/files/Statements/Bdef_NutCC_2311_final.pdf)



Another multi-agency policy brief entitled ‘Enhancing women’s leadership to address the challenges of climate change on nutrition security and health’ also considers similar policy responses – with a high focus on the roles and potential of women. It is available at:

<http://docustore.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/communications/wfp245370.pdf>

### CLIMATE RESILIENCE ACTION #6

**ACF will further advocate for a better consideration of undernutrition challenges in key risk management, resilience and climate change-related policy agendas. On the opposite, it will advocate for a better consideration of climate-related risks and the need for resilience in key food security and nutrition-related within key agendas. Primary targets include United Nations agencies, national governments and donors.**

## Reducing carbon footprints

With unabated emissions, many trends in climate will accelerate, leading to higher risks of food and nutrition crises. There is now widespread consensus on the need for climate change mitigation efforts to limit the adverse effects of climate change. As presented in the glossary, climate change mitigation refers to actions, measures and processes taken to reduce the sources of or enhance the sinks of greenhouse gases. ACF has recently assessed its carbon footprints in pilot headquarters and missions, and it is exploring ways to reduce its footprints.

### CLIMATE RESILIENCE ACTION #7

**ACF will progressively reduce its carbon footprint in priority country of operations.**



# CORE PRINCIPLES IN ACF RESPONSES

If ACF is to remain effective and relevant in terms of the technical and programmatic solutions it offers in the fight against undernutrition, preparing for and responding to crises, it is important for us to understand the likely trends and developments in the contexts and sectors within which we operate. The challenges today are like never before and our strategies and approaches must anticipate change and be adaptable and flexible in the face of both predictable developments and uncertainty. In the elaboration of our sectorial strategies and action plans, we need to think longer-term, with 2015 as a 'staging post'. Described below are some of the major challenges facing NGOs such as ACF (the list is not exhaustive, but aims to highlight some key issues).

## Focusing on hunger and undernutrition and the most vulnerable

ACF is involved primarily in communities where hunger and undernutrition prevails. It gives priority to the needs of the most vulnerable people— particularly women, young children and marginalised groups.

## Working with communities

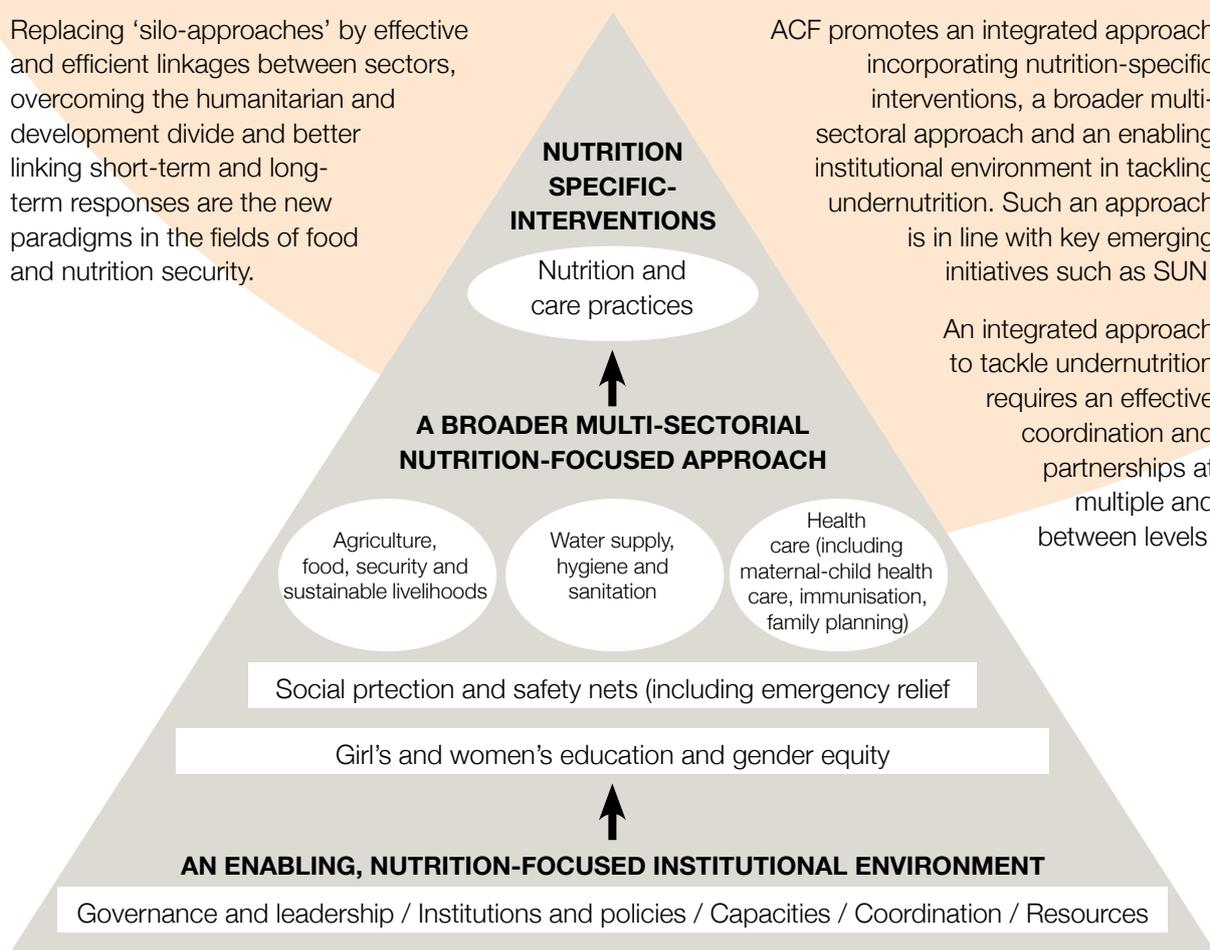
At the core of ACF programming is a community-focused approach. ACF empowers and develop the capacities of local communities through the sharing of expertise and encouraging local level involvement and decision making.

## Developing an integrated approach with partners to tackle undernutrition

Replacing 'silo-approaches' by effective and efficient linkages between sectors, overcoming the humanitarian and development divide and better linking short-term and long-term responses are the new paradigms in the fields of food and nutrition security.

ACF promotes an integrated approach incorporating nutrition-specific interventions, a broader multi-sectoral approach and an enabling institutional environment in tackling undernutrition. Such an approach is in line with key emerging initiatives such as SUN.

An integrated approach to tackle undernutrition requires an effective coordination and partnerships at multiple and between levels.



Source of the figure: Adapted from ACF (various); Nabarro (2010); and SUN, 2010

## **Strengthening local and national institutions**

While analysing situations, strengthening early warning systems, enhancing preparedness, managing climate-related risks or building resilience, ACF strengthens local and national institutions through capacity development and technical assistance. This allows ensuring that these institutions have the skills necessary to address hunger and undernutrition; enhancing ownership and sustainability of ACF actions; and encouraging the replication and scaling up of food and nutrition security initiatives.

## **Aiming at impact and lasting solutions**

ACF's work is solution-centred and impact-focused. ACF promotes participation, ownership and capacity-building of local and national structures so that to transform short-term actions into lasting solutions.

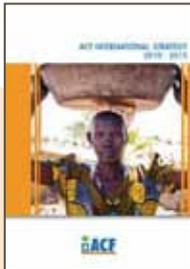


# ANNEX

## 01

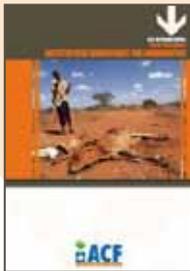
### STRATEGIC REFERENCES IN ACF ON RISK MANAGEMENT AND RESILIENCE

For the past years ACF has carried an important institutional evolution by adopting a risk management and resilience building approach in terms of strategy, policies and concrete actions among vulnerable communities. Four strategic frameworks – presented in the box below – reflect this evolution.



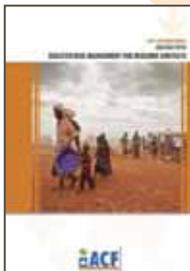
Aim #2 of ACF international strategy is to respond to, and prevent humanitarian crises, address vulnerability and reinforce longer term resilience to food, water and nutritional crises. As part of this general aim, ACF will improve its capability to respond rapidly to crises; increase ACF support to the most vulnerable and affected populations; and build long-term resilience in populations most vulnerable to natural disasters. It is available at:

[www.actionagainsthunger.org.uk/fileadmin/contribution/0\\_accueil/pdf/ACF%20International%20Strategy.pdf](http://www.actionagainsthunger.org.uk/fileadmin/contribution/0_accueil/pdf/ACF%20International%20Strategy.pdf)



ACF policy 'disaster risk management for communities' outlines the current and likely future dynamics of disaster risk, the commitment of ACF for Disaster Risk Management in communities and how to make this practice sustainable within ACF via an institutional strategy. The policy challenges ACF to extend its humanitarian mandate towards resilience and to put in place the enabling environment for successful development. It is available at:

[www.actioncontrelafaim.org/fr/content/disaster-risk-management-communities](http://www.actioncontrelafaim.org/fr/content/disaster-risk-management-communities)



This briefing paper explores an expanded notion of risk and resilience, what has been done before on the ground, the overlaps with programming in insecurity contexts, and concludes with some key principles and suggestions for adapted Disaster Risk Management (DRM) programming. This initiative aims to bring together the DRM, conflict and fragile states aid communities, emphasising action at a community level. It is available at:

[www.actioncontrelafaim.org/fr/content/disaster-risk-management-insecure-contexts-0](http://www.actioncontrelafaim.org/fr/content/disaster-risk-management-insecure-contexts-0)



ACF policy paper on climate change suggests a climate resilience approach in face of more frequent and severe climate-related hazards and climate change. It suggests a set of interconnected and complementary approaches to enhancing climate resilience and food and nutrition security among populations at-risk. These approaches mainly combine elements from food and nutrition security; disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, but not only!





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