COPING STRATEGY INDEX

Impact indicator

Indicator Phrasing

INDICATOR PHRASING: % of households in the highest Coping Strategy Index score category

Français: to be added later

What is its purpose?

The Coping Strategy Index (CSI) is an indicator of a household's food security assessing the extent to which households use harmful coping strategies when they do not have enough food or enough money to buy food.

How to Collect and Analyse the Required Data

Determine the indicator's value by using the methodology summarized below. If you need a more **detailed guidance or practical examples** on any of the following points, you can find it in WFP's manual on using CSI (see at the bottom of this site).

1) **Identify the most frequent coping strategies that local people use when they do not have enough food** and do not have enough money to buy food. While you can take advantage of a list of the most common strategies included in WFP's guidance (see below) or those identified by the national Food Security Cluster (if available), **you might need to adjust the list to make it more context-specific,** so that only strategies that are used locally during food insecure times are included in the assessment. There is no point in asking people about strategies they do not use or strategies that are common even in food secure periods, such as collecting wild food in the river.

2) **Identify how "severe" each of these individual coping strategies is** considered to be. Such information needs to be collected from community-level focus group discussions, **providing a "weight"** for the perceived severity of each strategy (1 - low, 2 - medium, 3 - severe).

3) Conduct individual interviews with a representative sample of the target group members to **assess how frequently people had to use these strategies** in the assessed recall period (e.g. twice in the past 7 days). During the interview, the data collectors ask the following question about each of the selected coping strategies: "In the past 7 days, if there have been times when you did not have enough food or money to buy food, how often has your household had to [specify the coping strategy]".

4) During the data analysis, for each coping strategy, **multiply the assigned "weight" with its**

frequency, receiving the "score" per each strategy. For example, if a coping strategy with a weight of "2" was used three times in the past 6 days, the score of this strategy is 6. **Read more detailed guidance on counting the scores in WFP's guidance** attached below.

5) By **summing up the scores of all assessed strategies** you will receive the total Coping Strategy Index score of the surveyed household. A high score means an extensive use of negative coping strategies and hence increased food insecurity.

6) The scores are usually divided into three **categories**: low CSI score (0-50), medium (51-100) and high (over 100). However, these **thresholds often need to be modified** based on the context and the number of coping strategies you assess (e.g. to 0-40; 41-80; and over 80). If you use the indicator for your baseline/ endline, you will be **aiming to reduce the percentage of households in the highest CSI category.**

Important Comments

1) **Do not assess a high number of coping strategies** - respondents as well as enumerators get tired of being asked/ asking similar questions and are more likely to provide less precise answers. If possible, limit the number to no more than 8 strategies.

2) CSI is prone to significant seasonal differences. Do your best to **collect baseline and endline data at the same time of year**; otherwise, it is very likely that it will not be comparable (i.e. providing largely useless data).

3) Invest enough effort into **carefully identifying and selecting the most common coping strategies** you want to assess. Furthermore, make sure that all data collectors understand the difference between these strategies, as some of them might seem quite similar.