Lesotho
mVAM Methodology

Mobile Vulnerability Assessment Mapping (mVAM) started in Lesotho in June 2016 via live telephone interviews through a call center. Collected information includes household-level food consumption, coping strategies, sources of food, and manual labour daily wages. Perceptions from households regarding the food security situation in their communities is also captured. Between June 2016 and June 2017, approximately 900 households across ten districts were interviewed on monthly basis. Respondents are randomly-selected from a national database of mobile subscribers, and an airtime credit incentive of US$0.50 (M7.00) is provided to respondents who successfully complete the survey.

In addition, data on food prices and markets has been collected from an average of 35 traders across 10 districts in functional markets in urban and rural areas. The survey questions focus on the prices of the basic foods that comprise the standard food basket: maize meal, wheat flour, beans and peas, cooking oil, cabbage, salt, and sugar. Other survey questions address food availability, market accessibility, and factors that might limit business. There is also an open-ended question to gauge traders’ perception of the food security situation in their local community. The results from these surveys should be used with caution since the sample was not representative, and a limited number of traders was surveyed.

Food Consumption Score (FCS):
The food consumption score (FCS) is a composite of dietary diversity and food frequency. Dietary diversity refers to the number of different foods or food groups consumed; while food frequency simply refers to the number of days foods were consumed over a 7-day period. Different foods and food groups are weighted based on their nutritional density. Households were classified as having either ‘poor’, ‘borderline,’ or ‘acceptable’ consumption based on standard cut-off points.

Reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI):
The reduced coping strategies index is an indicator used to assess the hardship faced by households by measuring the frequency and severity of certain negative coping behaviours they engage in when faced with shortages of food. A set of five questions are asked to capture the number of days in the past week that each negative coping strategy was employed by the household. Each strategy is then weighted based on its severity. The higher the index, the higher the stress on the household.

Livelihood Coping Strategies:
In addition to evaluating household food

The household was also asked a series of questions regarding its experience with livelihood stress and asset depletion during the 30 days prior to survey. Responses are used to understand the stress and insecurity, and potential long-term impact faced by households and indicates capacity regarding future productivity.

NOTE: Food consumption and coping strategies questions are constructed based on the Consolidated Approach to Reporting Indicators of food security (CARI).

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mVAM Questionnaire

Household survey questionnaire

Profiling questions

1. Is the head of your household a man or a woman?
2. In what year were you born?
3. Which district of Lesotho are you currently living in?
4. Do you live in a city or small town/village?
5. What kind of wall does your house have?
   a) Cement
   b) Baked brick
   c) Unbaked brick
   d) Mud and rocks

Food consumption score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Consumption Score (FCS)</th>
<th>Frequency (number of days from 0 to 7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6. Consider only meals consumed at home or at a public kitchen but not in private restaurants or street food. DO NOT count food consumed in very small amount: i.e. less than a tablespoon per person or consumed by only one member of household.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How many days in the past 7 days</strong> did your household eat the following food groups?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Cereals, grains, roots and tubers including (Rice, pasta, bread, sorghum, maize, potato, white sweet potato)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Pulses, nuts and/or seeds including (beans, peas, peanuts, lentils, nut, soy and/or other nuts)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. vegetables including (spinach, onion, tomatoes, carrots, peppers, green beans, lettuce, pumpkin, orange sweet potatoes, broccoli, butter nut, amaranth / or other)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Fruits including (banana, apple, lemon, mango, papaya, apricot, peach or other)</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. Meat, eggs and fish including (goat, beef, chicken, pork, blood (fish, including canned tuna, and / or other seafood, eggs (meat and fish consumed in large quantities and not as a condiment)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Milk and other dairy products: fresh milk / sour, yogurt, cheese, other dairy products</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(Exclude margarine / butter or small amounts of milk for tea/coffee)</td>
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<tr>
<td>g. Oil and fats including (vegetable oil, palm oil, shea butter, margarine, other fats / oil</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Sugar and sweets including (Sugar, honey, jam, cakes, candy, cookies, sugary drinks, other)</td>
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Reduced coping strategies index

7. How many days in the past 7 days did your household eat foods you enjoy less, because it is cheaper?
8. How many days in the past 7 days did your household get food or money to buy food from family or friends?
9. How many days in the past 7 days did your household eat fewer meals in a day?
10. How many days in the past 7 days did your household eat smaller meals?
11. How many days in the past 7 days did adults in your household eat less so children can also eat?

Livelhoods coping strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Livelihood-based coping strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12. During the past <strong>30 days</strong>, did anyone in your household have to engage in any following behaviors <strong>due to a lack of food or a lack of money to buy food</strong>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1= Yes  
2= No because I already did this and cannot do so anymore  
3= No because I did not face a shortage of food and did not need to do so  
4 = Not Applicable |
| a. Sold more animals than usual |
| b. Purchased food on credit or borrowed food |
| c. Withdrew children from school |

Other

13. In the past 30 days, what was the main source of food?  
   a. Own production  
   b. Purchases  
   c. Gifts  
   d. Food assistance  
   e. Other

14. Did your household receive food assistance in the past 30 days?

15. What is the typical day’s wages for unskilled, casual, manual labour (sekoropo)?

16. How many active/functional mobile phones (working SIMs) does your household use?

17. What is the main problem your household or community faces with accessing food?

Trader survey questionnaire

Profiling questions

1. Are you the employee or owner of the shop? (Employee/Owner)
2. How many years has your business been in operation?
3. Which district of Lesotho are you currently operating in?
4. What is the name of the council?
5. Do you sell your commodities at an urban or a rural area?
6. Which type of trading activity you are mainly involved? [Wholesale, Retail in shop, Retail in supermarket]

Food prices

7. Currently, how much does 12.5kg Chai brand of maize meal cost in your shop? If the brand is not available: What is the maize meal brand that you usually sell the most? And what is the price for it? (If maize meal is not sold, include “commodity not sold”)
   7.1 Where is your main source of supply for maize?  
      a) From your current district  
      b) Another district in Lesotho. Which one?  
      c) South Africa  
      d) Elsewhere: specify
   7.2 How often do you place your purchasing orders for maize?
   7.3 How much maize (in mt) you usually buy in that time frame?
   7.4 Once you order stock, how long does it take to have your stock order delivered? (state number of days)
8. Currently, how much does 12.5 kg of wheat flour cost in your shop? (If wheat flour is not sold, include “commodity not sold”)

9. Currently, how much does 750 ml sunflower cooking oil bottle cost in your shop? (If cooking oil is not sold, include “commodity not sold”)

10. Currently, how much does 500g of sugar beans red speckled cost in your shop? (If beans is not sold, include “commodity not sold”)

11. Currently, how much does 500g of Split dried peas cost in your shop? (If peas is not sold, include “commodity not sold”)

12. Currently, how much does a head of cabbage cost in your shop? (If cabbage is not sold, include “commodity not sold”)

13. Currently, how much does 500g of sugar cost in your shop? (If sugar is not sold, include “commodity not sold”)

14. Currently, how much does 500g of salt cost in your shop? (If salt is not sold, include “commodity not sold”)

Others

15. How many traders are there in your community?
   15.1 Of which, how many of them are maize traders
   15.2 How long does it take the furthest person living away from your shop, to walk to your shop?

16. Are there any challenges in accessing the market/area?
   a. Yes: If yes, what is it? Single or multiple?
      i. Difficult road conditions
      ii. Damaged bridge
      iii. No vehicles to ferry goods
      iv. Others: specify

   b. No:

17. What are the major constraints limiting your business?
   i. Poor road infrastructure
   ii. lack of electricity
   iii. lack of financial institutions (for credit provision)
   iv. increasing prices
   v. lack of transport
   vi. other, specify

18. Are there any shortages of basic food commodities in your shop [such as maize meal, beans, peas, cooking oil, wheat flour, etc.]
   1. Yes: if yes, what food?
   2. No

18.1 If yes: what is the main reason for shortage of food commodities in the market?
   i. High prices
   ii. unavailability of food commodities
   iii. lack of transport
   iv. poor weather
   v. delay to ferry goods by supplier
   vi. other, specify

19. Would you tell us about the food situation in your community?