

Household Livelihood Security Assessments: A Toolkit for Practitioners

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Organisation

CARE USA works with poor communities in more than 70 countries around the world to find lasting solutions to poverty. CARE looks at the big picture of poverty, and goes beyond the symptoms to confront underlying causes. With a broad range of programs based on empowerment, equity and sustainability, CARE seeks to tap human potential and leverage the power of individuals and communities to unleash a vast force for progress

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Abstract

Publication provides frameworks and detailed guidelines around a rights-based approach to household livelihood security. The Household Livelihood Security Assessment (HLSA) process aims to enhance understanding about local livelihood systems and the constraints, vulnerabilities, marginalization, and risks of poor families living within this context.

Intended end users

End users are **emergency managers, disaster risk management field practitioners** as well as **community development workers** in general.

Geographical focus

Can be applied at a community level throughout the world.

Type of Material

This **comprehensive manual** contains a detailed conceptual framework for both the HLS approach, as well as the HLS assessment (HLSA). It provides both the methodology for carrying out HLSA, as well as the analytical tools that are needed.

It includes:

- ♦ Detailed methods for carrying out the fieldwork
- ♦ Steps to data analysis and interpretation
- ♦ Suggested analysis techniques and instruments
- ♦ How to develop program recommendations
- ♦ How and what to include in the final report

It also gives the rationale behind the HLS framework, as well as detailed instructions for all parts of the process. Many examples and tips as to ‘things to think’ about and different tools and analyses to consider.

Language

The document is in English.

Scale of assessment

The HLSA assessment process aims to enhance understanding about local livelihood systems – livelihoods, economic, socio-cultural and political systems and the constraints, vulnerabilities, marginalization, and risks of poor families living within this context – and important differences among types of households and among members within the **household**.

Type of assessment

The HLSA framework was introduced to CARE in 1994 and grows out of a food security perspective, but recognizes that food is only one of the basic needs.

It is based on the conceptualization of the Household Livelihood Security Assessment (HLSA) framework, which is a holistic and multi-disciplinary analysis, as well as a type of rapid rural appraisal (RRA) or participatory rural appraisal (PRA). It also incorporates Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) and a rights-based approach into assessments.

It disaggregates data by ethnic groups, gender, economic status, social strata, age etc. It provides an action-oriented manual for conducting the HLSA with all of the methodology and analytical tools necessary.

Analytical methods

The methods mentioned in this **Household Livelihood Security Assessment (HLSA)** document are by no means exhaustive. They include a mix of methods and tools for assessing risks, vulnerability and options of opportunities.

The assessment start with pre-assessment activities including the collection of baseline data, identifying institutional partners, negotiating TOR, organizing work and contacting organizations.

General assessment methods included in the HLSA include:

- ◆ **Livelihood analysis**
- ◆ Analysis of livelihood security
- ◆ Opportunity analysis
- ◆ Rights and responsibilities analysis
- ◆ **Gender analysis**
- ◆ **Stakeholder analysis**
- ◆ **Institutional analysis**

Tools

Participatory tools used in the HLSA include:

- ◆ **Risk mapping**
- ◆ **Venn Diagrams**
- ◆ Diagnosis decision tree
- ◆ **Transect walk**
- ◆ **Seasonal calendar**
- ◆ **Timeline**
- ◆ **Problem tree**
- ◆ **Wealth ranking**

Technical tools included in the HLSA are:

- ◆ **Surveys**
- ◆ Flow diagrams
- ◆ Ranking/scoring
- ◆ **Semi structured Interviews**

Notes on methods

- ◆ This document would be most useful for people who wish to get an understanding of how to conceptualise risk, vulnerability in a household livelihood security framework.
- ◆ It is a comprehensive manual both conceptually and practically, giving a broad understanding of root causes of both risk and vulnerability from a community and household perspective.
- ◆ It lists tools for undertaking HLSA (largely taken from RRA and PRA) and gives examples explaining in detail the assessment process.
- ◆ Discusses the importance of the assessment process and the manner in which it is conducted
- ◆ Good use of case studies to illustrate general themes

Case studies / practical examples

In the Appendices several cases and practical examples are given on how the Household Livelihood Security Assessment method has been applied in CARE's work worldwide.

Resource person(s)

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Author of guidance note

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