



Impact Measurement Guidelines

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Together, we strive to create a world where everyone has the opportunity to lead a sustainable and self-sufficient life.

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1. Introduction

Measuring impact is a crucial aspect of ForAfrika's programmes, as it allows the organisation to assess the effectiveness of its interventions and ensure accountability to donors, partners, and targeted stakeholders. Impact measurement provides evidence-based data that can be used to inform decisions, guide programme improvement efforts, and demonstrate responsible use of resources.

One key importance of measuring impact is **accountability**. As a non-governmental organisation (NGO) relying on funding from donors and partners, ForAfrika has a responsibility to demonstrate that its programmes are making a positive difference in the lives of the communities it serves. Impact measurement helps establish the link between the organisation's interventions and the desired outcomes, providing evidence of the impact achieved or progress made towards intended goals.

By engaging with the communities and involving them in the measurement process, ForAfrika highlights its **localisation** approach to development and fosters **accountability to the affected populations**. Localisation – which is primed on equal partnership with the communities – enhances their empowerment to participate in decision-making and holds the organisation accountable for the outcomes and impacts of its programmes. This accountability is essential to maintain trust with stakeholders and ensure continued support for the organisation's programmes. Empowered communities also achieve local ownership which drives the transformation throughout the entire development processes.

Another critical dimension of this measurement is **learning and improvement**. By systematically measuring and analysing the impact of its programmes, ForAfrika can identify what works and what doesn't. This allows the organisation to learn from its experiences, understand the factors that contribute to success or challenges, and make evidence-based decisions on how to improve programme design, implementation, and monitoring. Impact measurement helps ForAfrika to continuously adapt and optimise its interventions, ensuring that they are responsive to the evolving needs of the communities it serves, and resources are allocated effectively and efficiently.

Through proven methodological strategies and approaches, the organisation responds effectively and by design to the issue of **sustainability** which is another critical outcome of impact measurement. ForAfrika aims to achieve sustainable change, where the benefits of its programmes endure beyond the duration of the interventions. (This is what ForAfrika refers to as Thrivability). Measuring impact helps assess the longevity of outcomes and impacts, by tracking changes over time and evaluating the extent to which they are maintained after the programme ends. This information informs programming on how to design interventions that have lasting effects and contribute to sustainable community development and therefore, **an Afrika That Thrives**.

Lastly, by systematically measuring and reporting on the outcomes and impact of its programmes, ForAfrika enhances and consolidates its organisational image as a professional and trustworthy organisation with a comparable advantage. This will continue to uphold its position as a lead in the humanitarian field and its nexus to sustainable development space. ForAfrika continues to flourish in the trust and support from donors, partners, and the communities it serves through its accountability, **credibility and influence** in both the humanitarian space and its integral link to the sustainable development space.

Accountability:

Measuring impact holds ForAfrika accountable to its donors, partners, and beneficiaries. It provides evidence of the effectiveness and efficiency of its programmes and demonstrates responsible use of resources.

Learning and improvement:

Impact measurement helps ForAfrika to identify what works and what doesn't, and to continuously learn from its programmes. It provides insights into programme strengths and weaknesses, allowing for informed decision-making and programme improvement efforts.

1.1 Purpose and scope

The **purpose** of this guideline is to provide a framework for ForAfrika's personnel and partners to systematically measure the impact of its programmes. The guideline aims to establish a standardised approach to measuring and evaluating the outcomes and impact of ForAfrika's programmes, with the ultimate goal of improving programme effectiveness and achieving positive social, economic, and environmental change in the communities it serves.

The **scope** of the impact measurement guideline is specifically focused on **measuring self-sufficiency as a high-level outcome of ForAfrika's programmes**. This includes defining clear and measurable indicators of self-sufficiency, selecting appropriate data collection methods, data analysis to assess the level of self-sufficiency, and reporting findings in a way that is meaningful for organisational learning and accountability.

2. Key concepts

Impact refers to the measurable positive or negative effects that result from the execution of ForAfrika's programmes. ForAfrika primarily envisages impact manifesting as:

- Changes in the lives and well-being of targeted individuals, communities, and ecosystems;
- Improvements in social, economic, and environmental conditions;
- Sustainable positive outcomes that endure beyond the duration of the intervention.

Self-sufficiency:

Self-sufficiency in the context of ForAfrika's programmes refers to the level of autonomy and resilience achieved by the people and communities reached through our programmes in meeting their basic needs, improving their livelihoods, and sustaining communal well-being and positive outcomes without continued external support.

The concept of self-sufficiency implies that individuals and communities are able to access and manage resources, knowledge, and skills in a way that allows them to meet their immediate and strategic needs, create sustainable livelihoods, and maintain their well-being over the long term, without being dependent on external assistance. Self-sufficiency encompasses not only economic factors, but also social, environmental, and cultural aspects that enable individuals and communities to lead dignified, empowered, and sustainable lives, taking into account local contexts including cultural norms and behavioural changes.

Impact measurement involves systematically evaluating the extent to which a programme or intervention has achieved its intended outcomes and contributed to positive changes in the lives of the target population.

The chosen conceptual model used to guide the measurement of self-sufficiency in ForAfrika's programmes is the **Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF)**¹. The SLF is a widely used framework that provides a holistic and comprehensive approach to understanding and assessing the various dimensions of individuals' and communities' livelihoods, and how they interact with each other in achieving sustainable livelihood outcomes.

The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework typically consists of five interrelated components: assets, livelihood strategies, institutions and governance, vulnerability and risks, livelihood outcomes.

ForAfrika seeks to improve livelihoods by strengthening the range of assets (resources), both tangible and intangible, that individuals and communities possess or have access to, enabling them to fully exert their capabilities and achieve self-sufficiency.

In order to quantify the changes on self-sufficiency, the organisation has developed a **Sustainable Livelihoods Index** for assessing the resilience of households by examining their access to different livelihood assets. The index is based on the SLF, which identifies five key assets or capitals that are necessary for achieving sustainable livelihoods. Building of ForAfrika's empirical application of the Sustainable Livelihoods Index following the 2024 baseline study and a robustness assessment of the SLI, it was decided that demonstrated that certain indicators exhibit stronger conceptual and statistical relationships when grouped according to their functional nexuses rather than traditional capital categories.

This evidence-based learning has led ForAfrika to adapt the dimensional structure of the index to better reflect real-world causal pathways whilst maintaining the holistic principles of the SLF. These are: natural capital, WASH-Health nexus, Education-Productivity nexus, financial capital, and social capital.

The revised framework represents ForAfrika's commitment to continuous learning and methodological rigour, ensuring that the measurement system accurately captures the interdependencies that drive household self-sufficiency.

¹ Scoones, I. (1998) Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: A Framework for Analysis, IDS Working Paper 72, Brighton: IDS.

3. Selecting indicators

The Sustainable Livelihoods Index (SLI) is a composite index that combines indicators related to different livelihood assets to provide a holistic assessment of the overall livelihood status of individuals, households or communities. It aims to capture the extent to which individuals or households have the necessary assets to meet their basic needs and achieve sustainable livelihoods without relying on external support.

The SLI is derived from the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF), which was first introduced by the Department for International Development (DFID) in the United Kingdom in the late 1990s. The SLF is a comprehensive, people-centred approach that aims to understand the complexities of poverty and vulnerability, by looking at various aspects of an individual or community's livelihood, such as their access to and the quality of resources, as well as their vulnerability context.

The SLI is calculated by aggregating several sub-indices, which we will call dimensions, each of which corresponds to one of the five types of capital identified in the SLF. Each dimension is composed of several indicators that are context-specific, and the selection of these indicators should be based on a thorough understanding of the local situation and the objectives of the development programme. The indicators are normalised and combined using appropriate weights (analytical formula/scale) to produce the overall SLI, which ranges from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating greater sustainability and resilience of livelihoods.

Formula:

$$SLI = \sum_{i=1}^n C_n \times W_n$$

$$C = \sum_{i=1}^z I_z \times W_z$$

Where²:

C_n = normalised score for the n capital

W_n = weight attributed to the n capital

n = natural capital, WASH-health nexus, education-productivity nexus, financial capital, social capital

I_z = normalised score for indicator z of an n capital

W_z = weight attributed to the indicator z of an n capital



3.1 Aggregation and computation of the index

Each capital dimension is composed of indicators which are normalised to a scale of 0-1 points, with sustainability thresholds established for each of them (see Table 1). To assess the variation within indicators, dimensions and community SLI in a comparable way, the measurements will be expressed in the 0-1 scale, initially equally weighted. ForAfrika will engage with communities in 2025 in a process to identify the different weights within each dimension of the overall SLI was done through a participatory process in each country of operations.

For the purpose of **counting the number of individuals which have reached self-sufficiency** (headcount), the indicator measurements will be transformed to dummy variables – where a measurement which surpasses the threshold will be counted as 1 (one), and those below as 0 (zero).

² Note: Normalised scores can be calculated by transforming the raw scores of individual indicators to a common scale, such as a scale of 0 to 1, where 1 represents the highest level of the particular livelihood asset and 0 represents the lowest level. Normalisation methods may include linear scaling, z-score standardisation, or min-max scaling, depending on the distribution and nature of the data.

Hence, with this approach there will be no information of the variances per indicator and dimension, but rather if the individuals fall below or above the threshold line³.

Once the proportion of self-sufficient households is identified in the sample, the number of individuals will be calculated by applying the sample proportion to the total population of the surveyed communities⁴. This method aligns with ForAfrika's approach of transformational development through the multiple safety nets within the community and strengthening of varied individual capacities for varied livelihood choices.

SLI headcount:

To compute the SLI headcount, a household will be considered self-sufficient if it has surpassed the threshold in at least half of the indicators in all dimensions.

3.2 SLI indicators

The following section provides a further breakdown of each component of the formula for the Sustainable Livelihoods Index (SLI)⁵ along with some possible ways to calculate them:

- **Natural Capital (C_N):** refers to the availability and sustainable use of natural resources, such as land, water, forests, and biodiversity. Natural resources are often the foundation of livelihoods for many communities, particularly in rural and agrarian areas. The availability of land for agriculture, water for irrigation, forests for timber and non-timber forest products, and biodiversity for food and other ecosystem services can directly impact the self-sufficiency of individuals and households. For example, those with access to fertile land, clean water, and diverse natural resources may have better opportunities for sustainable livelihoods, while those facing land degradation, water scarcity, or loss of biodiversity may face challenges in achieving self-sufficiency.
 - **Land access⁶:** level of household tenure rights security to land, with (a) legally recognised documentation; and (b) who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and by type of tenure (SDG 1.4.2)
 - **Sustainability of resources⁷:** level of household adaptation to climate-smart practices, including land preservation and water management (SDG 2.4.1)
- **WASH-Health Nexus (C_{HW}):** consolidates seven indicators that reflect the well-documented causal relationships between water, sanitation, and health outcomes. Extensive research in human development demonstrates that improved sanitation and safe drinking water significantly reduce the incidence of waterborne diseases, particularly diarrhoeal diseases and child mortality. These relationships are foundational to public health and well-being. This dimension captures the interconnected nature of water access, sanitation facilities, health services, nutrition, and related outcomes that collectively determine household health status and resilience.
 - **Sanitation availability⁸:** Households usage (a) safely managed sanitation services and (b) a hand-washing facility with soap and water (SDG 6.2.1)
 - **Water quality⁹:** level of household access to safely managed drinking water services (SDG 6.1.1)
 - **Access to health¹⁰:** level of household access to a functional Community Health Unit (adapted from SDG 3.8.1)
 - **Perceived health:** level of household access to a functional Community Health Unit (adapted from SDG 3.8.1)
 - **Immunisation¹¹:** Proportion of household members covered by all vaccines (per target group) included in their national programme (SDG 3.b.1)
 - **Food security¹²:** Level of household food insecurity based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (SDG 2.1.2)
 - **School feeding:** Level of access of household children at primary school age (6-10) to a sustainable school feeding programme.

³ This approach, is mathematically valid as it follows specific axioms relevant for measuring poverty as it is similar to an approach that counts deprivations. See: Atkinson, A.B. (2003). Multidimensional Deprivation: Contrasting Social Welfare and Counting Approaches. *The Journal of Economic Inequality* 1: 51 – 65.

⁴ While we follow existing practices in poverty deprivation studies by counting self-sufficient households as those that surpass at least half of the indicators in each dimension, we conduct robustness checks to examine how sensitive our evaluation of self-sufficiency is to this cut-off choice.

⁵ ForAfrika factors in and ensures across all the variables the issue of gender responsiveness.

⁶ Metadata-01-04-02.docx (live.com)

⁷ <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/files/Metadata-02-04-01.docx>

⁸ <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/files/Metadata-06-02-01a.docx>

⁹ Clean Water - Our World in Data

¹⁰ Metadata-03-08-01.docx (live.com)

¹¹ Metadata-03-0b-01.docx (live.com), Immunisation, Vaccines and Biologicals (who.int)

¹² SDG 2.1.2 - Our World in Data; Food Insecurity Experience Scale - FIES by FAO

- **Education-Productivity Nexus (C_{EP}):** groups six indicators that capture capacity-building and economic inclusion pathways. This dimension recognises that education, access to technology, and productive tools are interconnected elements that enable households to engage in livelihood activities, generate income, and build resilience. The clustering of these indicators reflects their synergistic contribution to household productivity and economic participation.
 - **Basic education¹³:** Proportion of household members with formal education on-track, compared to age-grade standards
 - **Access to education¹⁴:** household access to a resilient school offering basic services (adapted SDG 4.a.1)
 - **Technical education:** Level of household members self-perceived good health
 - **Energy security¹⁵:** Proportion of household members covered by all vaccines (per target group) included in their national programme (SDG 3.b.1)
 - **Enabling technology:** Level of household food insecurity based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (SDG 2.1.2)
 - **Productive tools¹⁶:** Level of access of household children at primary school age (6-10) to a sustainable school feeding programme.
- **Financial Capital (CF):** refers to the availability of financial resources and access to credit, savings, and other financial services. Financial capital is important for individuals (women, men, youth) and communities to invest in livelihood activities, start or expand businesses, cope with shocks and risks, and build resilience. Lack of access to financial capital can limit the ability of individuals and communities to invest in their livelihoods and achieve self-sufficiency. Conversely, access to financial capital can provide opportunities for income generation, asset building, and economic empowerment, contributing to higher levels of self-sufficiency.
 - **Asset resilience¹⁷:** household capacity to protect and maintain productive assets in the face of shocks and stressors.
 - **Income:** level of liquid household savings
 - **Financial inclusion¹⁸:** Proportion of household adult members with an account at a bank, with a mobile-money-service provider, or using community savings groups (e.g., Village Savings and Loan Associations, Savings and Credit Co-Operatives) (adapted from SDG 8.10.2)
 - **Access to markets:** Level of household access to market goods and basic services.
- **Social Capital (C_s):** refers to the social networks, relationships, and institutions that support livelihoods. Social networks and relationships can provide access to information, resources, and support systems, while institutions such as community organisations, cooperatives, and government or community-based governance structures can facilitate/hinder collective action and decision-making. Social capital plays a crucial role in building resilience, creating opportunities, and addressing social and economic challenges. Communities with strong social capital, characterised by peaceful situations, social cohesion, trust, and cooperation, are better equipped to address livelihood challenges, access resources, and achieve self-sufficiency.
 - **Social networks:** level of household participation in formal or informal community networks
 - **Representation and participation¹⁹:** level of household trust in community decision-making as inclusive and responsive processes (SDG 16.7.2)
 - **Disaster risk reduction²⁰:** level of household access to disaster risk information (SDG 1.5.3)



A summary of the SLI composition can be found in the figure below.

¹³ [Metadata-04-01-02.pdf \(un.org\)](#)

¹⁴ [Metadata-04-0A-01.docx \(live.com\)](#); Quality school: (a) electricity; (b) adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities; (c) basic drinking water; (d) single-sex basic sanitation facilities; and (g) basic handwashing facilities (as per the WASH indicator definitions)

¹⁵ **Source of energy:** Categorise different energy sources available to households, such as electricity grid connection, renewable energy (solar, wind), liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), biogas, biomass (firewood, charcoal), kerosene, or diesel. **Reliability of energy supply:** Assess the consistency and reliability of energy supply, considering factors like frequency of power outages or availability of fuel. **Needs:** cooking, heating, lighting.

¹⁶ There is no standard SDG indicator, or FAO, WFP guidance.

¹⁷ <https://microdata.worldbank.org/index.php/catalog/2946/>

<https://microdata.worldbank.org/index.php/catalog/3823>

<https://microdata.worldbank.org/index.php/catalog/5753>

¹⁸ <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/files/Metadata-08-10-02.docx>

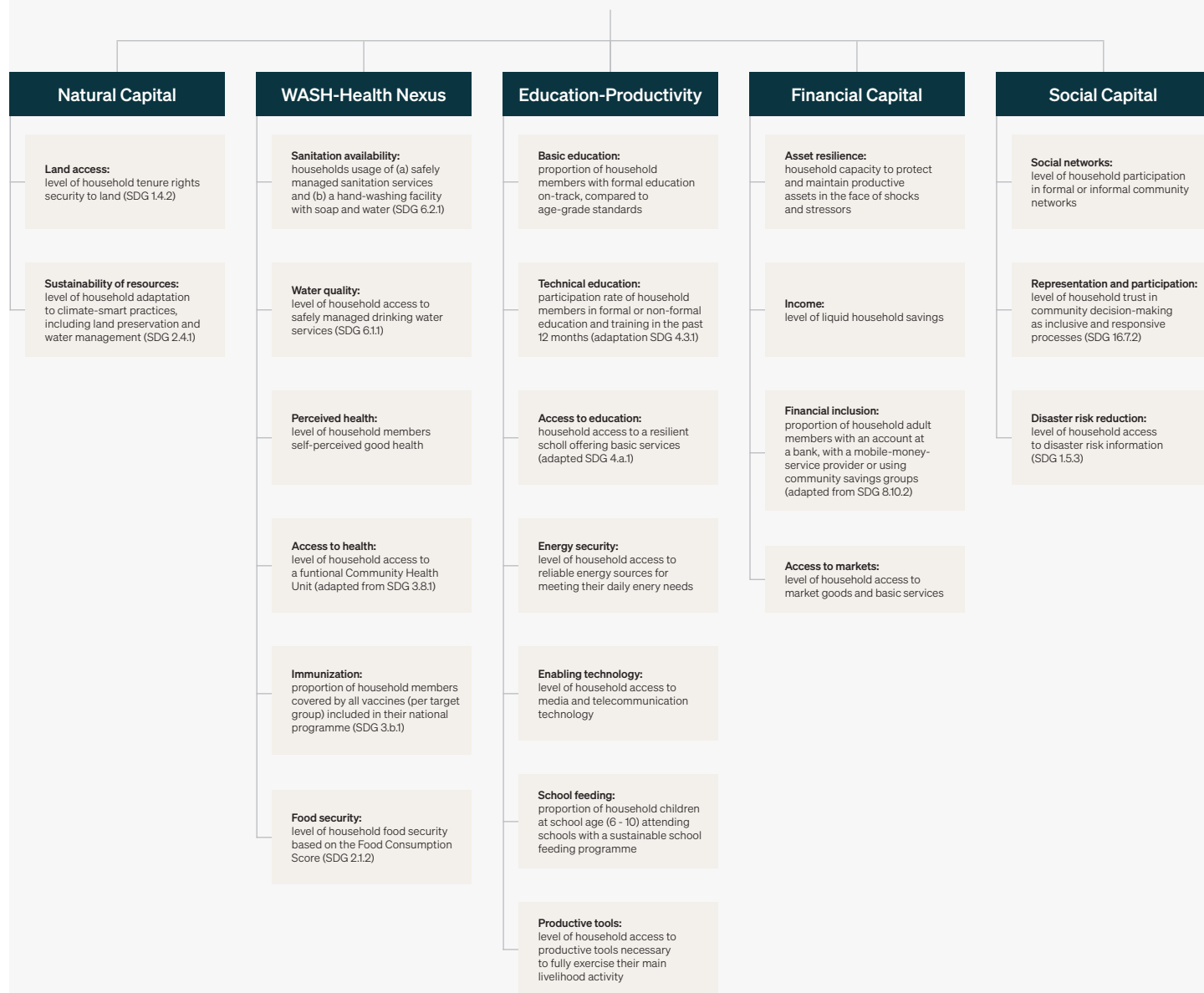
¹⁹ [Metadata-16-07-02.docx \(live.com\)](#)

²⁰ [Technical guidance on comprehensive risk assessment and planning in the context of climate change | UNDRR : Disaster Risk Reduction in Least Developed Countries \(undrr.org\)](#)

Self-sufficiency

The level of autonomy and resilience achieved by communities and people in meeting their basic needs, improving their livelihoods, and sustaining positive outcomes without continued external support.

Sustainable Livelihoods Index (SLI)



Sustainable Livelihoods Framework

Aggregation and computation of the index

Each capital dimension is composed of indicators which are normalized to a scale of 0-1 points, with sustainability thresholds established to each of them (see table X). To assess the variance within indicators, dimensions and community SLI, the measurements will be expressed in the 0-1 scale, weighted at each stage of the aggregation.

Formulas:

$$SLI = \sum_{i=1}^n C_n \times W_n$$

$$C = \sum_{i=1}^z I_z \times W_z$$

Where:

C_n = normalised score for the n capital
 W_n = weight attributed to the n capital
 n = natural, physical, human, financial, social
 I_z = normalised score for indicator z of an n capital
 W_z = weight attributed to the indicator z of an n capital

Self-sufficiency headcount

For the purpose of counting the number of individuals which have reached self-sufficiency (headcount), the indicator measurements will be transformed to dummy variables - where a measurement which surpasses the threshold will be counted as 1 (one), and those below as 0 (zero). Hence, with this approach there will be no information of the variances per indicator and dimension, but rather if the individuals fall below or above the threshold line.

To compute the SLI headcount, a household will be considered self-sufficient if it has surpassed the threshold in at least half of the indicators per capital dimension. The prioritization process to identify the key indicators which should be achieved in each dimension was done through a participatory process with X community members in X countries of operations.

Once the proportion of self-sufficient households is identified in the sample, the number of individuals will be calculated by applying the sample proportion to the total population of the surveyed communities. This method aligns with ForAfrika's approach of transformational development through the multiple safety nets within the community and strengthening of varied individual capacities for varied livelihood choices.

4. Quantitative data collection and analysis

This chapter aims to guide M&E officers in selecting appropriate data sources, methods, and tools for gathering reliable and valid information on the indicators defined in Chapter 3. In addition, it offers guidance on analysing and interpreting the collected data to inform programme design, implementation, and evaluation.

4.1 Data collection process

ForAfrika will primarily collect data through annual surveys administered to a sample of all people participating in interventions when they register their household in a programme. The survey will be repeated every year to track changes in the indicators over time. **The sampling will be statistically significant at a country level.**

These surveys will be based on self-perception, self-reporting and observation, gathering information directly from programme participants regarding their social economic status, knowledge and practices related to outcome areas of ForAfrika's programmes. This approach helps to capture individuals' perspectives and provides valuable insights into the impact of the interventions on their lives.

4.1.1 Determining the sample size and strategy

In order to collect data for the SLI survey, the following sampling strategy ensures a representative and diverse group of households from the target communities is included.

- **Define the target population:** Clearly identify the communities which are the focus of the impact measurement. For the purpose of impact measurements, we define community as the smallest formal administrative geographical area covered by ForAfrika's interventions in a country.
- **Determine the sample size:** To calculate the sample size for a statistically significant result at the country level, we use the following formula:

$$n = N * X / (X + N - 1),$$

where,

$$X = Z_{\alpha/2} * p * (1-p) / MOE^2,$$

and $Z_{\alpha/2}$ is the value of the Normal distribution at $\alpha/2$ (i.e. for a confidence level of 95%, α is 0.05 and the critical value is 1.96), MOE is the margin of error (0.05), p is the sample variance, conservatively estimated at 0.5, and N is the total number of households in the communities covered by our programmes.

A total sample of 400 households per country is recommended, based on statistical power calculations, to ensure a sufficient sample for robust quantitative analysis of self-sufficiency indicators at the country level.

- **Stratified purposive sampling of communities:** Each country will randomly select 20 communities to participate in the survey. The communities will be sampled to reflect the proportional representation of the population among programme communities in that country.
 - A random sample of 20 communities²¹ per country provides adequate representation of the various programming stages and geographic areas within a given country, while remaining a feasible number for data collection with current resources.
 - The sample excludes communities currently under emergency response. As the framework aims to measure self-sufficiency and sustainable livelihoods, it is methodologically sound to focus on communities that have moved beyond the emergency phase where basic survival needs are the priority. Measuring self-sufficiency would not be feasible or appropriate in emergency contexts.
- **Random sampling of households within communities:** Within each of the 20 purposively selected communities, 20 households will be randomly selected using a statistically valid random walk technique. Starting from a random starting point, households will be sampled at regular intervals along a predetermined route. This randomisation removes selection bias and allows for generalisation of the results to the broader population. To conduct the random walk:
 - List all major landmarks in the community/neighbourhood: community centre, school, place of worship, health centre, market, borehole/water pump, cemetery, police station, post office, sports field, etc. Write all their names on separate pieces of paper.
 - Randomly select 5 landmarks (by drawing the pieces of paper without seeing their content). These will be the starting point of the random walks.

²¹ The random sample will be drawn from a list of communities in which ForAfrika works in each country.

- From the starting point, take the road/path going east (where the sun rises) and visit every 5th household along the way. In urban areas, count only the households on the right side of the street.
- At each selected household, administer the survey and collect the necessary data. If a household is unavailable or unwilling to participate, proceed to the next household according to the pre-determined path or route.
- If you reach the limit/border of the neighbourhood and have not finished surveying 4 households, go back to the starting point and take the road/path going west (where the sun sets), and repeat the process until you have finalised the daily sample of 4 households.
- Repeat this process every day for 5 days, starting from one of the different 5 landmarks randomly drawn at the beginning of field work.

The advantages of this sampling approach are:

- Stratified purposive sampling of communities ensures representation of the diverse programming contexts found within each country.
- Setting the number of communities at 20 per country provides a reasonably sized subsample for each stratum.
- Random sampling of 20 households within each community will remove selection bias.
- The total sample of 400 households provides adequate statistical power for quantitative analysis of self-sufficiency indicators at the country programme level.

In summary, the combined approach of purposive stratification of communities and randomisation of households will allow for disaggregated analysis by context as well as robust measurement of the SLI indicators across programmes within each country. This will generate high quality, statistically valid data to inform decision making.

4.1.2 Designing the survey

The survey considers factors such as the level of detail required, the time and resources available, and the potential biases or limitations associated with self-reported data. Hence, it seeks a compromise between all that could be asked, and what can actually be collected without much bias and intrusion on people's daily routine. Survey questions are culturally appropriate, gender-sensitive, and tailored to the specific needs of the target population. Additionally, the survey is tailored to be user-friendly and easy to understand for the respondents.

To minimise potential biases and improve the reliability of the self-reported data, we use:

- **Anchoring:** Providing respondents with specific examples or benchmarks to help them better understand the questions and respond more accurately.
- **Randomised response technique:** Incorporating a level of randomness in the survey design to help respondents feel more comfortable providing honest answers, especially for sensitive questions.
- **Cognitive interviewing:** Testing the survey questions with a small sample of respondents to identify potential issues, misunderstandings, or biases, and to refine the questions accordingly.

According to the pre-test, the survey should be possible to be administered in one take, however it is possible to schedule a second interview if strictly necessary – i.e. to reduce disturbances on the household routine.

4.2 Data quality, reliability, and validity

High-quality data is essential for accurate and meaningful impact measurement. Data quality refers to the accuracy, completeness, consistency, and timeliness of the data collected, while reliability and validity concern the consistency and truthfulness of the data in reflecting the reality of the situation being measured. We ensure data quality by:

- **Clear definitions and indicators:** the metadata for each indicator clearly defines the concepts being measured to minimise ambiguity and ensure that data collectors and respondents have a shared understanding of what is being assessed.
- **Standardisation:** we use a standardised survey and procedures to ensure consistency across different data collectors, respondents, and time periods. This enhances the comparability of the data and helps to identify trends and patterns in the indicators being measured.
- **Training and supervision:** comprehensive training for data collectors to ensure they understand the data collection tools, procedures, and ethical considerations. Regular supervision and feedback to identify and address potential issues or biases in the data collection process.
- **Pilot testing:** Test of the survey tool and procedures with a small sample of respondents before full-scale implementation to identify potential issues, misunderstandings, or biases, and provide an opportunity to refine the tools and procedures accordingly.
- **Data triangulation:** during analysis, we compare survey data with official country statistics on the same indicators, when existent, to increase the reliability and validity of the data by identifying and addressing potential biases or limitations associated with any single data source or method.
- **Data cleaning and validation:** systematic processes to identify and address inconsistencies, outliers, or missing values in the data. This involves using statistical techniques to impute missing values or correct for potential biases.
- **Ethical considerations:** the data collection process respects respondents' privacy, confidentiality, and informed consent. This helps to build trust with respondents and encourage honest and accurate reporting of their experiences and outcomes.

4.3 Data analysis: Data aggregation, statistical analysis, and interpretation of results

Step 1: Prepare the data for analysis

- Import the collected data into a statistical software package (e.g., SPSS, Stata, or R) for analysis.
- **Identify inconsistencies:**
 - a) Perform frequency distributions and cross-tabulations to check for inconsistencies, such as illogical or impossible, and extreme values.
 - b) Review the data for patterns of missing or incorrect values that may indicate systematic errors in the data collection or entry process.
- **Address missing values:**
 - a) Analyse the patterns of missing data to determine whether they are missing at random (MAR) or missing not at random (MNAR).
 - b) Choose an appropriate method for handling missing data, such as listwise or pairwise deletion, mean imputation, regression imputation, or multiple imputation, depending on the nature and extent of the missing data.
- **Normalise the indicator measurements:** all indicators are already calculated in a 0-1 scale, allowing for aggregation without a normalisation process.
- **Address inconsistencies:**
 - a) Investigate the source of the inconsistencies and determine the appropriate corrective action, such as correcting data entry errors or recoding variables.
 - b) Document all changes made to the dataset, including the reasons for the changes and any assumptions made. All effort will be made to minimise the occurrence of missing values during data collection. In the case of impossible or extreme values which the field team cannot correct, we will follow the missing values procedures established and discussed below. For other missing values resulting from a lack of response in the survey, for example, will be left as missing values.
- **Treat outliers:**
 - a) Use descriptive statistics (e.g., box plots or z-scores) to identify extreme values (outliers) that may unduly influence the analysis. We will define outliers as values more than three standard deviations from the mean.
 - b) Assess the validity of the outliers by examining the context and data collection procedures.
 - c) Determine the appropriate treatment for the outliers, such as winsorizing²², transforming, or removing them from the analysis, depending on the specific context and distribution of the data.
- **Verify the data cleaning process:**
 - a) Conduct quality control checks to ensure that the data cleaning process has been carried out accurately and consistently.
 - b) Compare the cleaned dataset with the original dataset to ensure that no unintended changes have been introduced.
- **Document the data cleaning process:**
 - a) Maintain a detailed record of all the data cleaning steps, decisions, and changes made to the dataset.
 - b) Create a data cleaning report that summarises the key findings, actions taken, and lessons learned from the process.

Step 2: Aggregate the data using the provided rationale

- **Weighted aggregation of indicators within each dimension:**
 - a) Multiply the normalised indicator measurements by their respective dimension weights – which were identified through the consultative process involving communities and ForAfrika's programme teams.
 - b) Calculate the weighted sum of the indicator measurements within each dimension for each household.
- **Apply sustainability thresholds:**
 - a) Establish sustainability thresholds for each indicator based on the specific context of ForAfrika's programmes and the desired level of self-sufficiency.
 - b) Create dummy variable based on the normalised indicator measurements, where a measurement above the threshold is assigned a value of 1 (one) and those below the threshold are assigned a value of 0 (zero).²³
- **Compute the number of self-sufficient individuals:**
 - a) Calculate the proportion of self-sufficient households in the surveyed sample by summing the households which have a positive dummy variable for all indicators, then dividing by the total number of surveyed households.
 - b) Apply the sample proportion to the total population of the surveyed community to estimate the number of self-sufficient individuals.
 - c) Keep in mind that only those who have surpassed the threshold on all indicators are considered sustainable.

²² "Introduction to Winsorizing and Trimming" by Jonathan D. Cryer and Kung-Sik Chan, published in the book "Time Series Analysis: With Applications in R" (Springer, 2010). Link: https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-1-4419-7865-3_4

²³ After ForAfrika conducts the participatory workshops for community definition of indicator weights, we will conduct robustness checks examining the impact of the community indicator weighting and the sustainability thresholds across countries. As ForAfrika aims to honour local perceptions of self-sufficiency, we will use locally-informed thresholds to calculate the number of self-sufficient households to be used to assess ForAfrika's performance.

Step 3: Conduct descriptive statistical analysis

- **Use descriptive statistics to summarise the main features of the data:**
 - a) Calculate measures of central tendency, such as the mean, median, or mode, to describe the average value or most common value of each indicator.
 - b) Determine measures of dispersion, including range, variance, and standard deviation, to describe the spread or variability of each indicator.
 - c) Assess the distribution of the data using frequency tables, percentiles, or skewness and kurtosis measures.
- **Assess the variance within dimensions:**
 - a) Calculate the mean and standard deviation for each capital dimension by averaging the normalised indicator measurements within that dimension.
 - b) Examine the variance in the community SLI by analysing the distribution of the SLI scores across the surveyed sample.
- **Generate visualisations to illustrate the patterns and relationships in the data:**
 - a) Create bar charts or pie charts to display the distribution of categorical variables.
 - b) Develop histograms or box plots to visualise the distribution of continuous variables.
 - c) Use scatterplots or correlation matrices to explore the relationships between variables.

Step 4: Interpret the results

- **Analyse²⁴ the statistical results to draw meaningful conclusions about the impact of ForAfrika's programmes on the target communities' self-sufficiency and sustainability:**
 - a) Consider the context, limitations, and assumptions of the data when interpreting the findings, including potential sources of bias, measurement error, or confounding factors.
 - b) Relate the findings back to the theoretical framework and programme objectives to assess the extent to which the interventions are achieving their intended outcomes.

Step 5: Validate the findings

- **Use data triangulation to compare and cross-validate the survey findings with other data sources, such as secondary data and evidence collected through the Qualitative Impact Protocol:**
 - a) Compare the patterns and trends observed in the survey data with the insights gained from qualitative data collection methods.
 - b) Assess the consistency and credibility of the findings by evaluating their convergence with the results obtained from different data sources or methods.
- **Seek feedback from stakeholders, including beneficiaries, staff, and partners, to ensure that the findings are consistent with their experiences and perspectives:**
 - a) Share the preliminary findings with stakeholders and solicit their input on the interpretation and implications of the results.
 - b) Incorporate the feedback received from stakeholders into the final analysis to enhance the credibility, validity, and relevance of the findings.



²⁴ Conduct inferential statistical analysis: • Employ inferential statistics to make generalisations about the target population based on the sample data: a) Test hypotheses about the relationships between variables using appropriate statistical tests, such as t-tests, ANOVA, or chi-square tests. b) Investigate the relationships between variables and potential confounding factors using multivariate techniques, such as regression analysis, factor analysis, or structural equation modeling. c) Evaluate the stability and generalisability of the findings by conducting sensitivity analyses or cross-validation techniques. • Calculate confidence intervals to estimate the range of values within which the true population parameter is likely to fall, given the sample data. This provides a measure of the precision of the estimates and helps quantify the uncertainty associated with the sample results.

5. Qualitative data collection and triangulation

This chapter focuses on qualitative data collection and triangulation using the Qualitative Impact Protocol (QuIP) developed by Bath Social & Development Research (Bath SDR). QuIP is grounded in the belief that beneficiaries' voices and experiences are essential to understanding the true impact of development programmes. By incorporating qualitative data, it offers a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of how interventions affect people's lives, considering not only measurable outcomes but also the perceptions, feelings, and experiences of those involved – complementing the quantitative data collected through the Sustainable Livelihoods Index (SLI).

Data collected through “blindfolded”²⁵ interviews is then analysed using a thematic analysis approach, which involves identifying patterns and themes in the data that relate to the monitoring questions and objectives. This process allows for the identification of commonalities and differences in experiences, as well as the exploration of causal mechanisms and the influence of contextual factors on programme outcomes.

By using QuIP, the impact measurement process will be enriched and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the effects of ForAfrika's programmes on the target communities.

5.1 QuIP sampling

Designing a sample for a Qualitative Impact Protocol (QuIP) study involves selecting a representative and diverse group of participants from the target population to ensure that the insights gathered are relevant and generalisable.

- **Define the target population:** Clearly identify the group of individuals or households that are the focus of the study, such as beneficiaries of a specific intervention, community members, or other stakeholders.
- **Determine the sample size:** The sample size for a QuIP study depends on the monitoring questions, resources available, and the desired level of saturation or depth of understanding. While there is no definitive rule for the sample size in qualitative monitoring, a common range for QuIP studies is 20-50 participants. This number can be adjusted based on the diversity of the target population and the complexity of the monitoring questions.
- **Pilot the sampling process:** Before launching the full-scale data collection, it is recommended to conduct a pilot test with a small number of participants from the target population. This will allow you to assess the effectiveness of your sampling strategy, refine your monitoring instruments, and identify any challenges or biases that may emerge during the data collection process.
- **Use purposive sampling:** select participants which represent different locations in the community, develop different livelihood strategies and have engaged with different ForAfrika programmes. For each group select 6 individuals, having a maximum of 5 to 6 groups. Consider a gender balance in all groups.

5.2 Implementing Qualitative Impact Protocol (QuIP)

The QuIP methodology is a semi-structured, flexible, and participatory approach to qualitative data collection. The QuIP protocol (Annex A) has been designed with monitoring questions focused on identifying change processes and mechanisms on the different Capital dimensions described in the SLI. The protocol will be implemented through individual interviews with household heads which have participated in ForAfrika programmes.

The process begins with the M&E officer at the country office developing a thorough understanding of the context, target population, and objectives of the monitoring. They will then select and train a monitoring team that is well-versed in qualitative monitoring methods and the principles of the QuIP approach. The monitoring team should be familiar with the local context, language, and cultural norms of the target population, as this will help ensure the quality and relevance of the collected data.

Once the interview guides have been developed, the monitoring team should be briefed on the objectives, context, and target population of the monitoring. However, detailed information about the intervention, such as specific activities, programme components, or implementing organisations, should be withheld as part of the blindfolding process.

²⁵ The blindfolding process in QuIP (Qualitative Impact Protocol) interviews is a key component of the methodology that enhances the credibility and trustworthiness of the study findings. Blindfolding refers to withholding specific information about the intervention, programme, or project being evaluated from the field monitoring officers who conduct the interviews. The purpose of the blindfolding process is to minimize biases that may influence the way interviewers ask questions, probe for details, or interpret the responses they receive from participants.

The monitoring team then conducts the interviews, using the interview guides to ask open-ended questions and encourage participants to share their experiences, perceptions, and the changes they have experienced in their lives. Interviewers should avoid asking leading questions or probing for information that may reveal the details of the intervention. Instead, they should focus on gathering rich and nuanced data that allows participants to identify and attribute the causes of any observed impacts.

After the interviews have been completed, the monitoring team transcribes and translates the data (if necessary) and prepares it for analysis. The lead M&E officer, together with the DMEAL Director, then analyses the data, looking for patterns, themes, and causal explanations that emerge from the participants' responses. This process involves coding the data using qualitative data analysis software, such as NVivo, to identify key themes and categories.

Once the data analysis is complete, the blindfolding is lifted, and the monitoring team can compare the findings with the details of the intervention. This comparison allows the team to assess the plausibility of the causal attributions reported by the participants and draw conclusions about the intervention's impact.

5.3 Triangulation

Triangulation is the process of comparing and contrasting data from different sources, methods, or perspectives to enhance the credibility and validity of the findings. In the context of the Impact Measurement Guideline, triangulation will be achieved by:

- Comparing the qualitative and quantitative data to identify consistencies and discrepancies between the two sets of findings. Divergent findings will be noted in an agenda for detailed discussion with DMEAL and programmes teams to try and reconcile, if possible, the findings.
- Assessing the qualitative data from different sources (e.g., in-depth interviews, observations) to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of ForAfrika's programmes.
- Analysing the perspectives of various stakeholders, such as beneficiaries, programme staff, and community leaders, to identify common themes and divergent viewpoints.



6. Reporting and utilisation of findings

The effective communication of impact measurement findings is crucial to ensuring that the results of ForAfrika's programmes are understood and appreciated by a range of stakeholders, including targeted communities, individuals, donors, partners, and staff. This chapter provides guidance on how to report and utilise these findings to enhance programme performance, inform decision-making processes, and demonstrate accountability.

6.1 Reporting and communicating impact measurement findings to stakeholders

To effectively report and communicate impact measurement findings to various stakeholders, it is important to tailor the message and presentation of the results according to the needs and expectations of each audience. This requires a thorough understanding of the specific interests and concerns of each stakeholder group and the ability to convey the findings in a clear, concise, and accessible manner.

For targeted communities and individuals, it is essential to present the findings in a way that is both culturally sensitive and contextually relevant. Engaging with communities in an open and transparent manner encourages a sense of ownership and involvement in the programme's success and future direction. Examples of communication products and strategies for this audience might include:

- Translating findings into local languages to ensure accessibility.
- Creating **visual aids** such as infographics or short videos that illustrate key findings in an easily digestible format.
- Organising **community meetings**, workshops, or focus groups to discuss the results, gather feedback, and identify areas for improvement.
- Developing **success stories** or case studies that highlight individual or community achievements resulting from the programme.

When reporting to donors and partners, it is vital to demonstrate the effectiveness and efficiency of the programmes in achieving their objectives. This can be done by providing quantitative and qualitative evidence of the impacts achieved, as well as linking these outcomes to the specific goals and targets of the programme. It is also important to outline any challenges encountered during implementation and the steps taken to address them. This transparency helps to foster trust and confidence in ForAfrika's ability to deliver meaningful and lasting change. Examples of communication products and strategies for this audience might include:

- Producing detailed **progress reports** that provide quantitative and qualitative evidence of the impacts achieved and their alignment with programme goals and targets.
- Preparing **presentations** or **webinars** to share findings and discuss challenges and lessons learned during implementation.
- Developing **policy briefs** or **fact sheets** that summarise key findings and their implications for future programming and funding decisions.
- Organising donor meetings or **partner forums** to discuss the results and explore opportunities for collaboration and joint action.

For staff members, effective communication of impact measurement findings is crucial in fostering a sense of motivation and commitment to the programme's aims and objectives. Sharing the results of impact measurement efforts can help to highlight the successes and areas for improvement, providing valuable insights for the ongoing refinement and development of programme activities. This process should be inclusive and participatory, allowing staff to contribute their perspectives and ideas for enhancing programme performance. Examples of communication products and strategies for this audience might include:

- Sharing the results of impact measurement efforts through **internal newsletters**, emails, or staff meetings.
- Organising **workshops** or training sessions to discuss findings, explore best practices, and identify areas for improvement.
- Recognising and **celebrating staff achievements** related to the programme's impact and success.

By tailoring the message and presentation of results to the specific needs and interests of each audience, ForAfrika can foster a sense of engagement, trust, and accountability among its diverse range of stakeholders, ultimately contributing to the success and sustainability of its programmes.

6.2 Utilising impact measurement findings for programme improvement, decision-making, and accountability

The effective utilisation of impact measurement findings is essential to ensuring that ForAfrika's programmes continue to be relevant, efficient, and impactful. By incorporating the insights gained from the impact measurement process into programme improvement, decision-making, and accountability mechanisms, ForAfrika can enhance the overall quality and sustainability of its interventions.

Programme improvement:

Impact measurement findings can serve as valuable inputs for the continuous improvement of programme design and implementation. By identifying areas of success and opportunities for growth, ForAfrika can adjust and refine its interventions to better address the needs and priorities of targeted communities and individuals. This process involves:

- Analysing impact measurement findings to determine the effectiveness of various interventions and identify best practices that can be scaled up or replicated.
- Assessing the needs of targeted communities and individuals to adjust programme activities and strategies accordingly.
- Identifying gaps or challenges in programme delivery and address them by allocating resources, building capacity, or modifying logistical arrangements.
- Fostering a culture of learning and innovation by encouraging staff to experiment with new ideas, approaches, and technologies that are supported by impact measurement evidence.

Decision-making:

Informed decision-making is critical to the effective allocation of resources and the overall success of ForAfrika's programmes. By using impact measurement findings to guide strategic planning and resource allocation processes, ForAfrika can ensure that its investments yield the greatest possible impact. This involves:

- Prioritising interventions with the strongest evidence of impact and scalability in strategic planning and resource allocation.
- Using impact measurement findings to identify areas of greatest need and direct resources accordingly.
- Leveraging impact measurement evidence to attract additional funding and support from donors, partners, and other stakeholders.
- Engaging in policy advocacy efforts and collaborate with government and other stakeholders, using evidence-based insights to inform the design and implementation of relevant policies and programmes.

Accountability:

Maintaining a strong sense of accountability to stakeholders is a fundamental aspect of ForAfrika's commitment to transparency, integrity, and effectiveness. By openly sharing impact measurement findings and using them as a basis for ongoing dialogue and engagement, ForAfrika can demonstrate its commitment to delivering results and upholding the trust placed in it by its stakeholders. This involves:

- Regularly reporting on programme progress and impact to donors, partners, targeted communities, and other stakeholders, using clear and accessible communication channels.
- Seeking feedback from stakeholders on the impact measurement findings and incorporating their perspectives into programme improvement efforts.
- Implementing robust monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) systems that track progress against programme goals and objectives, facilitating ongoing learning and adaptation.
- Holding staff members accountable for their performance and contributions to the programme's impact through performance reviews and other management mechanisms.

By incorporating these insights into programme improvement efforts, decision-making processes, and accountability mechanisms, ForAfrika can ensure that it continues to deliver lasting, positive change for the communities and individuals it serves.



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8. Annex A – QuIP interview guide

8.1 Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. We're interested in understanding how various aspects of your household's well-being have changed over time, and how different factors have influenced these changes. Please feel free to share your thoughts openly – there are no right or wrong answers.

8.2 Land and resource management

- Could you tell me about how your household's access to land has changed over the years? What has driven these changes?
 - How have these changes in land access affected other aspects of your household's life?
 - What factors have most influenced your feeling of security about land rights?
 - How has your land use changed in response to environmental or economic pressures?
- In what ways has your household adapted to changes in climate or environment?
 - What prompted these adaptations?
 - How have these changes affected your agricultural productivity or income?
 - How have environmental changes influenced other aspects of your household's well-being?

8.3 Water and sanitation

- How has your household's access to water changed over time? What has driven these changes?
 - How have changes in water access affected your daily activities or livelihood?
 - What factors have most influenced the safety of your drinking water?
 - How has water availability impacted your household's health or hygiene practices?
- How has your household's sanitation situation evolved? What has driven these changes?
 - How have improvements in sanitation affected your household's health?
 - What factors have most influenced your ability to maintain good sanitation practices?
 - How have changes in sanitation impacted other aspects of your household's well-being?

8.4 Education and skills

- How have educational opportunities for your household members changed over time? What has driven these changes?
 - How have changes in education affected your household's economic opportunities?
 - What factors have most influenced school attendance for children in your household?
 - How has education impacted other aspects of your household's well-being?
- How has participation in training or skills development programmes affected your household?
 - What prompted involvement in these programmes?
 - How have new skills influenced your livelihood strategies?
 - How has skills development impacted other aspects of your household's well-being?

8.5 Health and nutrition

- How has your household's overall health changed over time? What factors have driven these changes?
 - How have changes in health status affected your household's productivity or income?
 - What has most influenced your household's ability to access healthcare when needed?
 - How have health issues impacted other aspects of your household's well-being?

- How has your household's diet changed over the years? What has driven these changes?
 - How have changes in diet affected your household's health or productivity?
 - What factors have most influenced your household's food choices?
 - How have changes in food availability or affordability impacted other aspects of your life?

8.6 Energy and technology

- How has your household's access to and use of energy changed over time? What has driven these changes?
 - How have changes in energy access affected your household's productivity or quality of life?
 - What factors have most influenced your choice of energy sources?
 - How has energy access impacted other aspects of your household's well-being?
- How has access to technology evolved for your household? What has driven these changes?
 - How has technology access affected your household's economic opportunities or social connections?
 - What factors have most influenced your household's ability to use technology?
 - How has technology use impacted other aspects of your household's well-being?

8.7 Livelihoods and financial management

- How have your household's income sources changed over time? What has driven these changes?
 - How have changes in income sources affected your household's stability or resilience?
 - What factors have most influenced your household's livelihood strategies?
 - How have changes in income impacted other aspects of your household's well-being?
- How have your household's savings and financial management practices evolved? What has driven these changes?
 - How have changes in financial practices affected your household's ability to handle unexpected expenses?
 - What factors have most influenced your household's financial decisions?
 - How have financial management practices impacted other aspects of your household's well-being?

8.8 Social networks and community participation

- How has your household's involvement in community activities or groups changed over time? What has driven these changes?
 - How have changes in community involvement affected your household's access to resources or support?
 - What factors have most influenced your household's ability to participate in community activities?
 - How has community participation impacted other aspects of your household's well-being?
- How have patterns of giving and receiving support within the community changed? What has driven these changes?
 - How have changes in community support affected your household's resilience to shocks?
 - What factors have most influenced the strength of community support networks?
 - How has community support impacted other aspects of your household's well-being?

8.9 Governance and decision-making

- How has your household's ability to participate in and influence community decisions changed over time? What has driven these changes?
 - How have changes in participation affected your household's access to resources or services?
 - What factors have most influenced your household's engagement in community decision-making?
 - How has participation in decision-making impacted other aspects of your household's well-being?
- How has access to information about potential disasters or risks changed for your household? What has driven these changes?
 - How have changes in risk information affected your household's preparedness or resilience?
 - What factors have most influenced your household's ability to act on risk information?
 - How has access to risk information impacted other aspects of your household's well-being?

8.10 Overall resilience and well-being

- How has your household's ability to cope with challenges or unexpected events changed over time? What has driven these changes?
 - How have changes in resilience affected your household's overall well-being?
 - What factors have most influenced your household's capacity to bounce back from difficulties?
 - How has improved resilience impacted other aspects of your household's life?
- How have opportunities for improving your household's well-being changed over time? What has driven these changes?
 - How have these changing opportunities affected your household's goals or aspirations?
 - What factors have most influenced your household's ability to seize new opportunities?
 - How have improvements in one area of life created opportunities in others?

8.11 Conclusion

Reflecting on all we've discussed, how do you see the different aspects of your household's life influencing each other? Are there any key connections or patterns you've noticed?

Is there anything else you'd like to share about how your household's experiences or challenges have evolved over time?

Thank you for your time and insights. Your responses will help us better understand the dynamics of household resilience and well-being in this community.

9. Annex B – Metadata

[Metadata.docx](#)



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