

MDG **iF**
MDG ACHIEVEMENT FUND



United Nations
ALBANIA

Ministria e
Shëndetësisë



Ministria e
Bujqësisë,
Ushqimit dhe
Mbrojtjes së
Konsumatorit



100 Vjet Shtet Shqiptar

QUALITATIVE STUDY *on* The effects of gender issues and high food prices on household food security in Albania

Summary Report

December 2011

UNJP/ALB/007/SPA
Reducing Malnutrition in
Children



Qualitative Study on

The effects of gender issues and high food prices on household food security in Albania

Summary Report

December 2011

UNJP/ALB/007/SPA
Reducing Malnutrition in
Children

Abbreviation and Acronyms

ACER	Albanian Centre for Economic Research
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
INSTAT	Albanian Institute of Statistics
DBUMK	Directory of Agriculture, Food, and Consumer Protection
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
IDI	In-Depth Interview

Contents

1. Introduction.....	5
2. Methodology.....	6
3. Main Findings.....	10
a. Basic services and infrastructure.....	10
b. Employment and income sources.....	10
c. Food availability and household access to food.....	12
d. Changes in food consumption and dietary habits due to higher prices.....	13
e. Food customs and feeding priorities.....	14
f. Vulnerable populations.....	15
g. Changes in behavior to manage problems with access to food.....	16
h. Gender aspects of food security.....	17
4. Suggestions to improve food and nutrition security.....	20
Appendix.....	21
A: Survey templates.....	22
B: Characteristics of respondents.....	34
Table 1: Tirana.....	34
Table 2: Shkodra.....	34
Table 3: Malesia e Madhe.....	35
Table 4: Puka.....	36
Table 5: Tropoja.....	36
Table 6: Kukes.....	37
Table 7: Has.....	37

Table 8. Price perceptions.....	38
Table 9. Perceptions on food consumption.....	38
Table 10. Summary of food sources.....	39
C: Summary District reports.....	40
Tirana District.....	40
Shkodra District	45
Malesia e Madhe District.....	50
Puka District	55
Tropoja District.....	60
Kukes District.....	64
Has District.....	68

I. Introduction

This is a qualitative research study carried out in the context of the MDG Achievement Fund for Children, Nutrition and Food Security. The Joint Programme on Nutrition “Albania - Reducing Malnutrition in Children” aims to prevent and address malnutrition and food insecurity among poor, high-risk rural and peri-urban communities in Albania, with a particular focus on women and children. The study complements the quantitative “Baseline Nutrition and Food Security Survey”, carried out under the same programme, by gaining in-depth information on specific factors central to household food and nutrition security.

Food and nutrition security – defined as physical, social and economic access at all times to a safe and nutritionally adequate food supply – depends on many factors at the individual, household, community and national level, all of which are necessary to ensure that people have adequate food to meet their dietary needs for an active and healthy life. Poverty, inequality, poor living conditions, inadequate sanitation and health services, and lack of resources, knowledge, skills, opportunities all affect people’s ability to achieve food and nutrition security for themselves and their families.

This study set out to examine the affects of two specific factors on the ability of families and households to achieve food and nutrition security: 1) high or changing food prices; and 2) gender roles, activities, responsibilities and equal access to services and benefits. It aimed to identify the main food security problems faced by households in the study area, understand how their food security is affected during times of difficulty and identify some of the ways in which they manage these difficulties.

In order to understand the food and nutrition security situation of households in the study areas, questions were posed to respondents from the general population and key local leaders or authorities on a range of issues directly or indirectly related to food and nutrition security. In particular, the following topics were covered: infrastructure and basic services; incomes and food prices; food availability; food access of individuals and families; the affect of gender on food security; and changes in household practices in times of economic difficulty or food insecurity in the different geographic areas covered by the study.

This summary report presents the highlights of the study findings. All reported findings reflect an overview of the experiences, thoughts and perceptions of the many persons interviewed. More detailed information is presented in the full report of the study, which was carried out by the Albanian Centre for Economic Research (ACER).

The FAO technical team – **Terri Ballard, Eleonora Dupouy and Valeria Menza** – are responsible for the study design and the preparation of this report.

2. Methodology

Study design

The study areas were selected to correspond to the target areas of the project baseline survey, including rural and suburban locations. In each of the 7 districts (zones) selected for the survey, Tirana and six northern districts of Kukes, Has, Tropoja, Shkodër, Puka, Malesia and Madhe, two locations were surveyed, for a total of 14 localities. As the study was designed to be qualitative rather than quantitative, the respondents were selected accordingly, with no attempt to implement rigorous sampling procedures such as random sampling or stratified random sampling. The total sample included 298 respondents. Both women and men respondents participated in focus group discussions and key informant interviews, using survey instruments and guidelines developed for the study.

a. Qualitative approach and techniques

The study approach was to collect qualitative information through focus group (FG) discussions and in-depth interviews (IDI) with respondents selected from a variety of social, economic, cultural and professional backgrounds. A semi-structured interviewing questionnaire and a guideline for focus group discussions (FGD) were prepared and administered. (See Annex for study instruments).

For the focus groups, the approach was to assemble 5 to 15 community members, selected with the assistance of the people from the area, and gently lead the group through a semi-structured discussion by posing open-ended questions and promoting fruitful dialogues and exchange of experiences. For the in-depth interviews, key informants were led individually through a discussion using a similar approach and set of questions.

A conceptual framework for the analysis of the factors contributing to food security in rural and suburban poor communities, as well as the effect of changes in food prices and the impact of gender roles, was built based on the responses to the 19 questions discussed in the focus groups and in-depth interviews

b. Selected sites

The selected sites were chosen among the Joint Programme on Nutrition target areas. Based on INSTAT classifications, this survey focused on the Central and Mountain area, including peri-urban areas of Tirana, where there are high rates of poverty and malnutrition. Within each of the 7 selected districts, two localities – one rural and one suburban – were selected, including localities with different socio-economic levels and livelihoods -- for a total of 14 localities.

Table 1. Classification of the districts

Region	Districts in the Region
1. Central Area	Pukë, Malësia e Madhe, Shkodër, Tirana rural
2. Mountain Area	Kukës, Has, Tropoja
3. Tirana	Tirana Urban, suburban

Source: INSTAT and Swiss Cooperation Office, Socio-Demographic Statistics in Albania, pg. 56, 2010

Table 2. Selection of Zones in Selected Districts

No.	District	Areas	Zones
1	Tirana	rural	Ibe/Paskuqan
		suburban	Kombinat
2	Shkoder	rural	Guri i ZI
		suburban	Dobrac
3	Puka	rural	Luf
		suburban	Puka "Lagjia e Re"
4	Malesi e Madhe	rural	Grizhe
		suburban	Koplik
5	Kukes	rural	Shtiçen
		suburban	Kukes
6	Has	rural	Gjicaj
		suburban	Kruma
7	Tropoja	rural	Margegaj
		suburban	Bajram Curri

c. Field work

The field work was carried out between 16 November 2010 and 25 January 2011. There was a slight delay in the completion of the field work in December due to the flooding in the Shkodër Region. When field work was resumed after the emergency, special questions were created and added to both survey instruments (FGD and IDI) for Shkodër Region in order to assess the impact of the floods on food security

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

In each of the 14 selected localities, two focus group discussions were held, one with women and one with men, with same-sex facilitators (2 facilitators for each FG) leading the discussion using participatory techniques. Women and men were separated to ensure equal numbers of female and male respondents and to enable a free and uninhibited discussion. Focus group participants aged 25 and older were selected from the local community, including a cross-section of occupations and socio-economic groups for each respective location. Participants included farmers, workers, housewives, teachers, nurses, shopkeepers, local administrators, the unemployed, social assistance beneficiaries and pensioners. The focus group discussions were held in informal settings within the community, such as coffee-bars, school classrooms and community centres. Each discussion session used the same semi-structured questionnaire and lasted about 1 – 1.5 hours. All FG discussions were documented through written notes and voice recordings to capture the full depth of the discussions and individual respondent comments. (See Appendix for Focus Group Discussion Template)

In-depth Key Informant Interviews (IDIs)

In each District, four key informant interviews were conducted. The key informants included community leaders, financial experts, health care providers, agricultural extension workers, local Ministry staff (health, agriculture, and economics), women's group leaders, and teachers. The interviews were conducted individually on a one-to-one basis, using a semi-structured questionnaire, and lasted about 45 minutes. The key informant interviews were documented through interviewer notes and voice recordings taken during the interviews. (See Appendix for Key Informant Template)

For both the FGDs and the IDIs, written transcripts were made of the voice recordings and summary reports presenting the main findings were prepared for each district.

Table 3 No. of Participants per District

Participants	Districts							Total
	Tirana	Shkodër	Puka	Malësi e Madhe	Kukës	Has	Tropoja	
FGDs	33	32	21	27	55	39	35	242
Key Informants	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	56
Total	41	40	29	35	63	47	43	298

Facilitator and interviewer training

All facilitators and interviewers, selected from skilled and experienced researchers, attended a one-day training session, where they were introduced to the survey instruments, terms of references of the research, and the main purpose and objectives of the study. The training included a discussion of the main issues and concepts of food security and a simulation of in-depth interviews and focus group discussions using the survey instruments. The comments and suggestions made by the interviewers and facilitators during training were taken into consideration for a final redrafting of the instruments, in particular for the language and vocabulary used to describe and discuss the concepts of food security.

3. Main Findings

a) Basic services and infrastructure

- *What are the advantages/ disadvantages in your community in providing access to electricity; access to water supply; access to communication links with the city and other places in order to improve food security?*
- *Do you consider that access to basic services facilitates food security in your community? What are the advantages/ disadvantages?*

Although most of the study localities have access to electricity, respondents report that the service may be irregular. They also report that electricity is expensive, noting that in the winter months families may use fire wood or gas for cooking instead of electricity, due to the high price of power. Many respondents mention the lack of investment in the electrical power network which has remained in place with little improvement for decades.

Piped water is reported as being almost universal in both suburban and rural areas, but it is not always available 24 hours a day. Displaced families in some suburban areas have poorer access to piped water and some are using electric pumps to draw water from wells. In some of the rural study areas, residents still depend on individual wells. Where individual well water is used, there is concern for the quality and safety of the water.

While it is generally acknowledged that the road system has improved in recent years, respondents note that there are still areas which do not have paved roads. These areas include the outskirts of the suburban areas and especially the rural areas. In the rural areas, respondents highlight the fact that lack of decent roads and adequate public transportation affect the normal and necessary flow of goods and people. Improvement in roads and transport are also perceived as important for enabling more domestic producers to sell their products in local markets or in cities.

b) Employment and income sources

- *What are the main sources of employment and income in your community? Has this changed over the last 2-3 years or remained stable?*

It is generally expressed across all areas that low incomes, under employment and unemployment are a major determinant of peoples' food insecurity. The shortage of jobs is felt to affect primarily women and

young adults. The type of employment that people engage in varies by location and gender; for example, in urban areas men are able to find employment in industrial jobs but women have great difficulty in finding work. Respondents comment that the private sector has suffered from the global economic crisis and salaries in the sector are very low. In Shkodër, employment opportunities overall are reported to be decreasing.

In the rural mountain areas small scale agriculture prevails as the main source of employment. However, it is reported that much arable land remains unused due to the high costs of carrying out agricultural activities. Many households in the study rural areas have gardens and livestock, and it is felt that this is an important element for improving food and nutrition security.

Emigration to urban areas to seek employment is not uncommon among the population in the study areas. In urban Kukes, the public sector is a major employer. However in this sector, respondents feel that incomes have not increased enough to keep up with rising food prices. Seasonal and informal employment is an additional source of household income in most areas.

In addition to employment, income sources include public assistance and remittances. There is the general impression that remittances, which were heavily relied upon in the past, have subsided considerably over the last several years, as job opportunities abroad have decreased in response to the global economic crisis.

Social benefits in the study localities include social assistance, unemployment insurance (for the urban sector only), disability payments and retirement pensions. It is estimated by respondents that approximately half of residents in the rural mountain areas receive some form of social benefit. Study respondents are generally aware of the assistance provided by local municipalities and communes to the neediest and of the public works to increase local income. There is also recognition of the assistance provided by NGOs to needy people and families.

It is generally felt that borrowing money from banks is not a viable option, due to difficulties in obtaining loans and high interest rates. People are more likely to borrow money from relatives or friends to cover necessary expenses in times of need than to seek bank loans. It is not uncommon for people to buy food on credit, carrying a “debt list” at the local food market.

c) Food availability and household access to food

- *How do you assess the availability of your local markets for providing good quality and quantity food?*
- *What about the retail/wholesale market? What strategies can improve local markets?*

It is the general opinion that the food supply in wholesale and retail markets is sufficient in both urban and rural areas. In the study localities, the wholesale markets are located in the periphery of cities and are widely used by suburban residents as well as rural residents living not too far away. Some respondents in suburban Tirana (Kombinat) commented on a recent reversal in the boom in grocery store openings in the ground floors of residential buildings near the main road, noting that these smaller local food shops are disappearing because of the competition from wholesale markets.

Rural markets appear to have sufficient food for sale, but the quality and variety are reported to be limited in some cases. This is leading rural residents to go to nearby wholesale markets or rely on relatives living in more urban areas to shop for them in these markets. Respondents comment that transportation costs are high, consequently,

for those people living some distance from the wholesale markets any potential savings from purchasing food wholesale is wiped out by the cost of transportation to and from the markets.

- *Have there been episodes of sharp rises of food prices in past 2-3 years? If yes, Please specify for what kinds of foods. When and why have prices increased?*
- *Has the proportion of the household income spent on food changed in the past two-three years? (Increased/Decreased/Remained the same).*
- *Is an issue of concern in your community providing adequate food?*

Everyone is in agreement that food prices have increased considerably in the past several years, since 2008. Several national factors are identified as contributing to this general trend. Most importantly, it is felt that there has been insufficient investment in domestic agricultural production. This, coupled with the high price of agricultural inputs and fuel, limited arable land, land degradation during transition from communism and low ownership of land by the population, are seen as obstacles to greater domestic production. Respondents feel that lowering reliance on imported foods through greater investment in agriculture is an important means to ensuring greater food security for Albania. They believe that this would result in lower food prices and in a greater variety of available foods.

This type of investment would also have the effect of increasing incomes of food producers. However, they emphasize that greater domestic food production in itself will not lower food prices if inputs into agriculture, such as seeds and fuel for mechanized farm implements, remain expensive. There is also widespread agreement that overall household incomes have not kept up with the cost of living. This, coupled with rising food prices, is felt to be compromising the ability of households to purchase sufficient quantities of food for themselves and their families or to consume what they consider to be better quality foods. It is the clear impression of participants in all discussion groups that the problem is not the overall availability of food, as the markets are full, but the individual's ability to afford to buy adequate food.

d) Changes in food consumption and dietary habits due to higher prices

- *Does an increase in food prices affect people's diets and eating habits? How?*
- *In case of shortage of money, are there any specific foods that you will buy at any price? What are the first food priorities in the family that people will buy at any price? For example, is bread a priority food that people will buy at any price?*
- *If either of these happened (raise of food prices, reduced availability of food) how have families changed the diet and eating practices?*
- *What are the main reasons for food shortages in your community: Weather, season; lack of production; limited incomes; increase in prices; flooding or other natural disasters; difficulties in transportation*
- *Have there been episodes of reduced availability of food in the communities? If answers is Yes. How did your community cope with this?*

Many people report spending a greater proportion of their income than in the past on food purchases. In some of the study localities, 70% - 75% of household income goes towards purchasing food. They attribute this increase to higher food prices, reporting that almost all food items have increased in price.

FOOD ITEMS	Consumption decreased	Persons interviewed
Fish	93.1%	116
Red meat	90.3%	113
Fruits	84.5%	116
Pasta	66.9%	118
Vegetables	66.4%	119
Chicken	56.2%	130
Eggs	42.9%	119
Oils and fats	42.9%	119
Dairy	27.7%	119
Milk	25.2%	119
Bread	23.4%	128
Pickles	11.3%	115
Beans	10.0%	120

Respondents recognize that this loss of food purchasing power has led to diets that are more limited in variety, with food substitutions (chicken instead of beef or veal), in certain items being dropped (such as fruits and vegetables, sweets). It has also caused a shift away from buying food at local markets in favour of wholesale markets which have lower prices. Nonetheless, when asked about food purchase priorities, people report that there are certain basic food items that they continue to purchase as before, despite the higher prices. These “priority foods” include cooking oil, sugar, bread, milk, potatoes and beans.

The following table reflects information from the study respondents on changes they have made in their consumption of different food types since food prices first peaked in 2008. These results confirm the many statements by respondents that beans, milk and other dairy and bread continue to be purchased and consumed despite food price increases.

e) Food customs and feeding priorities

- *What is the usual diet of families in this community? What foods form the base of the diet? What are the most commonly eaten foods? How many meals a day? What is the main meal of the day?*
- *Do people make home food preserves for winter period?*
- *What are the normal periods of difficulties for obtaining food, during the year?*

Dairy products are considered an essential element in diet, even for those without their own source, as well as potatoes and bread. Beans are common winter foods while fresh vegetables are commonly consumed in the summer. It appears that in all interviewed areas, red meats are preferred over chicken.

In rural areas, traditional foods are still commonly consumed; these are often of own production. However, even those with gardens or animals say it has become more expensive to grow or produce food for their own consumption, due to the increase in cost of agricultural inputs. Respondents from Shkodër mention that very little of their diet comes from their own production.

Food stocks and conservation of foods are reported to play an important role in stabilizing food security and ensuring dietary diversity in both rural and suburban localities. Foods commonly preserved, stored and eaten over winter months include homemade pickled vegetables, dried vegetables, dried meat, tomato sauce, dried beans, and preserved fruits.

Food shortages are felt more acutely in winter in the northern mountainous areas because there is less seasonal employment in agriculture and construction. In the Central area and suburban Tirana, shortages are mo-

re acute in the late spring when stocks run out. In this time period, it is still too early to purchase fresh fruits at reasonable prices.

This information on times of food shortage gathered from respondents in the qualitative study matches the data gathered from the quantitative baseline survey (BFNS) about months of the year when food stocks are low. BFNS data show that in Kukes the highest period of food shortages was during the winter months (approximately February through May of 2010). In Shkodër, shortages increased from February 2010, peaking in May and gradually declined thereafter. The period of greatest shortages for the suburban population of Kamez and Paskuqan was from May through September, 2010.

- *According to the local customs, do different household members eat differently? (In the case of shortage, do some members have priority in terms of quantity or better quality foods? For example, do the persons working outside the home, children, pregnant or lactating women get priority?)*

Priorities for feeding family members vary slightly across the different study areas. The main meal of the day is lunch in Tirana and Shkodër but dinner in Kukes and Has, but the overall custom is to have three meals a day (breakfast, lunch and dinner). Most respondents indicated that it was not unusual that children, pregnant women and lactating women, the elderly and household members engaged in heavy work (usually men) were given priority when food was scarce. Given these priorities, women who are neither pregnant nor lactating are the most likely members to sacrifice food for the others. Some respondents however felt that there weren't important distinctions in their locations regarding who was given better or more abundant food.

f) Vulnerable populations

- *In your opinion, what are the most vulnerable groups for food deficiencies in your community?*
- *Are there any initiatives in your community to assist vulnerable groups? What kind of initiatives or activities are there for improving their food security? Who is undertaking them?*

Key informants in all the study sites were asked to identify the populations most at risk of food insecurity. The groups most mentioned as vulnerable included families with orphaned children, poor families and those with unemployed members, women-headed households, single elderly persons, disabled, and some Roma families.

g) Changes in behaviour to manage problems with access to food

- *In case of shortage of money, are there any specific foods that you will buy at any price? What are the first food priorities in the family that people will buy at any price?*
- *When money is short or prices are too high, what are the first foods that people stop purchasing?*
- *If either of these happened (raise of food prices, reduced availability of food) in the last 2-3 years how have the families changed their spending priorities?*
- *What other things do people do to reduce the effect of difficulties in access to food and feeding their families well? selling livestock; asking for credit; increasing work load; seeking casual labor; emigration.*

The main way in which the study participants cope during times of reduced family income or high food prices is by changing the types of food purchased and consumed by themselves and their families. Almost universally, respondents report that they substitute chicken (a less preferred food) for beef, eliminate meat from some mixed dishes, reduce fresh vegetable and especially fruit. In some cases, they report eating less overall.

When money is short, spending priorities are directed first to purchasing those foods considered basic to the diet and second to other basic household purchases. This means that households are by necessity cutting back on the quality of their diet and not purchasing or eating a variety of different foods other than the basic ones in order to satisfy other household needs. They also choose cheaper foods than they would prefer to buy, such as frozen rather than fresh vegetables, and lower quality cheese. More households are shopping at the wholesale markets or purchasing small quantities and sometimes with credit from local markets.

One point mentioned in all groups is that because of more expensive food, certain important social customs have changed. In particular, traditional Albanian hospitality, such as inviting guests to share meals is becoming much less common, because families are saving the food to feed their children. What used to be traditional abundant lunches on Sundays are only now reserved for festive occasions, and for large family gatherings such as wedding dinners or funeral lunches. Respondents perceive the changes in their food purchasing, eating habits and traditions resulting from high or rising food prices as undermining human dignity.

In addition to changes in food purchases and consumption, other ways of increasing family income to account for higher food prices were reported by respondents. These include: seeking additional employment in the informal sector; working longer hours; increasing the number of women

finding employment; emigration to urban areas; selling livestock; buying used clothing; and borrowing from family members. In some cases, children may be taken out of school to work at such jobs as washing cars, caring for the animals or selling in the markets. Assistance may be sought from NGOs or local government programmes.

h) Gender aspects of food security

- *In your community do women have equal access as men in the following: inheritance; land ownership community leadership role; credit; pensions; social assistance; employment; education; health services?*

One aspect of the study was to understand how food security might be affected by different roles and responsibilities of men and women. There were several areas where differences by gender were identified, as discussed below.

Land inheritance - It is almost universally agreed that inheritance customs give an advantage to men over women. The one exception is the sub-urban Puka, where respondents who feel there are no differences by gender. Respondents recognize that by law men and women have equal rights concerning land inheritance, but note that traditional customs of male-dominated inheritance are still followed in specific localities, such as in the mountainous areas of Malesia and Madhe.

Credit - In general, people do not take out loans or ask for credit from banks. In one locality, a respondent notes that employed women can get credit in their name but then the money is used by the male. Or sometimes even if a woman is in a legal position to sign a contract, it is done by the man.

Leadership roles – Respondents report that women are present in much wider percentages in leadership positions in the major cities; for example a woman has been elected Mayor of the Kombinat municipality and a number of women are seated in municipal councils in urban and suburban Tirana. In the more rural areas, however, men dominate the leadership roles. It is common to find women in leadership positions in local NGOs. It is the prevailing opinion of all focus group discussions that the leading role in the social and economic sphere of their communities, both in public and private, is dominated by men. It is felt that this is due not only to mentality and tradition, but also to the lack of economic independence of women, who are more involved in work at home or family business.

Social benefits – It is recognized that the Albanian legal system has created equal opportunities for both men and women, in particular for pensions and unemployment benefits. Despite this equal opportunity under the

law, study respondents note that both men and women are effectively excluded from the contribution-based social security system because women are less likely than men to have formal employment and men are often working in the informal economy or are unemployed. Benefits are perceived to be very low, and compounded with the bureaucracy involved in getting benefits, resulting in many families not even applying for these types of benefits. However, respondents note a tendency for more and more poor families to request and receive social assistance.

Employment – Women living in or moving to suburban areas of Tirana and Shkodër have increasingly found employment in small enterprises and businesses, such as textiles, tailoring, and shoe manufacturing, where up to 20% of employees can be women. In Shkodër rural areas, the handicraft business is a source of employment for women, in addition to agriculture. On the other hand, in Kombinat, an industrial area of sub-urban Tirana, employment opportunities still favor men over women. When women do occupy professional roles, it is mostly in the area of the education or health sectors. One reason identified for women having more limited opportunities for employment and professional careers is the lack of appropriate policies for family and child care and inadequate public services for working women.

Education – It is generally agreed that educational opportunities are the same for males and females. In rare cases where children are taken out of school to work, it is mostly boys whose education is interrupted.

Decision-making

- *How household budget responsibilities are handled (e.g does one person control the budget for all expenditures or are there divisions of responsibilities among the adult members of the HH)? Who is usually responsible for the family or household food budget (deciding how much to spend on food)?*

Traditionally, and still in many parts of the locations where the study took place, men are responsible for the household budget. In the opinion of one respondent, this is based on the belief that men have better management skills than women.

It appears, however, that in urban and sub-urban areas, women have a greater role in decision-making on household expenditures. Some respondents indicate that the expenditures on food are more likely to be decided upon by the person responsible for food preparation, which in most cases is women. There are some differences in opinions on women's decision-making role by gender of the respondent, and across the study locations. In sub-urban Tirana, the female focus group participants say that men handle the food

budget, while the male respondents say instead that it is the women who manage the food budget. Other respondents in suburban Tropoja say that women might have more decision-making power when they contribute to the household income through their own earnings. Key informants from the same district concede that in general, men make the major decisions while women have discretion for deciding only on minor expenses. In the district of Malesia E Madhe, the women acknowledge that in general the men make decisions on household purchases, but in cases where the men are outside the home all day for work, women purchase foods and decide what foods to feed the family. Puka district focus group participants say that in some cases, food expenditure decisions are taken jointly by spouses but there are still traditional families where men make all the decisions, including food purchases. In Has district, it is reported that male control over household budget decisions is more common in the rural areas but still prevails even in the more urban locations. Women may have independence in deciding on small daily food purchases only.

There is a consensus among participants that greater participation in decision-making about household expenses and food would have a positive impact on improving food security and reducing malnutrition. It is felt that NGOs in collaboration with local authorities should work toward increasing awareness of the importance of women's role in management and shared decision-making on household expenditures.

The qualitative information gathered from this study indicates that when women have decision-making power, it is more likely to be for the food budget than for the overall household budget. It also indicates that decision-making tends to be shared more by both men and women in urban or suburban households than in rural households. This finding supports the findings of the BFNS quantitative survey, which also looked at women's participation in decision-making for overall household expenditures and for food purchases, and compared their decision making participation across food secure and food insecure households. In all strata of the BFNS survey, women were more likely to participate in decisions about food than in decisions about the overall household expenses. This participation by women was greater in urban areas compared to rural areas. It also found that women from food secure households, whether rural or urban, were more likely to have a greater role in budget decision making overall than women from food insecure households.

4. Suggestions to improve food and nutrition security

At the conclusion of each group interview, respondents offered suggestions for policies and practices that would serve to improve household food and nutrition security in their communities. The following is a list of the most frequently mentioned suggestions across the different study localities.

1. Increased sustainable employment opportunities, with emphasis on women and youth, in such sectors as agriculture, handicrafts, tourism, and mining. Youth should be offered technical and professional training to improve their employment prospects. There should be in place favourable financial policies for small businesses.
2. Increased investment in agriculture at national and local levels to promote greater domestic food production, with improved access to loans and technical assistance to farmers.
3. Improvement in the quality and diversity of foods available in local markets, with emphasis on local products.
4. Increased and better targeted economic and social assistance to vulnerable populations, administered with transparency.
5. Promotion of cooperation between local and national government as well as private and public institutions at local level for economic development and job creation.
6. Improved infrastructure, including road systems to increase trade and market access.

Appendix

Appendix A: Survey Templates

Template A: Focus Groups Discussions

Geographic Coverage: 7 selected areas divided per suburban and rural zones = 14 zones

Meeting duration: 1-1.5 hours

Suggested participants: In each zone, it will be carried out the following 2 focus groups (one with men participants suburban/rural) and one with female participants (suburban/rural): 14 x 2=28 focus groups.

Community Members: married, with children, age above 25.

- cross-section by occupation (farmers, workers, housewife, teachers, nurse, shop keeper, local administration official, public development agencies (BESA Foundation, MADA)
- Socio-economic group or livelihood for each respective location (employed; self-employed; self-employed in agriculture; unemployed; social assistance beneficiaries; pensioners).

Moderation:

A skilled facilitator with an assistant will conduct the focus groups following a semi-structured interview guide, allowing the discussion to go in unforeseen directions when new information is uncovered. Within the focus groups, participatory tools will be use to document the information (resources to be supplied).

The best timing for focus groups and interviews is determined, given people's work obligations: focus groups –Female 11:00-12:30; Male 16:30-18:00.

The place can be the coffee bars in a village, the schools or any appropriate room in the community facilities.

Focus Group Template

Nr. ____

Municipality (SUBURBAN) _____

Commune (RURAL) _____

Date ____/____/2011

Place: _____

Moderator (Name, Surname): _____

Contacts: _____

Facilitator (Name, Surname): _____

Introduction-10 minutes

Good day to all!

My name is.....and I will lead this conversation. My assistant is.....

Please introduce yourself and write your name on the paper for purpose of recognizing.

First, I want to thank you for coming to participate into this discussion. This research is conducted by the Albanian Center for Economic Research based in Tirana, supported by FAO project on Gender Issues and Effects of High Food prices and economic crises on household food security. We have invited you in order to find out your opinion regarding your way of living, specifically the household food security, the effects of crisis and food prices on your respective communities and families, basic problems that you encounter focused on gender roles and malnutrition of children, how to solve them, etc. Your information is very important to us to find out what are the attitudes, behavior and opinions of the citizens regarding these topics.

Logistics:

Discussion will take between 1-1.5 hours and it will be voice recorded. Notes of the discussions, or recordings, will be made and written up. A unified analysis of the information from the different areas will be conducted to extract the main information provided and to synthesis the results. In order to gain all the information from the discussion the report will show only generalized data, so you can be sure that it will be strictly confidential of all that you will say here. Tapes will be used just for this project and material will not be misused. After the finishing of the research, we will destroy the records.

I would like that every one of you say its personal opinion. Discussion among you is preferable. If you do not agree with the others, just say it. There are no right and wrong answers here. I am interested in your personal opinion. Everybody's opinion is important.

A- Macro factors – 20 minutes

1. What are the advantages/ disadvantages of your community in providing;
 - a. Access to electricity; main sources of energy do the people in your community use more frequently for preparing and cooking food.
 - b. Access to water supply, main source of community water supply, safety of community water supply.
 - c. Access to communication links with the city and other places in order to improve food security? (Telephone, internet, post office, road network, access to mass media, etc).
2. In your community, are there important differences in access to each of these between men and women?
 - a. Inheritance
 - b. Land ownership
 - c. Community leadership role
 - d. Credit or other facilities
 - e. Pensions,
 - f. Assistance
 - g. Employment, specify the sectors
 - h. Education
 - i. Health
 - j. Other, specify
3. Do you usually share information about food in your community? Here I mean availability of food in the shops or markets, variety of foods, sufficient food for all members of the family at affordable prices all year.

What are the main ways for sharing the information? (TV, radio, newspapers, leaflets, meetings in coffee bar, in your houses)?
4. What are the main sources of employment and income in your community? Has this changed over the last 2-3 years or remained stable?

B - Food security – one hour – 60 minutes
--

6. How household budget responsibilities are handled (e.g. does one person control the budget for all expenditures or are there divisions of responsibilities among the adult members of the HH)? Who is usually responsible for the family or household food budget (deciding how much to spend on food)?
7. Has the proportion of the household income spent on food changed in the past two-three years? E.g. Increased/ Stable /Unchanged/ Decreased
8. Is an issue of concern in your community providing adequate food? Please, explain in which ways and how?
9. What are the normal periods of difficulties for obtaining food, during the year (seasons/month)
 - a. Provide Reasons for this
9. Do the people make food reserves in the household for winter period? If yes, what kind of food?
 - a. How do the families preserve the food? (E.g. the following are to be considered: cellar/ refrigerator/ freezers/ homemade salty/ sweet vegetable/fruit preservation, etc.)
10. Have there been episodes of sharp rises of food **prices** in past 2-3 years? If yes, Please specify
for what kinds of foods. When and why prices increased?
11. In case of shortage of **money**, are there any specific foods that you will buy at any price? What are the first food priorities in the family that people will buy at any price?
For example, is bread a priority food that people will buy at any price?
12. When money is short or prices are too high, what are the first foods that people stop purchasing?
13. If either of these happened (raise of food prices, reduced availability of food) in the last 2-3 years how have the families changed their spending priorities?
14. Who decides which foods to be purchased (head of household, male or female, other)?
15. If either of these happened (raise of food prices, reduced availability of food) how have the families changed the diet and eating practices?

16. What is the usual diet of families in this community? What foods form the base of the diet? What are the most commonly eaten foods? How many meals a day? What is the main meal of the day?
17. According to the local customs, do different household members eat differently? (In case of shortage, do some members have priority in terms of quantity or better quality foods? For example, do the persons working outside the home get priority, children, pregnant or lactating women?)
18. What measures would your community undertake to overcome crises that affect food availability, access to food and food security? (for example: selling livestock, asking for credit, increasing work load, seeking casual labor, emigration, improve local markets, etc.)
19. What strategies do you think can improve food security for your community?

Template B: Key informants Interviews

Geographic Coverage: 7 selected areas divided per suburban and rural zones

Meeting duration: 45 minutes

Suggested participants: In each locality, it will be carried out the following 4 key informants' interviews (suburban/rural):

Community members:

- agricultural extension workers
 - a. farmer's extension services specialist
- local elected authorities (village chief and/or member of Commune Council)
- local non-elected authorities (health, economics)
- financial experts (bankers or financial counselors)
 - a. public development agencies (MADA, BESA foundation, FAF, etc)
- health care providers
 - a. nurses
 - b. doctors
 - c. pharmacist
 - d. dentist
- women's group leaders / local NGOs
- Education
 - a. head masters/ teachers
 - b. kindergarten
- Agriculture inputs retailer / food commodity shop keeper

Interviewer:

A skilled interviewer will conduct the interviews with key informants following a semi-structured questionnaire, conducted through a face-to-face method and note keeping when needed for additional comments and/or tape recording.

Draft Key Informant Template

Nr. ____

Municipality (SUBURBAN) _____

Commune (RURAL) _____

Date ____/____/2011

Place: _____

Interviewer (Name, Surname): _____

Contacts: _____

Key Informant Data

<i>Name Surname</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Level of Education</i>	<i>Marital Status</i>	<i>No. of Children</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Contacts</i>

Introduction-5 minutes

My name is.....and I will lead this conversation. My assistant is.....

It will be good to say about yourself, do you work, are you married, number of people in your household....

First, I want to thank you for coming to participate into this discussion. This research is conducted by the Albanian Center for Economic Research based in Tirana, supported by FAO project on Gender Issues and Effects of High Food prices and economic crises on household food security. We have invited you in order to find out your opinion regarding your way of living, specifically the household food security, the effects of crisis and food prices on your respective communities and families, basic problems that you encounter focused on gender roles and malnutrition of children, how to solve them, etc. Your information is very important to us to find out what are the attitude, behavior and opinions of the citizens regarding these topics.

Logistics:

The interview will take maximum 45 minutes and it will be voice recorded. Notes of the discussions, or recordings, will be made and written up. A unified analysis of the information from the different areas will be conducted to extract the main information provided and to synthesis the results. In order to gain all the information, the report will show only generalized data, so you can be sure that it will be strictly confidential of all that you will say here. Tapes will be used just for this project and material will not be misused. After the finishing of the research, we will destroy the records. I would like that you to say your personal opinion. There are no right and wrong answers here. I am interested in your opinion.

A - Macro factors – 10 minutes

1. Do you consider that access to the basic services facilitate your community in food security? What are the advantages/ disadvantages?
2. In your community do women have equal access as men in the following:
 - a. Inheritance
 - b. Land ownership

- c. Community leadership role
 - d. Credit or other facilities
 - e. Pensions
 - f. Assistance
 - g. Employment, specify the sectors:
 - h. Education
 - i. Health
 - j. Other, specify
3. Which of the following sectors guaranty food security for the households in your community and how: agriculture, farming, fishing, tourism, construction? Any other potential?

B - Food security-30 minutes

3. How do you *assess* the availability of your local markets for providing food in good quality and quantity? What about the retail/wholesale market? What strategies can improve local markets?
4. What are the normal periods of difficulties for obtaining food, during the year?
- Provide Reasons:
5. What are the main reasons for food shortages in your community (1 strong -5 weak reason):
- a. Weather, season
 - b. Lack of production
 - c. Limited incomes
 - d. Increase in prices
 - e. Flooding or natural disasters
 - f. Difficulties in transportation
 - g. Other, specify _____
6. Have there been episodes of sharp rises of food prices in past 2-3 years? If yes, Please explain what effects had on securing food for your community?
7. Have there been episodes of reduced availability of food in the communities?
- If answers is Yes. How did your community cope with this?*
8. If either of these happened (raise of food prices, reduced availability of food) how have the households changed their spending priorities?

9. Does an increase in food prices affect people's diets and eating habits?
How?
10. Who decides which foods to be purchased (head of household, male or female, other)?
11. According to the local customs, do different household members eat differently (do some members have priority in terms of quantity or better quality foods? For example, does the person working outside the home get priority, children, pregnant or lactating women?)
12. How household budget responsibilities are handled (i.e. does one person control the budget for all expenditures or are there divisions of responsibilities among the adult members of the household?) Who usually decides the family food budget or expenditures?
13. In case of shortage of money, what are the foods which people will buy at any price? What are the first food priorities in the family that people will buy at any price?
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
14. What are the first foods that people stop purchasing when money is short or prices are high?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
15. What other things do people do to reduce the effect of difficulties in access to food and feeding their families well?
 - a. selling livestock,
 - b. asking for credit,
 - c. increasing work load
 - d. seeking casual labor,
 - e. emigration
 - f. other (specify)
16. Are there systems for monitoring these kinds of difficulties? Is someone, some groups and/or authorities responsible for this? What happens to this information? Where does it go?
17. According to your opinion, what are the most vulnerable groups for

food deficiencies in your community?

18. Are there any initiatives in your community to assist the vulnerable groups on food security? What kind of initiatives or activities? Who is undertaking them?

Note to interviewers: the following questions are for Shkoder only

Now, I would like to talk about the effects of the recent flooding.

20 How was this community affected by the flooding?

21. How has the flooding affected the food supply, food availability and food prices?

22. Do you think the flooding will have any longer term affects on the food supply and prices? Who will be most affected?

23. Which are main damages caused by flooding?

- a) land (soil) structure
- b) prolong the season
- c) damage the fruit trees
- d) animal death
- e) animal feeding shortage
- f) damage to homes and personal property
- g) loss of jobs and income
- h) other (specify)

24. Are there any governmental initiatives to intervene for decreasing the negative flooding effects for farmers and others in the community? Describe and discuss

25. What do you think could be done to help? Who should do this?

26. Has there been damage in the past from other floods? Are there any warning or information systems to alert the community?

Template C: Food Market Survey

To be used in both FG and Key Informants Interview for the purposes to collect quantitative data on food market. One of the Key Informants in each zone will be the shopkeeper who is familiar with the food market.

- For most HHs in this community, what are the main sources of each of these foods?

Food/Food group	HH Production	Local market	City market
1. Fruits			
2. Vegetables: a) Tubers b) Tomato and others c) Leafy green (salad, spinach...)			
3. Eggs			
4. Milk			
5. Dairy product (cheese, yogurt, butter...)			
6. Pasta			
7. Meat			
8. Fish			
9. Chicken, poultry			
10. Beans			
11. Salty preserved vegetables			
12. Bread			
13. Oils or meat fat			

- Compared to 2008, did the food **prices** for each of these food groups in 2011 increase, decrease or remained the same?

Food/Food group	Increased	Decreased	Remained the same
1. Fruits			
2. Vegetables: Tubers Tomato and others Leafy green (salad, spinach...)			
3. Eggs			
4. Milk			
5. Dairy product (cheese, yogurt, butter...)			
6. Pasta			
7. Meat			

Food/Food group	Increased	Decreased	Remained the same
8. Fish			
9. Chicken, poultry			
10. Beans			
11. Salty preserved vegetables			
12. Bread			
13. Oils or meat fat			

3. Compared to 2008, did the food **consumption** for each of these food groups in 2011 increase, decrease or remained the same?

Food/Food group	Increased	Decreased	Remained the same
1. Fruits			
2. Vegetables: Tubers Tomato and others Leafy green (salad, spinach...)			
3. Eggs			
4. Milk			
5. Dairy product (cheese, yogurt, butter...)			
6. Pasta			
7. Meat			
8. Fish			
9. Chicken, poultry			
10. Beans			
11. Salty preserved vegetables			
12. Bread			
13. Oils or meat fat			

Appendix B: Characteristics of respondents

Table 1. Characteristics of participants- Tirana

Tirana Zones (Sub-Urban/Rural)	Activity	Date
1.Kombinat 2.Prush - Vaqarr	Focus Groups (4) In- Depth Interviews (8)	14-21 January 2011, 14.00 – 15.30 14-21 January 2011, 14.00 – 15.30
FGD: Characteristics of Tirana FGD participants:		- IDN: Characteristics of Participants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of participants: 33 • Civil Status: 90% are married • Average Age of both men and women: 38years old • On average households have 3 children (from 1 to 6), so as their households size on average is composed 5 members. • Education level of participants in total: 1 elementary education and 11 secondary education, 15 higher education 6 university. • As per sectors of employment 2 unemployed; 5 selfemployed; 16 employed, 6 housewives ; 4 retired 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of interviewers: 8; • Civil Status: All are married (women) • Average Age: 38 years old; • According to Employment Sector : 2 local administration; 2 health sector 2 teachers 1 NGO; 1 saleswoman

Source: Qualitative Study Report, ACER, 2011

Table 2. Characteristics of participants - Shkodra

Shkodra Zones (Sub-Urban/Rural)	Activity	Date
1. Dobrac 2. Guri i Zi	Focus Groups (4) In- Depth Interviews (8)	18 January 2011, 14.00 – 15.30 19 January 2011, 14.00 – 15.30
FGD: Characteristics of FGD participants.		- IDN: Characteristics of Participants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of participants: 32 • Civil Status: 100% are married • Average Age of both men and women:: 45 years old • On average households have 3 children, so as their households size 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of interviewers: 10; • Civil Status: All are married; • Average Age: 40 years old; • According to the employment sectors: local

Shkodra Zones (Sub-Urban/Rural)	Activity	Date
<p>children, so as their households size on average is composed of 5 members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education level of participants in total: 50% higher education (16 participants), 22% elementary education, and 18% university education. From a gender perspective, there are more women educated to university level than men. • As per Sectors of employment - Men: employed in local public administration, worker, and shop keeper – While for women: again public administration mainly education and health sector, as well as in handcraft sector and shop keeper. 		<p>employment sectors: local administration (health, education), agriculture (6) / entrepreneur (4)</p>

Source: Study Report, ACER, 2011

Table 3. Characteristics of participants - Malesia e Madhe

Malesia e Madhe Zones (Sub-Urban/Rural)	Activity	Date
<p>1. Koplik 2. Grizhe</p>	<p>Focus Groups (4) In- Depth Interviews (8)</p>	<p>15 January 2011, 14.00 – 15.30 17 January 2011, 14.00 – 15.30</p>
<p>FGD: Characteristics of FGD participants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of participants: 27 • Civil Status: 100% are married • Average Age of both men and women: 47 years old • On average households have 4 children (from 2 to 6), so as their households size on average is composed 6 members. • Education level of participants in total: 22% elementary education and 15% secondary education, 26% higher education, 37% university education. From a gender perspective, there are more women educated than men. • As per Sectors of employment - Men are composed: $\frac{3}{4}$ private enterprise $\frac{1}{4}$ administration; Women: $\frac{1}{2}$ unemployed and $\frac{1}{2}$ private enterprise, administration 		<p>- IDN: Characteristics of Participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of interviewers: 8; • Civil Status: All are married; • Average Age: 42 years old; • According to the employment sectors: local administration (health, education), agriculture (5) / entrepreneur (3)

Source: Study Report, ACER, 2011

Qualitative Study
on the effects of gender issues and high food prices on household food security in Albania

Table 4. Characteristics of participants - Puka

Puka Zones (Sub-Urban/Rural)	Activity	Date
1.Luf 2.Lagja e Re	Focus Groups (4) In- Depth Interviews (8)	16 January 2011, 14.00 – 15.30
FGD: Characteristics of FGD participants.		- IND: Characteristics of participants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of participants : 21 • Civil Status: 100% married • Average Age of both men and women : 41 years old • On average households have 3 children (from 1 to 5), so as their households size on average is composed 5 members. • Education level of participants in total: : 3 elementary education; 2 secondary; 6 high school; and 9 university education. • As per Sectors of employment ; 3 self-employed; 15 employed , 3 housewives; 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of interviewers: 8; • Civil Status: All are married; • Average Age: 40 years old; • According to Employment Sector: public administration / farming/ teachers / entrepreneurs

Source: Qualitative Study Report, ACER, 2011

Table 5. Characteristics of participants - Tropoja

Tropoja Zones (Sub-Urban/Rural)	Activity	Date
1.Bajram Curri 2.Margegaj	Focus Groups (4) In- Depth Interviews (8)	20 January 2011, 14.00 – 15.30 21 January 2011, 14.00 – 15.30
FGD: Characteristics of Tropoja FGD participants		- IDN: Characteristics of Participants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of participants : 35 • Civil Status: 95 % are married • Average Age of both men and women: 42 years old • On average households have 3 children (from 1 to 6), so as their households size on average is composed 5 members. • Education level of participants in total: 32% secondary education, 57% higher education, 11% university. From a gender perspective, there are more man educated to secondary education than men, but there are no women with higher education level. . • As per Sectors of employment Men are composed : 50% specialists (agronomist , plumber, electrician), Women: 40% engaged in the servile center; 10% entrepreneurs 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of interviewers: 8; • Civil Status: All are married ; • Average Age: 43 years old; • According to Employment Sector : 3 economists / 2 entrepreneurs / 1 agronomist/ 1 administrative assistant /translator/ 1 zoo veterinarian

Source: Complementary Qualitative Study Report, ACER, 2011

Table 6. Characteristics of participants-Kukes

Kukes Zones (Sub-Urban/Rural)	Activity	Date
1.Shtiçen 2.(SU)	Focus Groups (4) In- Depth Interviews (8)	14-21 Janar 2011, 14.00 – 15.30 14-21 Janar 2011, 14.00 – 15.30
FGD: Characteristics of Kukes FGD participants.		- IDN: Characteristics of Participants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of participants: • Civil Status: are married • Average Age of both men and women: years old • On average households have 3 children (from 1 to 6), so as their households size on average is composed 5 members. • Education level of participants in total: elementary education and secondary education, higher education. From a gender perspective, there are more women educated to secondary education than men, but there are no women with higher education level. • As per Sectors of employment - Men are composed: farmer agronomist; Women: handicraft and merchant ambulatory 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of interviewers: 8; • Civil Status: All are married; • Average Age: 38 years old; • According to Employment Sector: 1 engineer / 1 mechanic / 2 teachers / 3 entrepreneurs / 1 coordinator/1 social worker/1 unemployed

Source: Complementary Qualitative Study Report, ACER, 2011

Table 7. Characteristics of participants - Has

Food/Food Classification	Increased	Decreased	Unchanged	Total interviewer	Report perceive increased
1. Fruits	205	0	12	217	0.9
2. Vegetables:	207	3	6	216	1.0
3. Eggs	176	0	33	209	0.8
4. Milk	176	0	41	217	0.8
5. Dairy (cheese, Yogurt, butter)	187	1	19	207	0.9
6. Pasta	211	1	4	216	1.0
7. Meet	216	0	0	216	1.0
8. Fish	215	0	1	216	1.0
9. Chicken	202	0	13	215	0.9
10. Beans	138	3	70	211	0.7
11. Pickles	131	5	77	213	0.6
12. Bread	177	0	39	216	0.8
13. Oil and fats	215	0	2	217	1.0

Source: Qualitative Study Report, ACER, 2011

Qualitative Study
on the effects of gender issues and high food prices on household food security in Albania

Table 8. Price perception from the respondents¹

Food/Food Classification	Increased	Decreased	Unchanged	Total interviewer	Report perceive Decreased
1. Fruits	11	98	7	116	0.8
2. Vegetables:	11	79	29	119	0.7
3. Eggs	9	51	59	119	0.4
4. Milk	7	30	82	119	0.3
5. Dairy (cheese, yogurt, butter)	7	33	79	119	0.3
6. Pasta	15	79	24	118	0.7
7. Meet	8	102	3	113	0.9
8. Fish	8	108	0	116	0.9
9. Chicken	15	73	42	130	0.6
10. Beans	32	12	76	120	0.1
11. Pickles	33	13	69	115	0.1
12. Bread	38	30	60	128	0.2
13. Oil and fats	10	51	58	119	0.4

Source: Study Report, ACER, 201

Table 9. Perception on food consumption from the respondents²

Food/Food Categories	Household Products	Local Market	City market	Total
1. Fruits	68	76	75	219
2. Vegetables:	78	78	61	217
a) Different	41	33	27	101
b) tomatoes and others	61	37	20	118
c) green salad (spinach)	53	49	18	120
3. Eggs	103	91	35	229
4. Milk	102	97	16	215
5. Daity (Cheese, yogurt, butter.)	94	79	38	211
6. Pasta	2	135	78	215
7. Meet	39	118	57	214
8. Fish	8	108	87	203
9. Chicken	81	99	36	216
10. Beans	96	79	50	225
11. Pickles	157	39	6	202
12. Bread	101	91	32	224
13. Oil and fats	16	112	95	223

Source: Study Report, ACER, 2011

1 Not all of them have filled the table.

2 Not all of them have filled the table.

Table 10. Summary of food sources for the respondents³

Zones (Sub-Urban/Rural)	Activity	Date
1.Kombinat 2.Prush - Vaqarr	Focus Groups (4) In- Depth Interviews (8)	14-21 January 2011, 14.00 – 15.30 14-21 January 2011, 14.00 – 15.30
<p>FGD: Participants were selected to better represent their community, based on the methodology, as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>cross-section by occupation</i> (farmers, workers, housewife, teachers, nurse, shop keeper, local administration official, public development agencies (BESA Foundation, MADA) - <i>Socio-economic group</i> or livelihood for each respective location (employed; self-employed; self-employed in agriculture; unemployed; social assistance beneficiaries; pensioners). <p>Below there are some of the characteristics of Tirana FGD participants.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of participants: 33 • Civil Status: 90% are married • Average Age of both men and women: 38years old • On average households have 3 children (from 1 to 6), so as their households size on average is composed 5 members. • Education level of participants in total: 1 elementary education and 11 secondary education, 15 higher education 6 university. • As per Sectors of employment 2 unemployed; 5 selfemployed; 16 employed, 6 housewives ; 4 retired 		<p>IDN: Participants were selected in order to be representatives of their respective community, as the following community members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - agricultural extension workers; local elected authorities; financial experts (bankers or financial counselors); public development agencies; health care providers; women's group leaders / local NGOs; head masters/ teachers; kindergarten; Agriculture inputs retailer/ food commodity shop keeper.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of participants: 33 • Civil Status: 90% are married • Average Age of both men and women: 38years old • On average households have 3 children (from 1 to 6), so as their households size on average is composed 5 members. • Education level of participants in total: 1 elementary education and 11 secondary education, 15 higher education 6 university. • As per Sectors of employment 2 unemployed; 5 selfemployed; 16 employed, 6 housewives ; 4 retired 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of interviewers: 8; • Civil Status: All are married (women) • Average Age: 38 years old; • According to Employment Sector : 2 local administration; 2 health sector 2 teachers 1 NGO; 1 saleswoman

Source: Study Report, ACER, 2011

³ Not all of them have filled the table.

Appendix C: Summary District reports

Report Summary of Tirana District

Objectives:

- Collecting community experiences and opinions about different lifestyles, especially on nutrition, and households food security ;
- The impacts of food prices and economic crisis in food security for the household;
- Gender roles in children's nutrition and food security;
- Suggestions / recommendations regarding food security and relevant sustainable solutions, etc.

METHODOLOGY

Based on the study methodology, in Tirana locality there were selected two zones to be surveyed: 1) sub-urban area – Kombinat and 2) rural area – Prush-Vaqarr village. In each of these two zones, there were held 2 focus groups discussions (FGD) with members of the community gender disaggregated (one with women and one with men) so as 4 FGD in total 4; In addition there were held 4 In-depth interviews (IND)for each zone (total 8)

Zones (Sub-Urban/Rural)	Activity	Date
1.Kombinat 2.Prush - Vaqarr	Focus Groups (4) In- Depth Interviews (8)	14-21 January 2011, 14.00 – 15.30 14-21 January 2011, 14.00 – 15.30
<p>FGD: Participants were selected to better represent their community, based on the methodology, as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>cross-section by occupation</i> (farmers, workers, housewife, teachers, nurse, shop keeper, local administration official, public development agencies (BESA Foundation, MADA) - <i>Socio-economic group</i> or livelihood for each respective location (employed; self-employed; self-employed in agriculture; unemployed; social assistance beneficiaries; pensioners). <p>Below there are some of the characteristics of Tirana FGD participants.:</p>		<p>IDN: Participants were selected in order to be representatives of their respective community, as the following community members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - agricultural extension workers; local elected authorities; financial experts (bankers or financial counselors); public development agencies; health care providers; women's group leaders / local NGOs; head masters/ teachers; kindergarten; Agriculture inputs retailer/ food commodity shop keeper.

Zones (Sub-Urban/Rural)	Activity	Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of participants: 33 • Civil Status: 90% are married • Average Age of both men and women: 38years old • On average households have 3 children (from 1 to 6), so as their households size on average is composed 5 members. • Education level of participants in total: 1 elementary education and 11 secondary education, 15 higher education 6 university. • As per Sectors of employment 2 unemployed; 5 selfemployed; 16 employed, 6 housewives ; 4 retired 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of interviewers: 8; • Civil Status: All are married (women) • Average Age: 38 years old; • According to Employment Sector : 2 local administration; 2 health sector 2 teachers 1 NGO; 1 saleswoman

MAIN FINDINGS OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS (FGD)

- Decision-making within the households - the majority of women participants, said that men keep the households budget for food costs - while male participants said that women manage the food budget
- For participants, the main meal is lunch. In winter, they cook more potatoes, pie, beans. They rarely use meat, chicken etc. in the cooking. (reduction of meat)
- Meat is very expensive and the majority of participants expressed that have increased the consumption of chicken thighs. Also is greatly increased the price of oil, sugar, rice and bread price
- Participants said they attempt to secure the necessary food and to cope with prices they make more purchases at wholesale stores, because they are cheaper than in the store they have near home
- For participants, the necessary food, they will buy even though prices have risen, and incomes have remained the same are bread, oil, milk (about 50% of households in the area buy milk while 50% provide it through Livestock (mainly beef).) They buy more at wholesale stores, because they are cheaper than the store that may have near home
- Regarding to the attendance of wholesale markets, the participants said that: families who have employed people in the city, try to purchase products in the wholesale stores while a considerable part (70% of households) purchase the products in the local markets because, to go shopping in the wholesale stores, the need to pay round-trip van and the benefit from wholesale prices is not great

- shumica e familjeve nuk kane banak(frigorifer) ose frigorifer keshtu qe ruajtja e ushqimeve frigoriferike nuk aplikohet nga pjesa me e madhe e familjeve te zones (rreth 97%) . Most families do not have a refrigerator so the food storage in the refrigerator is not applied by the majority of families in the area (about 97%)
- When incomes are not enough to cope with expenses of the month, they take debts or take food with the list that is also a form of debt
- Water is provided 3 times a day and they say that use tanks to ensure continuity of water supply to the house. In terms of quality and cleanliness of the water there is much to be improved
- The participants pointed that the combine area had problems with the electricity interruptions. Interruption schedules were not warned so cooking often remain in half
- Most of the participants said that the prices have increased due to the crise and to cope with it, they buy food with lower quality and lower prices . they trie to provime incomes by selling agricultural products and livestock.
- Prices have risen while wages have remained the same, especially for people working in the the private sector (there has been no wage increase
- They provide incomes from employment, unemployment benefits (5000 ALL) or disabled pople payments.
- Immigration is not seen as an opportunity to cope with crisis, because participating said that they have their problems and in the countries where they emigrated they are faced with the effects of the crisis itself. immigrants used to help their families but now they have their own families, so the increasing costs has reduced the oportunities to help families in Albania.
- Employment is seen by all as one option to provide more income and food security.
- Regarding the local contributions, his role is very weak. The problems of the community are remembered only in the election periods
- Regarding employemet part of man are employed in the informal sector and sezonal employment
- Agriculture was not a priority in this area, where one of the obstacles was the lack of water. a significant part of households also provide income through the sale of milk or dairy products that produce an individual

RECOMMENDATIONS OF FGD PARTICIPANTS

- The municipality tries to help families in need. eg a participant (former member of the commune) explained that the municipality for households who may have food security problems due to a disaster such as cow deaths, damage to the house by fire or any other natural phenomenon gave support in the ALL from a special fund.
- Employment is seen by all participants as a strategy that can help ensure food especially in the area of the combine where the number of unemployed women is very high

MAIN FINDINGS OF IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS (IND

- Marginalized families: families with orphaned children, households with too low incomes, lonely elderly, disabled persons, Roma families, households income from remote mountainous areas that have sacrificed for the construction of houses, but have difficulties in the providing food
- There is an association that helps families in the need as e.g. providing items for the sick members of families with fewer people
- The municipality has helped in a way that families are in the trouble for food security.
- There are NGOs that work constantly with the LUs, by sending lists of people who support and also get information from the LU (No. 6).
- Some of the products families should consume but they cannot buy anymore are fish, bananas, the fruits and dairies have been reduced in quantities
- 80% of men keep the family budget.
- Differentiation of nutrition – mentality has changed, but men have the priority. children and pregnant women have priorities too. Women are the ones who sacrifice more in terms of eating
- The necessary food that all families will continue to buy despite price are, oil, sugar, bread, etc.
- Food price rise affects somehow in the way of diet and nutrition.
- Prices of medicines have increased.
- They try to provide the necessary food. for the purchase of food items they go in the wholesale market which has ALL 5-10 cheaper than in the market near their homes or have vastly reduced costs for clothing

or other things to be at home

- Prices have increased so is increased the number of people who go to the center of the NGOs to obtain the services it provides for people in the need (dealing with eating a meal as lunch)
- Even those who have land, have expenses that go around 10,000 ALL per to work. It is very difficult for some to make these payments.
- Especially those households who take products with list go to the local market.
- Most of of families try to go to the wholesale market where prices are lower.
- Purchase of used clothing in the market.
- Possibilities of providing income for food:
 - sell livestock,
 - apply for loan
 - increase working time
 - equire occasional work as a collection of cans
 - take the debt to their relatives
 - provide other income by selling milk or vegetables
 - few people from local families have emigrated
- In the last 5 years there was a boom in opening stores in this area turning the first floor flats from the apartment in stores. But soon a considerable part of them have changed the destination from stores in the cafe.
- Incomes are mainly provided by agriculture, livestock as well as handicrafts, sewing, manufacturing industry. Revenues come mainly from employment
- More are employed women (sewing, handicraft, agriculture)
- Credits are taken in the name of women who are employed and exploited by men.)
- Regarding to leadership roles in community men have a 80% representation of women while about 20%.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF IND PARTICIPANTS

- Improve food security in terms of increasing domestic production that will reduce the prices of grocery items in the market.

Report Summary of Shkodra District

Objectives:

- Collecting community experiences and opinions about different lifestyles, especially on nutrition, and households food security ;
- The impacts of food prices and economic crisis in food security for the household;
- Gender roles in children’s nutrition and food security;
- Suggestions / recommendations regarding food security and relevant sustainable solutions, etc.

METHODOLOGY

Based on the study methodology, in Shkodra locality there were selected two zones to be surveyed: 1) sub-urban area - Dobrac and 2) rural area – Guri i Zi village. In each of these two zones, there were held 2 focus groups discussions (FGD) with members of the community gender disaggregated (one with women and one with men) so as 4 FGD in total 4; In addition there were held 4 In-depth interviews (IND)for each zone (total 8).

MAIN FINDINGS OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS (FGD)

- Most participants stated that during the distribution of meal ratio, the priority is given to children, breastfeeding women and than men and women.
- The main meal of the day for the residents of these areas is lunch. They use mostly in winter the beans, bread, cheese, eggs, and pasta.
- Use of meat and fish is being eliminated entirely, and in special cases it is only chicken. They also use pasta, potatoes, onions, tomatoes and garden vegetables and food products that are cheaper in the market. This has aggravated the quality of nutrition for children and all family members.
- Women are dealing mostly with budget allocated to food, because they are the ones who cook as well, but also with the approval of their spouse.
- Most families have no refrigerator, so that the preservation of foods is not applied by the majority of families in the area (80%). Women who are housewives gather during the summer time tomatoes, peppers, greens and preserve them for winter as pickles, although in this area they do not have any tradition in this regard, but the current increased of food prices shifted this tradition also in Shkodra areas.

- Priority foods of any price are the most necessary ones, such as pasta, bread, oil, dairy products, and sugar. It is claimed that there is great poverty in this area. Currently earnings are lower and the consumption of food commodities has been reduced also to the extent in the amount of fruits needed for children as oranges, apples, etc. or they are not purchased at all.
- Also, it is declared that it is aimed primarily at consumption of home-made products, as well as those with the lowest price in the wholesale market of the city.
- During the last 2 years prices have raised more particularly for necessary foods, such as oil, rice, flour, pasta, fruit and meat, mainly due to the economic crisis.
- Even in the case of bread, which is not a price increase, they claimed that it is still abused with its weight, because none of the local authorities has frequently controlled and monitored the shops in the local market.
- Participants expressed that in their area, food security face difficulties due to increased food prices and food access is based on local market of the village where prices are higher, and most of residents have migrated from north highlands and do not possess land to help them with some garden vegetables, neither have adequate irrigation system.
- Food is mainly provided as mentioned by local market of the village and very little from agricultural products of the house, and the main income sources remain remittances and some income occasional informal jobs. Another way to provide food products is based on a debt list at the local market shops, where the shop keeper trusts the buyer.
- In relation to access the wholesale markets, participants felt that the HH who have employed members in the city try to shop in the city, as food commodities are cheaper there, the rest (40% of households) buy at the local markets, since Guri i Zi area is like a suburb zone of the Shkodra city and communication infrastructure is quite favorable.
- Participants declare that the most difficult period to challenge food security is winter, because in this period agriculture is developed in low temperatures, lack of water, etc. They claimed that the municipality has no invested for all these years.
- In terms of local government contribution, his role is assessed as very weak. Problems of the community are addressed only in election periods, if ever.
- Also, participants complained that their houses are still under property legalization process, which is very slow.

- Employment is perceived by all participants, as the most option to provide more incomes for ensuring more food and increase their quality of life.
- During the last 2-3 years as a result of price increases higher than incomes, the share of budget to ensure food has been increased drastically. Some participants emphasized the fact that unemployment, especially when men are unemployed, affect to a great extent the reduction of HH incomes.
- There are cases when children abandon school because they are employed occasionally as ambulant trader, or car wash etc.
- As the main source of income, participants identified the employment of men in agriculture and construction sectors, trade, and women in tailoring, shoes factory, administration, and education and health sectors. These resources have been reduced due to the increase of unemployment ratio in the past two years. In general, from 5000 households in the area, every household has a relative emigrating mainly in Greece and Italy, but in these three years they remittances have fallen considerably.
- Most of respondents said that when revenues are insufficient for an emergency situation in food security, they borrow money from relatives or friends, may sell livestock, increase working time, work temporarily informally, and pending by remittances, which have fallen due to unemployment in European countries or family reunions because of the global crisis.
- Flooding in some areas of Shkodra did not affect the increase of food prices directly, as the supply of these areas with food products is done not by local markets, but state aid, which has been distributed unfairly and in some cases abusively.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF FGD PARTICIPANTS

1. Encouraging investments to develop the agriculture sector primarily, in opening of several greenhouses, as well as tourism development, since the area has two large castles with historic values as attraction for tourists.
2. Participants suggested the opening of new employment sectors and improvement of road infrastructure as an opportunity for improving life standards in the area.

MAIN FINDINGS OF IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS (IND)

- Rural local market consists of several shops, which are assessed to be sufficiently filled with food commodities, received from the wholesale market of the city. The situation of these markets is considered in good quantity and quality.
- Rural area lands are considered not productive, at a time when the market is full of imported products and the price of domestic products has been decreased. HH plant mainly wheat, corn and any vegetables, to ensure basic food.
- The main reasons for lack of food, is due to limited revenues, the increase of prices, weather, and difficulties in transport.
- Increased prices in disproportion of revenues have led HH to change their spending priorities, giving priority to pasta, bread, oil, sugar and cut costs for fruits, meat, fish etc. I it reducing the consumption of fruits for children.
- It is noticed some progress in mentality of the community towards the differentiation of food portions (closeness of the city) where the priority is feeding the children (There continues to prevail the idea that man should eat better).
- It is assessed difficulty in obtaining credit, which is estimated challenging due to guarantees / collateral criteria (Unemployment, lack of ownership, legalization, etc.)
- Some other measures to guaranty food security are: increasing the working hours, work temporarily as a second job, even in informal sector (increasing the trend of informal employment) and above all emigration.
- There are some HH coming from remote mountainous areas that have invested for the construction of houses, but nowadays have difficulties in providing food, as there have no land.

Flooding:

- There was an abuse on food prices of the early days of flooding, maybe due to the alarm of the natural disaster, but this period did not last long. After a 10 day period, prices stabilized and came to approximate the level of local markets in other areas. It has been increased significantly only the price of forage and dry grass.
- On the other hand, there is no HH that has guarantee basic food for

livestock, as it has severely damaged the forages due to flooding. Flooding has had indirect effect on food, as it has impeded/postponed the process of planting vegetables, has offset production in greenhouses. All this has a high cost, and affect the normal supply of livestock food products reducing considerably the quality of life, as many of HH nutrition depend on their own dairy products.

- Other damages: the composition of soil led to animal deaths / reduction of animal nutrition / damage to houses and personal property.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF IND PARTICIPANTS

1. Increase interest of villagers, especially of young active labour forces, to cultivate more their agricultural land and to deal more with livestock breeding, which will affect directly the market for improving domestic food provision throughout the community.
2. Increase opportunities for finding chemical fertilizer at reasonable price.
3. It is worth enriching the local market with qualitative food products and of different varieties. For this it is suggested the establishment of greenhouses (Dobraç)

Flooding:

4. To avoid as much as possible the water collection in the catchment plants at the point that they are massively pull out and cause flooding, which endanger continuously community members' lives, so as better manage this great resources of water.
5. Impede the interference of construction companies in the river shores, as they are damaging every day their normality, while since many years there was no maintenance and reconstruction work.
6. There should be strengthen the embankment of Kiri, as its consequences would be too large for Kuci and Kir river where there are large quantities of water several times during the year.
7. It is needed appropriate and timely investments. It is required more information about the warning system and communication on potential risks on flooding.

Report Summary of Malesia e Madhe Districts

Objectives:

- Gathering experiences and opinions from the community about the lifestyle, especially food security
- The impact of food prices and economic crisis in food security
- Gender roles in children’s nutrition and food security
- Suggestions / Recommendations regarding their solution, etc..

METHODOLOGY

Based on the study methodology, in Malesia e Madhe locality were selected two areas to be surveyed: 1) sub-urban area - Koplik and 2) rural area - Grizhe village. In each of these two zones, there were held 2 focus groups discussions (FGD) with members of the community gender disaggregated (one with women and one with men) so as 4 FGD in total 4. In addition there were held 4 In-depth interviews (IND)for teach zone (total 8).

Zones (Sub-Urban/Rural)	Activity	Date
1. Koplik 2. Grizhe	Focus Groups (4) In- Depth Interviews (8)	15 January 2011, 14.00 – 15.30 17 January 2011, 14.00 – 15.30
<p>FGD: Participants were selected to better represent their community, based on the methodology, as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>cross-section by occupation</i> (farmers, workers, housewife, teachers, nurse, shop keeper, local administration official, public development agencies (BESA Foundation, MADA) - <i>Socio-economic group</i> or livelihood for each respective location (employed; self-employed; self-employed in agriculture; unemployed; social assistance beneficiaries; pensioners). <p>Below there are some of the characteristics of Has FGD participants.</p>		<p>IDN: Participants were selected in order to be representatives of their respective community, as the following community members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - agricultural extension workers; local elected authorities; financial experts (bankers or financial counselors); public development agencies; health care providers; women's group leaders / local NGOs; head masters/ teachers; kindergarten; Agriculture inputs retailer/ food commodity shop keeper.

Zones (Sub-Urban/Rural)	Activity	Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of participants: 27 • Civil Status: 100% are married • Average Age of both men and women: 47 years old • On average households have 4 children (from 2 to 6), so as their households size on average is composed 6 members. • Education level of participants in total: 22% elementary education and 15% secondary education, 26% higher education, 37% university education. From a gender perspective, there are more women educated than men. • As per Sectors of employment - Men are composed: $\frac{3}{4}$ private enterprise $\frac{1}{4}$ administration; Women: $\frac{1}{2}$ unemployed and $\frac{1}{2}$ private enterprise, administration 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of interviewers: 8; • Civil Status: All are married; • Average Age: 42 years old; • According to the employment sectors: local administration (health, education), agriculture (5) / entrepreneur (3)

MAIN FINDINGS OF FOCUS GROUP

- “Differentiation of nutrition” – Men have more advantages, especially if they work all day. Children also have more advantages..
- Decision process in the family: In the majority of families, women claimed that the husband makes decisions about the purchases in general, but in some families where the husbands are engaged with their work all day, then it is up to women to make the purchases and to take decisions about daily food consumption.
- It is no longer preferred to consume veal, beef, pork and in special occasions it is consumed local or cheaper imported chicken. Only fruits from the garden or from the local green market are consumed and the garden vegetables during sommer season.
- Despite the government’s social policies, some of the basket commodity prices are increased. It is even abused with the weight of some goods like bread, rice, sugar, etc. because also the control from the Structures od Metrology is weak and rare.
- Considering winter difficulties, the participants stated that they preserve some of the vegetables dry or frozen in the cellar, like beans, floor sacks, fats (butter), cottage cheese, pickles and dry meat.

- The participants identified winter as the most difficult season of the year because of the high unemployment rate at this period, nature's difficulties, snow and the cold weather that stops growth of agricultural products and seasonal works like construction. The nutrition quality lowers. More pasta, beans and potatoes are consumed.
- Reduction of domestic agricultural products during the winter season and the increase of imported food commodities has led to the increase of product prices and the reduction of municipality purchasing power.
- Also, some participants complained because they were unable to plant vegetables in their own land due to the lack of water for irrigation. People prefer to solve the water problem on their own by digging water wells without guarantee for the purity of water. Sometimes there have been cases of water pollution due to different interferences in the water system. For cooking is often used electrical energy and wood, and very rarely gas.
- Food is provided more from the own garden products than by buying in the local or city green market.
- The participants claimed that, food security, as far as needed, presents difficulties because of the lack of necessary incomes to provide sufficient food and to face the doubling prices of main goods.
- Revenues in general have not changed or been reduced due to the unemployment and the not good political situation of the country

MAIN FINDINGS OF IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

- About 2 / 3 of disposable income is spent on food. This happens due to increased costs of agricultural and farming products, namely the increased price of agricultural seeds, doubled price of imported grain, taxes, excise, cattle food, etc., which as a consequence have increased their own price in the local market and reduced the purchasing power.
- Sources of income are out of the work in public administration (municipal, education and health structures), informality sector for men, while women usually work in agriculture and farming for domestic consumption. They have more access in agriculture, farming, merchandising and less in administration, health and education structures than men. In the municipal, commune or district administration, men prevail, especially in the leading roles.
- Regarding the private sector, the participants said that the majority of residents in Koplik are self-employed, especially men, mainly

in construction, trade, and seasonal works in the informal sector. Specifically they claimed that there are certain enterprises like wine fabric 'Friendship' Cantina, Medicinal Plant Factory, three butcheries, etc., whose products have penetrated not only local and balkan regional market, but also in other countries of Europe, for example medicinal plants are being traded also in France, Italy, etc..

- The first food products which they would resign are meat, fruits, pasta, rice, etc, and they would consume then more garden and farming products and also not qualitative goods bought from the local market.
- Basic essential foods which would be bought at any price are flour, oil, sugar, bean , patatoo, etc.
- Internal road communication is in a very bad condition and the streets are very damaged and have no asphalt covering. The network of sewage canals is absent in many parts of the surrounding villages.
- It is often abused with the lists of economic assistance. Many emigrants and people not in real need have benefited from it as part of vulnerable groups of the community.
- In the area there are families which have no income and survive not from the state aid but from help from relatives and friends of their area.
- Prices have increased significantly in some imported foods during the crisis period 2008- 2010.
- These prices have been rising also because of high unemployment, declining of the remittances, etc.
- In addition, participants highlighted the fact of increases in the cost of planting and harvesting agricultural products, due to the increase of the price of oil at 160 AL / liter, agricultural seed at 6000 AL and the payment for a combine harvester for harvesting of wheat in 20 000 AL / ha of land, etc..
- Interest rates to obtain loans have already become unaffordable and there is a lack of confidence in the potential future investments.
- When the revenues are insufficient to face the rising prices due to the crisis, most of the participants expressed that they will look for more work at the informal market so that they can benefit more income, they can work long hours and three shifts, work more on planting their agricultural land and sell their garden and farming products in the local market.
- In the villages surrounding Koplík, in order to survive, villagers are often forced to take their children away from school so that they can

work in occasional works like ambulants, clubs, car wash, or take care of the livestock

- Emigration remains the only hope, but in a phase of the economic crisis, when men come back from emigration countries like England, Switzerland, Greece, Italy, Belgium, etc., then it is not longer an option.
- A proper and a fast way to solve family problems is also taking debts from relatives or friends.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF FGD PARTICIPANTS

1. To improve food security in the community, the participants claimed that it is necessary to invest more in agriculture as the cost of agricultural products is high. Also, they demanded that the fees of agricultural and farming products to be lower, so that the local product evolves.
2. Employment is seen as one of the options to provide more income. They proposed increasing domestic and foreign investment, creating new jobs, mainly in agriculture, vineyards, greenhouses, olive production.
3. Participants suggested the necessity of improving the roads as an opportunity for improving lifestyle in this region.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF IND PARTICIPANTS

4. Also, participants noted the fact that the local market is monopolized by Malesia e madhe – the request of custom officers to obtain a license and earn the right to exercise commercial activity with Montenegro, does not apply equally to all traders. This thing favors the monopoly of the market by a few merchants from Malesia e madhe. The participants said that their economic resources are reduced due to monopolisation of the local market from Malesia e madhe as well as due to the economic crisis (the fall of demand/ market purchasing power).

Report Summary of Puka District

Objectives:

- Collecting community experiences and opinions about different lifestyles, especially on nutrition, and households food security ;
- The impacts of food prices and economic crisis in food security for the household;
- Gender roles in children’s nutrition and food security;
- Suggestions / recommendations regarding food security and relevant sustainable solutions, etc.

METHODOLOGY

Based on the study methodology, in Puka locality there were selected two zones to be surveyed: 1) sub-urban area - Lagja e Re and 2) rural area - Luf village. In each of these two zones, there were held 2 focus groups discussions (FGD) with members of the community gender disaggregated (one with women and one with me) so as 4 FGD in total 4; In addition there were held 4 In-depth interviews (IND)for teach zone (total 8).

Food/Food Classification	Increased	Decreased	Unchanged	Total interviewer	Report perceive increased
1. Fruits	205	0	12	217	0.9
2. Vegetables:	207	3	6	216	1.0
3. Eggs	176	0	33	209	0.8
4. Milk	176	0	41	217	0.8
5. Dairy (cheese, Yogurt, butter)	187	1	19	207	0.9
6. Pasta	211	1	4	216	1.0
7. Meet	216	0	0	216	1.0
8. Fish	215	0	1	216	1.0
9. Chicken	202	0	13	215	0.9
10. Beans	138	3	70	211	0.7
11. Pickles	131	5	77	213	0.6
12. Bread	177	0	39	216	0.8
13. Oil and fats	215	0	2	217	1.0

MAIN FINDINGS OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS (FGD)

- Decision-making in HH - in most cases spouses decide together for the general food expenses, while for daily expenses women are mostly engaged in budget management, but there also traditional families where the men decide on everything, food included.
- Majority of HH consumes three meals per day and the main meal is lunch, with the exception of men who work far from home, and eat both lunch and dinner in a common meal. In winter, almost every day women cook beans, potatoes, and rice.
- All HH members are feed almost equally, but men have more advantages, especially in cases where they are at work all day and for them it is stored a larger quantity of food. However, in the absence of qualitative food, priority is given to pregnant women and small children.
- The market is abundant, but price increase of food products has made the purchase of food unaffordable. Therefore, most of the HH have lowered the costs for other products. The price rise has come as a result of the economic crisis, due to lack of investment in agriculture and farming, and purchases of imported goods with higher prices than those produced in the country.
- Increased prices have led to the circumstances that about $\frac{3}{4}$ of HH revenues are allocated to buy food. Sufficient food security is a problem mostly for HH with unemployed members and without any additional income. Securing food daily, according to participants, is based in part on household agriculture products such as, vegetables, fruits and dairy products, and additional purchases in the local market of the town with remittances as a support income from migration.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF FGD PARTICIPANTS

- In this area there are many mineral resources like copper, zinc, lead, asbestos, etc., which can be processed as raw materials, so investing for

new manufacture factories could open employment opportunities.

- There should be invested for the maintenance of roads, as they are damaged manly from the snow; start making operational Kukes – Rreshen road.
- There should be invested in the development of mountain tourism, to give some comparative advantages to the city life and provide new sources of income.
- Opening of an Inn in Fushe Arrez and Puka, as tourist spots which provide many attractions and environmental values for tourist of organic food and natural beauty.
- The government should apply different and favorable policies for electricity and potable water as per community members' income level.
- There must be implemented sustainable economic policies and fiscal incentives, reducing taxes for small and medium businesses, mostly dealing with agricultural products and farming, to support development and promote domestic product.
- Provide support to handicrafts enterprises.

MAIN FINDINGS OF IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS (IND)

- Increased prices has come as a result also due to lack of domestic production; in addition to the dry seasons during 2008-2009; the high prices of seeds; lack of investment and employment, as many young people from these areas are in emigrating.
- Maize as a basic source for food security is imported from Kosovo, because there are missing promotional and favorable fiscal policies to be implemented for encouraging production of maize of the own areas.
- Income sources of these areas depends on self-employment, employment in public administration, employment in service sector and various enterprises, such as shoes factory, construction sector, seasonal employment in informal sector. Remittances remain the main sources of income, but there is a considerable reduction these

years because of the economic crises in EU countries. Part of the incomes is obtained from sale of livestock products.

- The employment in the communes relies heavily on employment in health and education sector (public), road maintenance, forest service, etc.
- Due to lack of income and high level of unemployment has forced the HH members to work all of them including children, who are engaged in different works in the countryside such as agriculture and farming, carwashes, ambulant traders and therefore abandon school.
- Most necessary food items they would buy at any price is: the flour, bread, oil, sugar, beans, cottage cheese, etc.
- In most families with little income, it is significantly reduced consumption of meat, fruit, rice etc and has increased consumption for pasta, potatoes, onions, tomatoes and garden vegetables and additional food products that are the cheapest in the market.
- In Luf it was stated that community members do not feel any major changes in their living standard or change of diet in recent years, since they are feed mainly with homemade products, according to the seasons.
- Reduced consumption of food in parts has exacerbated the quality of nutrition for children and all family members.
- The most difficult period of food security remains the winter due to very low temperatures, frosts, traffic blocking on the road, difficulty in accesing food, blackouts, lack of seasonal works in the construction sector, and especially at the end of winter season, when food reserves finish and no additional income can support the food security, except those HH who receive some remittances from emigrants abroad.
- The effects of the economic crisis has increased the informality as the only possibility to find a temporary job, with additional working hours, sold out of HH garden vegetables, sold out livestock's products, encourage emigration, reduce family food consumption, diminish food ratio and reserving food for most difficult days. The state is perceived as corrupted and the public funds and national assets are perceived as badly managed.
- Overall, people have lost hopes in the state policies to improve their life, due to corrupted politicians and political crises which might affect also the foreign investors.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF IND PARTICIPANTS

- Decrease wireless and mobile communication service fees that are too high for their costs, but from the other side mobile telecommunication is indispensable for communication in this areas, especially for Puka, which is totally isolated during the winter.
- Community members seek more tranquility, stability, fight against corruption, and increase the confidence level of foreign investor towards the country.
- Organization and management of legal temporary emigration, in the conditions of inability to increase investment in these areas.
- Subsidizing local initiatives in agricultural and livestock development.
- Creation of dormer and stalls for cattle.
- Establish vocational training for youth especially in rural areas.
- Increase economic assistance and its fairly transparent distribution to the vulnerable groups.
- Strengthening the control/monitoring of the state to the quantity / weight of packed food products, eliminating speculation etc.

Report Summary of Tropoja District

Objectives:

- Collecting community experiences and opinions about different lifestyles, especially on nutrition, and households food security ;
- The impacts of food prices and economic crisis in food security for the household;
- Gender roles in children’s nutrition and food security;
- Suggestions / recommendations regarding food security and relevant sustainable solutions, etc.

METHODOLOGY

Based on the study methodology, in Tropoja locality there were selected two zones to be surveyed: 1) sub-urban area – Bajram Curri and 2) rural area - Margegaj village. In each of these two zones, there were held 2 focus groups discussions (FGD) with members of the community gender disaggregated (one with women and one with men) so as 4 FGD in total; In addition there were held 4 In-depth interviews (IND) for each zone (total 8).

Zones (Sub-Urban/Rural)	Activity	Date
1. Bajram Curri 2. Margegaj	Focus Groups (4) In- Depth Interviews (8)	20 Janar 2011, 14.00 – 15.30 21 Janar 2011, 14.00 – 15.30
<p>FGD: Participants were selected to better represent their community, based on the methodology, as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>cross-section by occupation</i> (farmers, workers, housewife, teachers, nurse, shop keeper, local administration official, public development agencies (BESA Foundation, MADA) - <i>Socio-economic group</i> or livelihood for each respective location (employed; self-employed; self-employed in agriculture; unemployed; social assistance beneficiaries; pensioners). <p>Below there are some of the characteristics of Tropoja FGD participants</p>		<p>IDN: Participants were selected in order to be representatives of their respective community, as the following community members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - agricultural extension workers; local elected authorities; financial experts (bankers or financial counselors); public development agencies; health care providers; women's group leaders / local NGOs; head masters/ teachers; kindergarten; Agriculture inputs retailer/ food commodity shop keeper.

Zones (Sub-Urban/Rural)	Activity	Date
1.Bajram curri 2.Margegaj	Focus Groups (4) In- Depth Interviews (8)	20 Janar 2011, 14.00 – 15.30 21 Janar 2011, 14.00 – 15.30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of participants : 35 • Civil Status: 95 % are married • Average Age of both men and women: 42 years old • On average households have 3 children (from 1 to 6), so as their households size on average is composed 5 members. • Education level of participants in total: 32% secondary education, 57% higher education, 11% university. From a gender perspective, there are more man educated to secondary education than men, but there are no women with higher education level. . • As per Sectors of employment Men are composed : 50% specialists (agronomist , plumber, electricist), Women: 40% engaged in the servile center; 10% entrepreneurs 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of interviewers: 8; • Civil Status: All are married ; • Average Age: 43 years old; • According to Employment Sector : 3 ekonomists / 2 entrepreneurs / 1 agronom ist/ 1 administrativ asistent /translator/ 1 zoo veterinarian

MAIN FINDINGS OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS (FGD)

- Decision making; food security and other expenses belong to the man, however, in the suburban area, the woman can decide too based on the contribution that she has in providing the family income
- If will be a lack in quantity of food, there will be differences for children and women who will be most favored. Then come the boys and finally men. Men who have jobs and severe physical fatigue will also have differences..
- The late spring is mentioned as the most difficult period in food security because this is the period that food stocks(reserves) are almost finished
- Diet varies according to seasons, where in general, in winter the diet base are beans, dried meat, potatoes, and this diet is continued even during the spring. In other seasons this diet varies depending on the season and its food .
- Ways to provide indispensable food are different, like borrowing money from friends and relatives, in some cases even from banks, immigration, self-employment in agriculture, livestock farming, handicrafts, seasonal employment, etc.

- The effects of price increases are mainly noted in reducing the consumption of food items that have been previously used and replace them with cheaper items. Costs for clothing or household furnishings are also reduced. The main advantage remains and will remain the bread for many decades, then come beans, meat, rice etc... reducing the use of sweets and luxury items
- Employment relies on immigration, self-employment, employment in the public sector and private sector
- Mentality. It is often discussed about food, but not so much because it is a mentality issue (it is an insult to complain of basic foods, as they may be considered “unable “to provide family meals), on the contrary, many of them say they have more income than in reality.
- Provide sufficient settlers for food is a problem which relates to the source of income. These sources are the same ones that have been before the 3-years: farming and emigration, thus, those families who have not as a basis, incomes from the public sector have not felt many changes.
- The overall state is that there is not lack of food in the market, but financial difficulties in providing them.
- Quality of food products used in households, has drop down due to increased price of quality products.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF FGD PARTICIPANTS

1. Having natural resources, what is needed is the political will to solve the food security
2. Self-employment by implementing strategies for sustainable food security
3. The employment of unemployed women in the agricultural sector in tourism or handicrafts processing sectors
4. The sale of livestock to cope with the effect of rising prices, and sales of surplus fruits and vegetables in suburban areas
5. Adding activities and hours of labor.
6. Obtaining loans for tackling the crisis.
7. Saving food and buying food with less quality but cheaper prices.
8. Immigration is seen as an opportunity for tackling the crisis.

MAIN FINDINGS OF IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS (IND)

- Groups in need are precisely those that are handled with family assistance, unemployed, disabled, elderly and those who do not have properties and families where there are no males.
- There are state organizations that must deal with these families, but it is thought that the funds are wasted by local and central government. Also there is a government fund to support agriculture and livestock and non-governmental organizations and associations in the form of materialized and the district structures of DBUMK
- Monitoring systems are made by DBUMK in the district, but almost does not exist and is not monitored, because of lacking sufficient information.
- The price rise is the main problem in food security, which has come from the global crisis and global warming, therefore, the purchasing power is reduced while in the market the products are not lacking
- The man is the one who decides on the costs in households while women are the ones that mainly deal with very small expense.
- Immigration, agriculture, livestock, public sector employment and tourism handicrafts are the main sources of income and food.
- There have been positive developments in agriculture, especially in fruit growing by the Albanian government through incentive and supporting schemes for a sustainable development and long term
- There is no clear scheme for the local market, but while this market operates in a non-sustainable way. Prices are high and the purchasing power is low.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF IND PARTICIPANTS

1. There must be cooperation between local and central government and through private sector and community.
2. The financing of domestic production should be strengthened and customs policy should protect domestic production.

Report Summary of Kukes District

Objectives:

- Collecting community experiences and opinions about different lifestyles, especially on nutrition, and households food security ;
- The impacts of food prices and economic crisis in food security for the household;
- Gender roles in children’s nutrition and food security;
- Suggestions / recommendations regarding food security and relevant sustainable solutions, etc.

METHODOLOGY

Based on the study methodology, in Kukes locality there were selected two zones to be surveyed: 1) sub-urban area - SU and 2) rural area - Shtiqen village. In each of these two zones, there were held 2 focus groups discussions (FGD) with members of the community gender disaggregated (one with women and one with me) so as 4 FGD in total 4; In addition there were held 4 In-depth interviews (IND)for teach zone (total 8).

MAIN FINDINGS OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS (FGD)

- Decision-making: there can be observed shared responsibility on the budget. Generally is decided together for costs in terms of food security but in some cases there are women who decided. For other expenses like meet, men are the one who decide.
- “Differentiation” in food is not present. All fed equally despite of their status unless they have a lack of food or because of preferences, physical and health needs that a family member may have. In these cases is adopted the type of food consumed.
- Food security is done in two ways: by direct purchase and in some cases with a list from local market. Indispensable food security is supported by close family connection, where the people help each other when they are in difficulties. Enough problems to ensure food are not from inability of the offer but the lack of demand. This area lacks agricultural products and livestock due to organizational sub-urban infrastructure.
- Periods of food security are related mainly to the possibility of their

employment. Winter and spring are the most vulnerable due to unemployment and high prices of products on the market

- Food diets are adopted on the basis of possibilities of each family. Diets are reduced, in providing vital basic foods, where the bread takes first place and then traditional foods and animal products as yogurt, butter milk, pickles, etc.. Also, diet changes and varies according to seasons
- Households consume all three meals, though not on a regular basis. Dinner remains the main meal for the whole family members are at home.
- Provision of income comes from employment in public administration, service sector, remittances from emigration, seasonal informal work, etc. in black. food security achieved through products (beans, wheat, corn, vegetables) that they receive from family gardens
- Prices have risen in recent years due to global crisis, lack of domestic production, as well as in the case of some products which come from area of Shkodra. Consumption of products out of season has reduced because of their high price. Increase in unemployment has contributed to the reduction of expenses and the decline of remittances. However, about 10-15% of families does not recognize the crisis and have no problems with food and other expenses.
- Employment relies on immigration, employment in the public and private sector, as well as seasonal work. Employment remains a problem and trend deterioration in the last year. Lacks regular employment, supported from private businesses.
- it is often discussed about food. The discussions are related to rising prices, the impossibility, and insufficient food for their families and to provide food for livestock. Women usually go to market themselves and verify the prices and obtain information which share with other women or the family.
- The area lacks agricultural products and livestock due to organizational sub-urban infrastructure
- Factories, workshops, tailoring etc. are totally absent.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF FGD PARTICIPANTS

1. Increasing employment of women as a stabilizing factor within the family would be very positive for improving the economic status of families.
2. Policies of professional education of young people, regular or seasonal employment as the sustainable food security.
3. The combination of efforts between state authorities and private business would make possible the opening of new jobs and greater economic opportunities for food in quantity and quality and improvement in standard of living.
4. development and agricultural livestock, merging farmers initiatives
5. Subsidizing local initiatives.
6. Support to small craft enterprises manufacturing
7. Tax mitigation policies
8. Increase economic assistance from municipality to families in need
9. Application of regular migration for young people.

MAIN FINDINGS OF IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS (IND)

- Vulnerable groups are single parent families, with many children, with no family members working or disabled, families who have owned land and labor shortage, the group of families receiving social assistance, families which consist from parents without a profession and more risk illiterate.
- Increasing prices and their lack of products on the market are not accompanied by financial supportive policies for families in need. This increase is accompanied by adoption of diet for most families. Also it is accompanied with a high number of we used clothing buyers.
Expenses in the family are decided together, but for daily expenses for food, women decide because are considered as best managers in saving and budgeting.
- The main sources of income are mainly migration, seasonal work of men, increased working hours. a part of households to save more difficult time but prolonged crisis, the continuing lack of income, unemployment, have obstacles to drastically cut the ability of households to save. Also a part of them sell livestock to ensure food for

the family and the remaining livestock.

- Farming and agriculture provide a good part of the food consumed
- Services and retail and wholesale trade employ the largest number of people. Kukes in general is the only circuit so far where the largest employer is the state public sector. There are very few workshops or handicraft and fishing sector is not organized. there have been reductions in the number of employees in them
- Local market provides ample amounts of food, while the quality cannot say the same thing. Lack of control constitutes a disadvantage. Local market prices are higher than that of city.
- Support service does not affect agricultural and does not serve our community as there is no developed agriculture
- The municipality hired a large number of members of families regarded as in need and difficulties of providing basic needs by giving them full page public services that they charge.

Some farmers and stockbreeders have benefited from the programs of the ministry of livestock development, agricultural and orchards

- Are noticed organisms like SNV, MADA, department of agriculture and livestock, World Bank forest programs, Shtiçen municipality with investments in irrigation, UNDP etc..

RECOMMENDATIONS OF IND PARTICIPANTS

- For quality is needed immediate intervention from authorities which are responsible since many products are marketed outside the standard and not good hygienic conditions.
- Market should also provide local products to help producers and lower the price.

Report Summary of Has District

Objectives:

- Collecting community experiences and opinions about different lifestyles, especially on nutrition, and households food security ;
- The impacts of food prices and economic crisis in food security for the household;
- Gender roles in children’s nutrition and food security;
- Suggestions / recommendations regarding food security and relevant sustainable solutions, etc.

METHODOLOGY

Based on the study methodology, in Has locality there were selected two zones to be surveyed: 1) sub-urban area - Krume and 2) rural area - Gjinaj village. In each of these two zones, there were held 2 focus groups discussions (FGD) with members of the community gender disaggregated (one with women and one with me) so as 4 FGD in total 4; In addition there were held 4 In-depth interviews (IND)for teach zone (total 8).

Zones (Sub-Urban/Rural)	Activity	Date
1. Krume 2. Gjinaj	Focus Groups (4) In- Depth Interviews (8)	17 January 2011, 14.00 – 15.30 17 January 2011, 14.00 – 15.30
<p>FGD: Participants were selected to better represent their community, based ont the methodology, as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>cross-section by occupation</i> (farmers, workers, housewife, teachers, nurse, shop keeper, local administration official, public development agencies (BESA Foundation, MADA) - <i>Socio-economic group</i> or livelihood for each respective location (employed; self-employed; self-employed in agriculture; unemployed; social assistance beneficiaries; pensioners). <p>Below there are some of the characteristics of Has FGD participants.</p>		<p>IND: Participants were selected in order to be representatives of their respective community, as the following community members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - agricultural extension workers; local elected authorities; financial experts (bankers or financial counselors); public development agencies; health care providers; women's group leaders / local NGOs; head masters/ teachers; kindergarten; Agriculture inputs retailer/ food commodity shop keeper.

Zones (Sub-Urban/Rural)	Activity	Date
1. Krume 2. Gjinaj	Focus Groups (4) In- Depth Interviews (8)	17 January 2011, 14.00 – 15.30 17 January 2011, 14.00 – 15.30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of participants: 39 • Civil Status: 80% are married • Average Age of both men and women: 39 years old • On average households have 3 children (from 1 to 6), so as their households size on average is composed 5 members. • Education level of participants in total: 49% elementary education and 44% secondary education, 3% higher education. From a gender perspective, there are more women educated to secondary education than men, but there are no women with higher education level. • As per Sectors of employment - Men are composed: ¾ farmer ¼ agronomist; Women: handicraft and merchant ambulatory (50% each) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of interviewers: 8; • Civil Status: All are married; • Average Age: 41 years old; • According to Employment Sector: 1 engineer / 2 agronomist / 2 teachers / 3 entrepreneurs

MAIN FINDINGS OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS (FGD)

- In households of this community the decision-making about food security and household budget allocations generally belongs to men, this is more pronounced in rural areas. This decision-making seems to be determined by the access to employment, and managing the household budget. Only for small food daily expenses women might decide in obtaining food.
- Overall, it emerge the idea of having differentiated food ratio for HH members who are working in difficult sectors asking for more physical activity, such as in construction, mining, as well as better food ratio for pregnant women and sick children, however, is not a significant phenomenon the differentiation of food diet (generally they are feed the same).
- Food security varies according to seasons: basic food for winter is made of dry beans with meat for most rural areas, pickle vegetables, and dried fruits, while in summer is difficult to use meat as families do not consume enough in order to keep livestock for sell, as a source of income for food and basic needs when needed in difficult food shortages periods.
- The main meal during the day is dinner due to the specific conditions

of the area and specific works in farming and other sectors.

- Although the most difficult period to ensure food remains the winter season, according to the traditions of the area households undertake respective measures early in this season to ensure basic food and overcome difficulties, while *late spring* is the period that face greater difficulties as far as food reserves is finishing, but at the same time there is a drastic increase in prices of main food commodities like vegetables, fruit and therefore there is a drastic drop of the quality of the food diets.
- Farming is the primary source of food security for majority of households and therefore as most of the HH do have livestock and some vegetables in their garden, it is assessed that ensuring basic food is a problem somehow overcome, but the improvement of nutrition standards remain crucial. This is related to access additional revenues provided mainly by a) private sector employment or temporary employment as a secondary job, and b) remittances from relatives in emigration, c) obtaining credit (although in a lower level).
- The effects of rising prices: there are more attempts to reduce spending on food (for urban areas it is changed the food diet structure reducing meat products, then fruit and then sweets, fruit juices, alcoholic beverages; to exploit other markets far from populated areas where the prices of products may have a small difference; selling their cattle to generate income sufficient to meet the crisis of rising prices. Instead, products that will be bought at any price are those basic ones: bread, oil, rice, medicines, etc.)
- Occupation: It is not used enough the young labour force potential in working the agriculture land and livestock breeding, which constitute the basic source of income and food security especially for rural communities - the existence of a conservative mentality (discrimination) impede youth to deal with livestock, instead they seek other jobs in the city.
- Provide adequate food is a problem which relates mostly to the sources of income. These resources which are farming and emigration have not changed during last 3-years in Has district, so as for those HH who ensure their income from the public sector there is not challenge in providing basic food.
- All participants agree that there is no shortage of food in the market, but financial difficulties to purchase them.
- Increased price of quality products lead to a poor quality of food products used by majority of community members.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF FGD PARTICIPANTS

1. Promoting private sector employment (sectoral diversification) provide some more possibility of improving the economic conditions of HH, especially in rural areas.
2. Encouraging the employment of youth in livestock breeding as an important source of meeting food needs in the rural areas.
3. Support through government subsidies or through foreign aid projects the livestock sector, to increase the number of employees in this sector, increase production (number of livestock) in the area, which in turn would increase household incomes and improve the structure of the food nutrition.
4. Encourage concrete involvement of local government units in better management of actual natural resources (in agriculture and farming) to encourage the employment, although this is perceived as closely linked with the political will.
5. Requested more sustainable development projects, such as development and promotion of mountain tourism, winter tourism, exploit potential incentives to encourage mining projects, which are numerous in this district.
6. The main reason for rising prices of food commodities is the world economic crisis in international markets for imported goods; therefore, it is recommended to strengthen public policies to support farmers in this area with long term loans and low interest banking.
7. According to them, women should be included in schemes of support for non-governmental and public subsidizes, encourage their work in the processing of livestock products, the cultivation of medical herbs, processing of pickle as per with market orientation.

MAIN FINDINGS OF IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS (IND)

- The most vulnerable groups are defined those communities members that have few employment opportunities, not liable to migration and inactive labor force, part of those HH who migrated from rural areas to urban centers without any estimation to find a job and ensuring incomes.
- One of the mechanisms to support marginalized groups to access food security is relying on social assistance. For some HH who based on some specific economic and social criteria, has the opportunity

to acquire by the respective municipality an economic aid. However, this aid is not considered sufficient to meet basic food needs, because it is assessed that there is some kind of abuse with this special fund in distribution to target group as designated by the municipal structures.

- No monitoring system to food shortages (excluding some mechanisms of respective regional directories of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection to monitor the food markets formally). Representative of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food provide only formal reports over the situation of market offers and prices.
- The area disadvantage is that the price of basic food products is slightly higher than other urban areas, due to increased transportation costs.
- Agriculture and farming are those which allow food security in the region, some additional incomes from tourism and handicrafts sectors, where women are mostly employed (but much less), and fruit processing. In recent years there is a non-significant improvement.
- Local market is considered very poor and there is little room for improvement, because there is no strategy for the development of this sector. While, in terms of the wholesale markets they do not have the appropriate standards, but for the future this sector should be improved based on some the relevant experts' advice and estimations.
- There are limitations and reductions in the total expenditures of HH, but where there were not shortages in food products as long as the market economy regulates the relations supply - offer.
- It has been reduced the purchasing power in different sectors.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF IND PARTICIPANTS

1. The majority of food products are not produced in the region, but imported by other regions. It is mandatory the implementation of relevant policies that stimulate domestic production (to encourage local farmers).
2. Processing of food or medical herbs in rural zones would represent a profitable opportunity to engage more women as a labour force and tourism and construction sector recently represent a great chance for employment of men, so as food security.
3. The current market needs requires a partnership between local and central government and as co-financing the private sector and community, as all of these actors would have common interests to develop this challenging system.