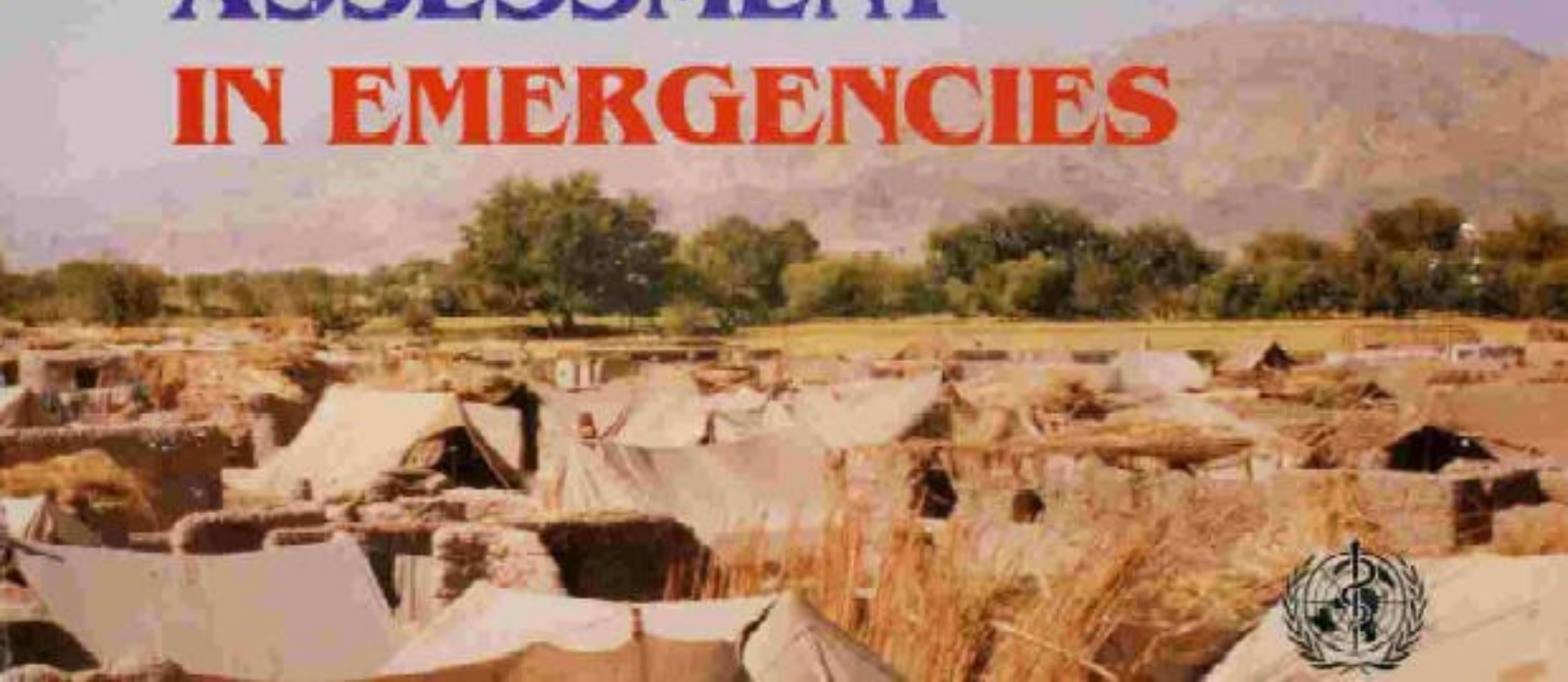


FIELD GUIDE ON RAPID NUTRITIONAL ASSESSMENT IN EMERGENCIES



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Couverture Dessenin et mise en page par Ahmed Hassanein

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Foreword

The Eastern Mediterranean Region has in recent years been affected by many emergencies, both natural and man-made. In almost all emergencies, nutrition is in danger, as people flee their homes, crops are destroyed, communication and transport become difficult, and the social structure of society is altered.

In the efforts to provide relief to those affected by emergencies, there is a need for data on numbers affected by, and on the extent of, a given emergency.

To estimate the need for increased food supplied, the nutritional status of the affected population is important information. Yet, those who are in charge often lack the know-how and expertise to give reliable information.

The WHO/EMRO Consultation on Rapid Nutritional Emergencies, held in Alexandria, Egypt, 19–23 January 1992, was called to develop a set of guidelines for the rapid assessment of nutritional status needed in emergencies, with clear instructions for use in the field, which would be compatible with the revised version of the WHO publication *The Management of Nutritional Emergencies in Large Populations*.

Experts from the Islamic Republic of Iran, Sudan, CDC Atlanta, FAO, UNHCR, UNICEF, SCF (UK) and WHO discussed and agreed on major

problem areas in nutritional assessment such as choice of indicators, sampling requirements, methodology and analysis, use and users of the information. On the basis of this multi-agency collaborative effort, Dr Wolf Keller, WHO Consultant, and Dr Anna Verster, Regional Adviser on Nutrition, Food Security & Safety, wrote this field guide, with the generous assistance of Dr Ray Yip and Dr Kevin Sullivan (CDC Atlanta), Mr Robert Hagan (WHO Somalia) and Ms Rita Bhatia (UNHCR).

It is therefore my pleasure to present this *Field Guide for Rapid Nutritional Assessment in Emergencies*, which will guide the user through the entire process of designing, planning, implementing, and reporting reliable nutritional assessment.

I am sure that the *Field Guide* will be a useful companion for all those faced with disasters in the Eastern Mediterranean Region and outside.

Hussein A. Gezairy, M.D., F.R.C.S.
Regional Director, World Health Organization
Eastern Mediterranean Region

CHAPTER

1

Introduction

This field guide is intended for all those who are faced with the need to make rapid but reliable estimates of nutritional status in emergencies as a basis for subsequent action.

In an emergency, time is often limited and there is a need for immediate information on the severity and extent of nutritional problems.

As a result, data are often hastily collected and are later found to be of little use.

A group of experts from WHO, UNICEF, UNHCR, Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Atlanta, FAO, Save the Children Fund (SCF) UK, and representatives from countries of the Eastern Mediterranean Region met in Alexandria, Egypt, in January 1992, to review the minimum of information on nutritional status needed in an emergency for first decisions on nutritional relief and for its planning, and to develop a field guide for obtaining such information. The resulting set of standardized procedures is presented here. It has been written for use by the various agencies and to allow comparison of results from different surveys.

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