



Abstract / Summary information for the Technical Meeting on Nutrition (TMN)

Subject / Title	Development of a rapid assessment method for older people (RAM-OP) with subsequent applicability to other populations
Level of Relevance	Global
Subject focus area	Research
Sphere of interest	Cross cutting, humanitarian, development, needs assessment, coverage assessment.
Main nutritional focus	Assessment of nutritional status and needs assessment (wasting in terms low muscle mass, dietary diversity, meal frequency, micronutrient intake, program coverage).
TNM thematic area	9 (M&E, global and national systems, innovation, standardisation, and alignment).

Abstract / Summary

Older people are a *neglected* group in humanitarian responses even as their numbers grow as life-expectancy increases in much of the developed and developing world. This neglect is particularly obvious in the nutrition sector where the overwhelming majority of activities target children and women of childbearing age. Older people are vulnerable to malnutrition but their nutritional status and needs are very seldom assessed and almost never addressed. There is a need for a simple, cheap, and rapid tool to assess these needs and to enable humanitarian actors to advocate, plan, and deliver relevant and comprehensive responses.

In January 2014, HelpAge International, Valid International, and Brixton Health funded by the Humanitarian Innovation Fund began developing a novel method for assessing the nutritional and other needs of older people in emergency and development settings. The **Rapid Assessment Method for Older People** (RAM-OP) is intended to offer a simple, rapid, low cost, accurate, and reliable survey method for assessing the nutritional status and vulnerabilities of older people. The method will use a two-stage *spatial sample* with a small first-stage sample and a small (i.e. $n < 200$) overall sample. Modern computer-intensive data-analysis procedures will be used, data-analysis software developed, and guidelines and training material produced.

The focus of the work is on older people but elements of the work will be applicable for assessing the nutritional states, dietary diversity, IYCF practices, and other indicators in other groups.

RAM-OP has been successfully tested in an urban setting (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, February 2014) and will be tested in rural Tanzania in June 2014. Testing involves performing surveys using SMART and RAM-OP methods simultaneously in the same population and comparing the results in terms of resources and results.

RAM-OP will be an innovative tool that contributes to the delivery of impartial, needs-based and effective assistance.