**Session 2.1: Instructions for small group work**

Designate group members to fill the following roles:

**Handouts and Tools for this exercise:**

* Handout 2.1a Problem tree tiers
* Handout 2.1c 2-page problem tree
  + One Chief of Party to make a final decision when the group comes to an impasse.
  + One data gap documenter.
  + Several group members devoted to digging for more evidence in the data set.
  + One graphic guru to capture the problem tree in electronic format.
  + One presenter

Use the preliminary analysis (Tool 1.2a and presentation) carried out during Day 1.

1. **Identify an overarching problem and write a problem statement:**

WHAT: Determine the condition the project is intended to address. (Generally, if the project is responding to a FFP RFA the condition will be FOOD and NUTRITION INSECURITY.

WHO: Identify the population affected by the condition.

WHERE: The area or location of the population.

1. **Prioritize key problems (broad conditions) and draft concise statements.**

Generally, these are the well-being outcomes you stated were most challenged in Module 1, although you may include more key problems, if warranted.

1. **Document underlying causes on sticky notes.**

* Create an inventory of underlying causes on sticky notes, starting with the evidence you organized in Exercise 1.2. Write each cause as a concise statement, making them as specific as possible, e.g., limited access to business development training. If the population most affected by a specific condition is a subset of the population in the overarching problem statement, make it clear in your statement, e.g., limited access to business development training for women and youth.
* To make sure you **include the various types of causes (systemic; knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs; behaviors/practices)** it can be helpful to use a different color sticky note for each type of underlying cause, or make some type of coding on the sticky note. As your problem tree develops, you will start to recognize if you have overlooked any type of cause. Note: not every underlying cause will fit into these three categories. Remember some underlying causes are simply the result of the three types of constraints.
* **Get into the practice of noting the evidence base for each underlying cause on the back of the sticky note (e.g., FGDs or BL survey)** or better yet, simultaneously capture the problem and corresponding evidence in an Excel sheet or other document.This will help proposal writers later on. Try to limit the causes you include to those for which you have evidence. If you don’t yet have an evidence base for an underlying cause, but there is a strong hypothesis and group agreement to include it, use some type of coding to indicate this is still a data gap on the sticky note (different color note, different color text, border, etc.), and note the data gap on your running list.

***A problem tree with strong causal logic is extremely important to proper development of a good TOC. If done well, it will make the rest of the TOC process much easier.***

1. **Begin causal analysis to develop the problem tree**

* Organize causes to demonstrate how they occur sequentially or simultaneously.
  + Start by moving all contextual conditions to the bottom tier of the tree
  + Next, work your way down from the key problems. Ask “what are the key reasons problem X exists?” Keep asking “are there any other reasons?”, until you have identified all causes that can explain **most** of the problem.

**5) Once a causal stream is in place check the causal logic moving downstream and upstream:**

* Move down the stream using statements such as “Condition X exists…….because of Condition Y”. For example, there is a high prevalence of livestock disease because there is limited adoption of improved husbandry practice. There is limited adoption of improved husbandry practices because there is limited access to animal health care supplies (deworming meds; vaccinations, etc. ) and limited knowledge of how to protect livestock health
* Check causal logic moving *up the stream*, e.g., Condition X and Condition Y and Condition Z are the main reasons Condition A exists.
* It may seem redundant to move up and down stream, but you’ll be amazed at the different insights you glean by vetting the logic in both directions.

**6) Periodically check the balance of types of constraints present in your tree** (systemic; knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs; behaviors/practices)

**7) Once the causal logic begins to hold, capture the problem tree in an electronic format.**

* Create a separate page for each key problem. This will set you up for meeting the FFP requirement of having a separate page for each TOC purpose. Be sure to show how the problems link to one another across pages. See Handout 2.1c