

Household Food Security: Concepts, Indicators, Measurements

A Technical Review

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and

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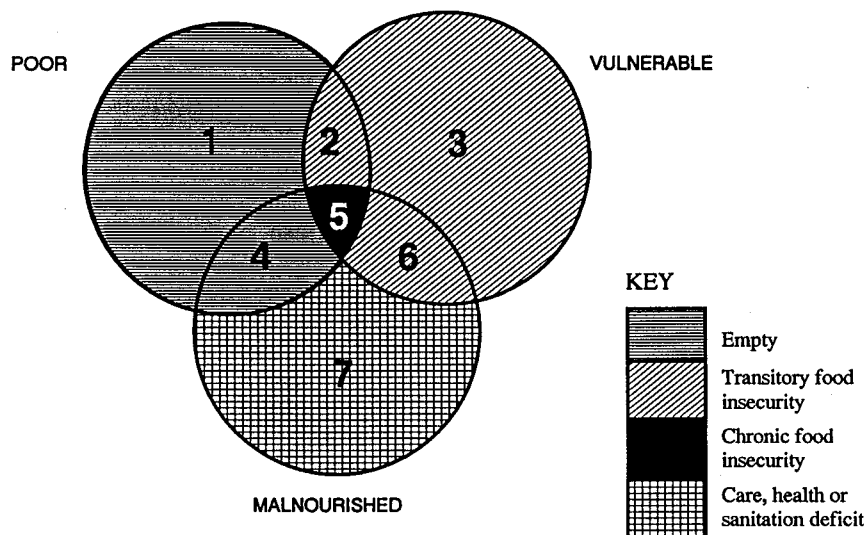
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Household Food Security — Errata

The following corrections should be made to the text:

Page 18: Figure 1.6, replace with the following:



Page 25: Figure 1.7, insert 'Source: UNICEF 1990'.

Page 34: Figure 1.10, replace key with the following:

- ENDURING HOUSEHOLDS: Maintaining Household Food Security (HFS) on a Continuing Basis
- ▲▲▲▲ RESILIENT HOUSEHOLDS: Experience Transitory Food Insecurity but Maintain HFS in the Long Term Perspective
- FRAGILE HOUSEHOLDS: Unable to Maintain HFS in the Short and Long Term Perspective

Page 35: Figure 1.11, delete '(Adapted from Watts, 1988)' and insert 'Source: Bayliss-Smith 1991:7'.

Page 169: Item 109, line 5, delete 'andhealth', insert 'and healthy'; line 6, delete 'food available'.

Page 185: Before item 170, insert 'USAID 1992 - see item 109'.

Preface

IFAD and UNICEF share a number of fundamental principles regarding the goals of and basis for development. Particularly important to both agencies is the necessity to reach the poorest and most vulnerable population groups in ways that respond to their real needs and on their own terms. However, the two agencies operate under different mandates and procedures. IFAD is a financing institution providing loans to developing countries to address rural poverty, while UNICEF is a technical and advocacy oriented agency providing grants to improve the welfare of children and women. There is, nevertheless, great scope for complementarity and synergism in the operations of the two agencies.

To ensure such synergism requires consensus on specific development objectives and their implications for operationalization. The comparative advantage and potential contributions of each agency can then be identified. One area of clear complementarity is the reduction of hunger and malnutrition, or as expressed in the positive: the achievement of sustainable access to adequate food, better dietary intake and improved nutritional status for all. Attainment of this goal requires a common perception of the principle causes of the problems, the concepts involved, and how they can be translated into practical activities and measurable change.

These changes must also be understood and designed within the context of economic development for the affected groups; reduction of poverty is a key to achieving reduction of hunger and malnutrition. The need is thus to understand better the linkages between the processes and measures that can alleviate poverty on the one hand, and specific food access, food intake and nutrition-relevant outcomes of such development efforts on the other. Household food security is a key element in such strategies.

The present document responds to a felt need in UNICEF and IFAD for an overview of the evolution and various uses of the concept of household food security. The concept generally has at least two applications. First, it can be seen as a framework within which to understand the opportunities, practices and constraints of households in attaining access to sufficient and adequate food to satisfy the dietary needs of their members under changing conditions. Secondly, it can be utilized as an explicit objective for development efforts intended to promote the sustained availability and access to adequate food for target groups in question.

The concept of household food security (as distinct from the more generic term of food security) emerged during the 1980s as a potentially useful development objective. It has captured great interest among research institutions, international aid organizations, government agencies and NGOs involved in social and economic development. However, the increasing attention given to household food security and its consequent popularity among funding agencies has not yet resulted in an agreed

conceptual and methodological understanding of the issues involved. Nor has there been agreement on the opportunities that household food security may offer as an explicit objective in current and future development activities. As a result, different individuals and development agencies often perceive the concept and its operationalization in different ways. Confusion about the term has tended to increase, comparison has become difficult, and programmatic implications have often been unclear.

The first two sections of the present publication review the evolution of the household food security concept and its measurement. Sections III and IV present detailed annotated bibliographies on each component to facilitate additional research and reference. The combined total has been prepared to clarify the essential elements of household food security. It is hoped that this review will contribute to increased understanding of the concept as an objective in programming and project design and as a key variable in monitoring change and evaluating outcome.

We thank the two main authors commissioned for this study, Simon Maxwell of The Institute of Development Studies, Sussex, and Timothy Frankenberger, Office of Arid Lands Studies, University of Arizona, as well as their collaborators, for their preparedness to take on this task.

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