

WHAT IS FOOD INSECURITY?

OUTLINE

- Defining Food Security
- Four Dimensions of Food Security
- Two Types of Food Insecurity
- Hunger, Malnutrition and Poverty
- Household Food Security

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Use correctly food security relevant terminology
- See the difference between various dimensions of food insecurity

DEFINING FOOD SECURITY

“Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”

(World Food Summit, 1996)

DEFINING FOOD SECURITY

“FAO’s vision of a world without hunger is one in which most people are able, by themselves, to obtain the food they need for an active and healthy life, and where social safety nets ensure that those who lack resources still get enough to eat.”

(FAO, 2007)

FOUR DIMENSIONS OF FOOD SECURITY



AVAILABILITY



ACCESS



UTILIZATION



STABILITY

FOUR DIMENSIONS OF FOOD SECURITY

Availability

- Refers to the physical availability of food
- Addresses the supply side of food security
- Is determined by the level of food production, stock levels and net trade
- is given when domestic production, food imports, or aid guarantees citizens “sufficient quantities of appropriate, necessary types of food [...] within reasonable proximity to them.” (USAID, 1992)

FOUR DIMENSIONS OF FOOD SECURITY

Access

- Refers to economic and physical access to food
- An adequate supply of food at the national or international level does not in itself guarantee household level food security
- Is given when “individuals have adequate incomes or other resources to purchase or barter to obtain levels of appropriate foods needed to maintain consumption of an adequate diet/nutrition level.” (USAID, 1992)

FOUR DIMENSIONS OF FOOD SECURITY

Utilization

- Refers to the physiological utilization of food.
- Sufficient energy and nutrient intake by individuals is the result of good care and feeding practices, food preparation, diversity of the diet and intra-household distribution of food.
- Combined with good biological utilization of food consumed, utilization determines the nutritional status of individuals.
- Is given when “food is properly used; proper food processing and storage techniques are employed; adequate knowledge of nutrition and child care techniques exists and is applied, and adequate health and sanitation services exist.” (USAID, 1992)

FOUR DIMENSIONS OF FOOD SECURITY

Stability

- Refers to continuous adequate access to food.
- Non-continuous access to food jeopardizes an individual's nutritional health.
- Adverse weather conditions, political instability, or economic factors (unemployment, rising food prices) may have an impact on an individual's food security status.

TWO TYPES OF FOOD INSECURITY



Chronic Food Insecurity



Transitory Food insecurity

Special Case: Seasonal Food Security

TWO TYPES OF FOOD SECURITY

Chronic Food Insecurity

- We talk about chronic food insecurity when food insecurity is observed over a long time period, hence it is persistent in nature.
- It is characterized by people being unable to meet their minimum requirements over a sustained period of time.
- Typically, chronic food insecurity is characterized by extended periods of poverty, in which people lack assets and adequate access to productive or financial resources.

TWO TYPES OF FOOD SECURITY

Overcoming Chronic Food Insecurity

- Chronic food insecurity may be overcome with long term economic, social, and human development through
 - Poverty reduction
 - Equitable social development
 - Investment in health and education
 - Peace and stability

*We will address this topic in more detail in *Module 6: Managing Food Insecurity*

TWO TYPES OF FOOD SECURITY

Transitory Food Insecurity

- We talk about transitory food insecurity when food insecurity is observed over a short time period, hence it is temporary in nature.
- It is characterized by fluctuations in food availability and access.
- Typically, chronic food insecurity is characterized by year-to-year variations in domestic food production, food prices and household income.

TWO TYPES OF FOOD SECURITY

Overcoming Transitory Food Insecurity

- Occurs in relatively unpredictable patterns and therefore requires capacities such as early warning systems and safety net programs.

*We will address this topic in more detail in *Module 6: Managing Food Insecurity*

TWO TYPES OF FOOD SECURITY

Seasonal Food Insecurity

- Falls between chronic and transitory food insecurity.
- Seasonal Food Insecurity is
 - Predictable: follows a sequence of known events.
 - Limited in duration.
 - Follows a cyclical pattern.

TWO TYPES OF FOOD SECURITY

Seasonal Food Insecurity and Climate Change

- Agriculture, forestry and fisheries produce the food people eat;
- These sectors also provide the primary source of livelihood for 30-40% of the world's total workforce.
- Agriculture, forestry and fisheries are all sensitive to climate.
- A two-edged sword: impacts are expected to be positive in temperate and negative in tropical regions.
- Nevertheless: Climate change increases seasonal uncertainties, especially in already poorer regions of the world.

*We will address this topic in more detail in *Module 6: Managing Food Insecurity*

HUNGER, MALNUTRITION, POVERTY



Hunger

“An uncomfortable or painful sensation caused by insufficient food energy consumption.” (FAO, 2008)

Food deprivation



Malnutrition

“Results from deficiencies, excesses or imbalances in the consumption of macro- and/or micronutrients.” (FAO, 2008)

Results from food insecurity and non-food factors like diseases



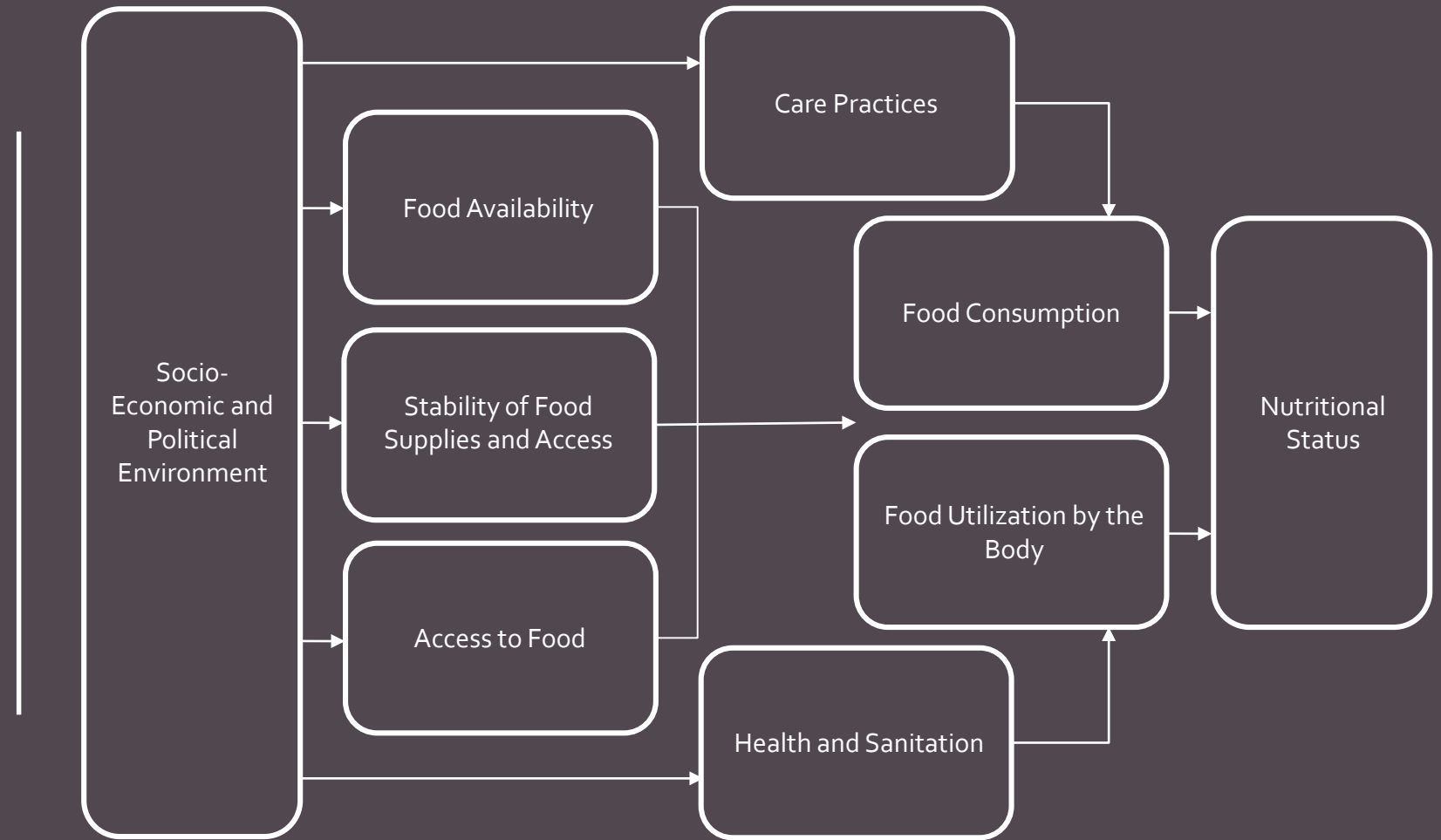
Poverty

“Poverty encompasses different dimensions of deprivation that relate to human capabilities including consumption and food security, health, education, rights, voice, security, dignity and decent work.” (FAO, 2008)

HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY

- Whether we talk about food insecure individuals, households, or nations, the terminology remains the same.
- “Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.” (FAO, 2008)
- If availability, access, utilization, and stability of/to food are not given, an individual/ household/ nation is considered to be food insecure.
- We differentiate between chronic and acute (transitory) food security:
 - Chronic: persisting for a long time or constantly recurring.
 - Acute (transitory): present or experienced to a severe or intense degree.

SUMMARY



SUMMARY

In this Module we learned about

- The four dimensions of Food Security
- The two types of Food Insecurity
- The Special Case of Seasonal Food Insecurity

We also learned how to differentiate

- Hunger
- Malnutrition
- Poverty

And we took a closer look at

- Household Food Security

COMPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

- FAO, A. (2008). An introduction to the basic concepts of food security. FAO Rome.
- AI, W., ORKING, G., & CLIMA, O. (2008). Climate change and food security: a framework document. FAO Rome.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

- True or False Questions
- Multiple Choice Questions
- Cloze Questions



Click Here!

EXERCISE

- Go to the website of the World Food Program (www.wfp.org),
 - choose one country from each region,
 - describe for each country in few sentences the nature of food insecurity.
- Prepare a small presentation of not more than five minutes, in which you describe what factors affect the various dimensions of food insecurity.
- The purpose of this exercise is to get a feeling for the terminology used by professionals and academics working in the area of food security.

SOURCES

AI, W., ORKING, G., & CLIMA, O. (2008). Climate change and food security: a framework document. FAO Rome.

FAO (2008). An introduction to the basic concepts of food security. FAO Rome.

FAO (2007). National programmes for food security: FAO's vision of a world without hunger. FAO Rome.

USAID (1992). Policy Determination. Definition of Food Security. Washington, USA:USAID.

World Food Summit (1996). Rome Declaration on World Food Security.