

SUMMARY OF THE FSN FORUM DISCUSSION No.34
**FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION SECURITY –
WHAT IS THE PROBLEM AND WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE**
FROM 1 APRIL TO 15 MAY 2009

Proceedings available at:

http://km.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/fsn/docs/PROCEEDINGS_FoodSecurity_NutritionSecurity.doc

I. ISSUES RAISED

The two main questions raised in this discussion were:

- What are the generic causes of young child malnutrition? How are they related to each other and to the final nutritional outcome?
- What is the difference between food security and nutrition security? What are the relationships between the two? Are there cases when one exists without the other?

II. DIFFERENCE AND RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION SECURITY

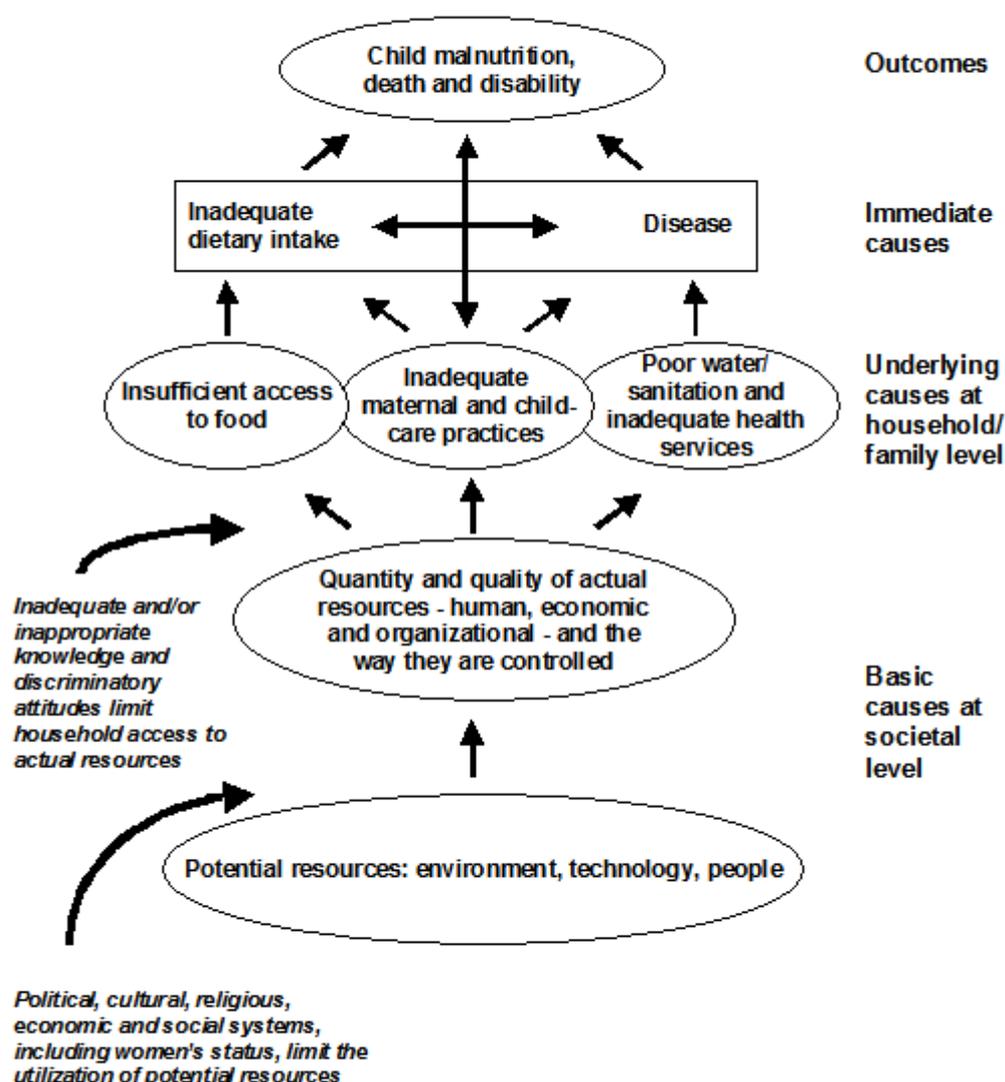
- **Difference between Food Security (FS) and Nutrition Security (NS):** It was agreed that there is a big difference but close linkages between FS and NS. Participants agreed that FS is a necessary but not sufficient condition of NS. However, in unpacking the two terms, discussants presented different views:
 - NS is part and parcel of FS (F. Adetunj, G. Swamy)
 - FS is part of NS (U. Jonsson, S. Basta, C. Schuftan)
- **Relationship between FS and NS:**
 - Food insecurity at the household level is one of the three main underlying causes of malnutrition (C. Schuftan, U. Jonsson, W. B. Eide)
 - All the acceptable definitions of food security in use imply nutrition but only in the sense that household FS means that if the household's food are consumed according to the dietary requirements of all household member their dietary/nutritional needs will be met (A. Agyemang, U. Jonsson)
 - Nutrition security requires simultaneously 'food', 'health' and 'care'. So, there is no way to achieve nutrition security without FS at household level. FS must include 'food safety' (E. Edwards, U. Jonsson)
 - Nutrition insecurity may increase the risk of food insecurity. This can best be explained by recognizing that there is a short- and a long-term feed-back from malnutrition to the capacity of providing food, health and care (through the basic cause level) (U. Jonsson).
 - FS and NS are closely interrelated and may appear in a vicious cycle, but at a different magnitude, according to the context. For instance, where infectious diseases are the prevailing cause of malnutrition, the addition of more food is not effective, or, vice versa, a further investment in the health sector does not help, if food insecure was the fundamental problem (S. Kaufmann)
 - The nutrition status can be improved even if food insecurity and poverty continues to exist, through improved 'nutrition supportive' decisions and behaviour (S. Kaufmann) or measures such as mandatory fortification of some carefully chosen food vehicles consumed by a large majority of the population to deliver much needed micronutrients (E. Edwards)

- Young child malnutrition can still persist once FS has been achieved, for instance the case of many children in near poor SE groups in developing countries (C. Schuftan)
- Comprehensive FS analyses include nutrition indicators, e.g. FAO's supported Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping systems. FIVIMS or WFP's comprehensive food security and vulnerability analysis. Nutrition indicators are also being used in results based management introduced UN agencies since the 2000s and was also practiced within GTZ's Integrated Food Security Programmes implemented in earlier years. Multi-sectoral programme with decentralised capacities and decision making responsibility might be in the best position to address nutrition problems most effectively (S. Kaufmann).
- **Literacy/Education** is a prerequisite for FS to translated into NS (R. Harish)
- **Issues in understanding and addressing FS and NS:**
 - FS in practice is not always understood in its comprehensive manner. The term FS, frequently, does not give adequate emphasis on the importance of food for better nutrition. Often policy and decision makers give higher priority to food production, while small scale farmers and nutritional objectives fall behind (K. Agyemang, S. Kaufmann).
 - The definition of FS was changed after the introduction on UNICEF's conceptual framework by including 'utilization' (definition of FS by the World Food Summit 1996). This has contributed significantly to the current confusion about the logical difference between 'food security' and 'nutrition security' (U. Jonsson, W. B. Eide)
 - In practice there is a point in stating both terms. Stating 'food and nutrition' as opposed to 'health and nutrition' specifies the problems and potential solutions for an adequate response.

III. GENERIC CAUSES OF YOUNG CHILD MALNUTRITION

- Factors affecting child nutrition (F. Adetunj, M. Mosisi, I A Onimawo, G. Mugambi, Samir Basta, S. Kauffman)
- Food security of the household
- Environment, infrastructures (hospital..)
- Educational level of parents and women's status, knowledge of caregivers about adequate diet for children
- Dietary diversity
- Household food distribution
- Content of food, which has to be age specific
- Hygiene, control of diseases, frequent infections,
- Trauma, loss of appetite, and stress,
- Neglect, apathy
- Maternal malnutrition & ill –health
- The UNICEF causal model gives a comprehensive framework of generic causes of child malnutrition (P C Wasti, C. Shutan). This framework should be promoted further to the grassroots level.

Figure 1: Causes of Child Malnutrition



Source: The State of the World's Children 1998

IV COUNTRY/PROJECT CASES

1. India case

Both the central and state government is supporting to ensure the food security of below poverty line (BPL) through public distribution system (PDS). As PDS is focusing on rice and wheat, it is adversely affecting the agricultural system: fallow lands, loss of agriculture biodiversity, etc (G. Swamy, Salomeyesudas)

Alternative public distribution system (APDS) of Deccan Development Society in Andhra Pradesh State of South India have emerged as one of the best programmes which address both food security and nutrition security www.ddsindia.com (Salomeyesudas)

Some suggestion to ensure FS and NS in India include (G. Swamy):

- 1) Food and Nutrition security issues should be addressed at household levels.
- 2) In public distribution system (PDS) along with rice/wheat other small and minor millets should be introduced.
- 3) Quality food commodities should be supplied in PDS.
- 4) Mixed cropping system in agriculture, kitchen garden at family level, school kitchen gardens could help to ensure the nutrition at some level.
- 5) Training to farmers on post harvest technology for drying, processing of grains and pulses, to minimize the storage losses.
- 6) Awareness to general public to minimize the wastage of food commodities during ceremonies and functions.

2. Africa case (M. Mosisi)

The African Union through its Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (www.nepad-caadp.net) has identified **four food security challenges** including (1) inadequate risk management at all levels from household to regional levels, (2) inadequate food supply and marketing systems for distributing food, (3) lack of income opportunities for the vulnerable, and (4) hunger and malnutrition.

To overcome these challenges, a **framework for African food security (FAFS)** has been developed with following objectives: (1) improved risk management, (2) increased supply of affordable commodities through increased production and improved market linkages; (3) Increased economic opportunities for the vulnerable, and (4) Increased quality of diets through diversification of food among the target groups.

Measurement of progress would be done through the following indicators: resilience score (based on asset); consumption and production (gifts, donations and transfers); per capita income; and dietary diversity score.

3. The Integrated Food Security Programme supported by GTZ in Northern Laos (S. Kaufmann)

Education and social status of women, through improved 'nutrition supportive' decisions and behaviour, mitigate the negative effects of food insecurity, poverty or other factors associated to a household's location, such as remoteness and limited access to social services or markets. No other causes of malnutrition included in the multi-factorial analysis model, structured according to the conceptual framework of malnutrition, determined the nutritional status so significantly than those two. The programme generated a substantial increase in food production as well as cash income. However, multi-factorial analysis showed that those two factors did not contribute to the reduction of malnutrition. Factors explaining the significant reduction in chronic malnutrition were the improved hygiene behaviour, improved access to water as well as the adoption of a less labour intensive agricultural production system.

The nutritional status was improved for all income groups. Also food produced was not associated to the nutritional status. This, once more, shows that nutrition security can improve even if food insecurity and poverty continues to exist, but wise decisions optimise the availability and use of limited resources for better nutrition (details at: <http://geb.uni-giessen.de/geb/volltexte/2009/6904/pdf/KaufmannSilvia-2009-03-03.pdf>).

IV. REFERENCES

Achieving Food and Nutrition Security Actions to Meet the Global Challenge by Klaus Klennert (P. C. Wasti).

http://www.inwent.org/E+Z/content/archive-eng/11-2005/media_art2.html

The nutrition situation in Northern Laos – determinants of malnutrition and changes after four years of intensive interventions (S. Kaufmann)

<http://geb.uni-giessen.de/geb/volltexte/2009/6904/pdf/KaufmannSilvia-2009-03-03.pdf>.

Household Food Security – Concepts, Issues, Measurements. A Technical Review”

<http://www.ifad.org/gender/tools/hfs/hfspub/>