

Glossary of selected terms used in the report

Anthropometry. Use of human body measurements to obtain information about nutritional status.

Body mass index (BMI). The ratio of weight-for-height measured as the weight in kilograms divided by the square of height in metres.

Dietary energy intake. The energy content of food consumed.

Dietary energy requirement (DER). The amount of dietary energy required by an individual to maintain body functions, health and normal activity.

Dietary energy supply (DES). Food available for human consumption, expressed in kilocalories per person per day (kcal/person/day). At country level, it is calculated as the food remaining for human use after deduction of all non-food utilizations (i.e. food = production + imports + stock withdrawals – exports – industrial use – animal feed – seed – wastage – additions to stock). Wastage includes losses of usable products occurring along distribution chains from farm gate (or port of import) up to the retail level.

Dietary energy supply adequacy. Dietary energy supply as a percentage of the average dietary energy requirement.

Food insecurity. A situation that exists when people lack secure access to sufficient amounts of safe and nutritious food for normal growth and development and an active and healthy life. It may be caused by the unavailability of food, insufficient purchasing power, inappropriate distribution or inadequate use of food at the household level. Food insecurity, poor conditions of health and sanitation and inappropriate care and feeding practices are the major causes of poor nutritional status. Food insecurity may be chronic, seasonal or transitory.

Food security. A situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. Based on this definition, four food security dimensions can be identified: food availability, economic and physical access to food, food utilization and stability over time.

Hunger. In this report the term hunger is used as being synonymous with chronic undernourishment.

Kilocalorie (kcal). A unit of measurement of energy. One kilocalorie equals 1 000 calories. In the International System of Units (SI), the universal unit of energy is the joule (J). One kilocalorie = 4.184 kilojoules (kJ).

Macronutrients. In this document, the proteins, carbohydrates and fats that are available to be used for energy. They are measured in grams.

Malnutrition. An abnormal physiological condition caused by inadequate, unbalanced or excessive consumption of macronutrients and/or micronutrients. Malnutrition includes undernutrition and overnutrition as well as micronutrient deficiencies.

Micronutrients. Vitamins, minerals and certain other substances that are required by the body in small amounts. They are measured in milligrams or micrograms.

Minimum dietary energy requirement (MDER). In a specified age/sex category, the minimum amount of dietary energy per person that is considered adequate to meet the energy needs at a minimum acceptable BMI of an individual engaged in low physical activity. If referring to an entire population, the minimum energy requirement is the weighted average of the minimum energy requirements of the different age/sex groups. It is expressed as kilocalories per person per day.

Nutrition security. A situation that exists when secure access to an appropriately nutritious diet is coupled with a sanitary environment, adequate health services and care, in order to ensure a healthy and active life for all household members. Nutrition security differs from food security in that it also considers the aspects of adequate caring practices, health and hygiene in addition to dietary adequacy.

Nutrition-sensitive intervention. Interventions designed to address the underlying determinants of nutrition (which include household food security, care for mothers and children and primary health care services and sanitation) but not necessarily having nutrition as the predominant goal.

Nutritional status. The physiological state of an individual that results from the relationship between nutrient intake and requirements and from the body's ability to digest, absorb and use these nutrients.

Overnourishment. Food intake that is continuously in excess of dietary energy requirements.

Overnutrition. A result of excessive food intake relative to dietary nutrient requirements.

Overweight and obesity. Body weight that is above normal for height as a result of an excessive accumulation of fat. It is usually a manifestation of overnourishment. Overweight is defined as a BMI of more than 25 but less than 30 and obesity as a BMI of 30 or more.

Stunting. Low height for age, reflecting a sustained past episode or episodes of undernutrition.

Undernourishment. A state, lasting for at least one year, of inability to acquire enough food, defined as a level of food intake insufficient to meet dietary energy requirements. For the purposes of this report, hunger was defined as being synonymous with chronic undernourishment.

Undernutrition. The outcome of undernourishment, and/or poor absorption and/or poor biological use of nutrients consumed as a result of repeated infectious disease. It includes being underweight for one's age, too short for one's age (stunted), dangerously thin for one's height (wasted) and deficient in vitamins and minerals (micronutrient malnutrition).

Underweight. Low weight for age in children, and BMI of less than 18.5 in adults, reflecting a current condition resulting from inadequate food intake, past episodes of undernutrition or poor health conditions.

Wasting. Low weight for height, generally the result of weight loss associated with a recent period of starvation or disease.