



# 1. INTRODUCTION

The *Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security* (2005), now known as the Right to Food Guidelines, gave rise to these two volumes on monitoring the right to adequate food at country level. Guideline 17 on Monitoring, Indicators and Benchmarks points to the need to identify and implement monitoring methods that incorporate human rights principles and approaches, while building on existing and ongoing monitoring information systems and activities related to food security and nutrition. Guidelines that relate to institutional aspects of rights-focused monitoring (Guideline 5.2), to stakeholder participation in rights-based monitoring (Guidelines 10.3 and 18.1), and to disaggregated vulnerability analysis for different population groups (Guideline 13.2) are particularly relevant here.

*Volume I*, which you are advised to read, places the right to adequate food within a framework of rights-based development and clarifies a number of concepts. It outlines strategies to monitor the right to adequate food at country level that take account of both opportunities and challenges that may exist. It signals what specific monitoring methods may be applied, and outlines an analytical and methodological agenda as part of implementing monitoring of the right to adequate food, an agenda that is also largely covered in the *Right to Food Guidelines*.

Rights-focused monitoring in general is also discussed in *Volume I*, referring to monitoring *implementation processes* and *outcomes*. A distinction is made between **rights-focused** and **rights-based** monitoring. Rights-focused monitoring means that monitoring focuses on the impacts and implementation of measures related to a right or rights. Monitoring does then apply methods and approaches that allow conclusions regarding progress in realising a right for all, and the protection of that right. Monitoring the realization of the right to adequate food, and the

implementation of measures towards the realization of this right, may itself not be conducted in ways that are consistent with human rights principles. Rights-based monitoring refers then to the monitoring process itself being conducted in ways that are consistent with human rights principles.

#### **BOX 1.1 - Rights-Focused Monitoring of Outcomes and Processes means monitoring...**

- *to determine whether the impacts of policy measures and state actions are consistent with the progressive realization of human rights,*
- *to assess over time whether or not human rights have increasingly been respected and protected, and are progressively being fulfilled in practice, and*
- *the decisions, actions, and conduct of political, economic, social and institutional systems and actors that are expected to contribute to the realization of rights.*

#### **BOX 1.2 - Rights-Based Monitoring means monitoring...**

*continuously the monitoring process itself to see if it is **rights compliant**, i.e. is conducted in ways that are consistent with human rights principles and approaches.*

In setting the stage for the following discussion of various monitoring methods, the guidance on monitoring that is included in the *Right to Food Guidelines* bears repeating<sup>1</sup>. Monitoring the right to adequate food should:

- Build on ongoing in-country monitoring activities related to food security, nutrition, poverty and socio-economic development, making maximum use of available information and filling information gaps to adequately monitor the right to adequate food.
- Incorporate human rights principles and approaches through appropriate analysis and dissemination methods.
- Implement and conduct a monitoring process that is itself, whenever feasible, rights-based, i.e. participatory and empowering, and is designed to provide valid and transparent information that allows drawing clear conclusions about progress with respect to the realization of the right to adequate food.
- Meet the information needs of the primary duty bearers and non-state actors with responsibilities for implementing measures for the realization of the right to adequate food, and for the protection of that right and other human rights.

---

<sup>1</sup> See Annex 1 of both volumes for conceptual definitions of key human rights principles.

- Make the monitoring information directly accessible to rights holders and to their representatives, so that they understand their rights, and can effectively monitor progress with the realization of the right to adequate food holding, if necessary, duty bearers accountable for poor performance, unlawful conduct and/or inefficient use of public resources.

The overriding questions that are addressed here are: What to monitor, and how to do it? A coherent framework is laid out in the next chapter that brings together all the relevant aspects related to monitoring the right to adequate food. This framework serves to identify a set of monitoring questions and helps to define needed monitoring information and possible monitoring indicators, as well as which analytical methods are the most relevant for monitoring the right to adequate food in finding answers to the monitoring questions. Thus, the methods and approaches described in this volume are selected because they are considered to be the most relevant for in-country monitoring practitioners who are tasked to generate, analyse and interpret, and disseminate monitoring information related to one or more aspects of the right to adequate food. Moreover, these methods are quite widely used, are generally well documented, and the results they generate can be interpreted from a human rights perspective. An exhaustive description of each method is beyond the scope and intent of this volume. Rather, an effort has been made to provide a synthesis of what the method consists of, and demonstrate the application of the method within a human rights framework, focused on monitoring the right to adequate food. Some of the methods can easily be adapted to monitor other economic, social or cultural rights, such as the right to health, the right to education, etc. Where possible, the actual application of the method is demonstrated by presenting country examples. General constraints that may be encountered in applying the method and the types of monitoring information that each method typically generates are also discussed. Relevant reference sources for each method are listed that the user of this volume may consult for more detailed technical and methodological guidance. Efforts have been made to include reference sources that are easily accessible, although this was not always possible since some of the topics covered in this volume are rather new. In order to avoid duplication, different techniques of gathering information are discussed in a separate chapter, and then linked to the various analytical methods. Dissemination of information is an essential component of the monitoring process, and various dissemination tools and uses of monitoring information of the right to adequate food are discussed in the last chapter, with additional details provided in two separate annexes.

#### **REFERENCE SOURCE:**

- ❖ FAO (2005). *Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security*, Rome.