

Coming to terms with terminology

8 to 28 August 2012

The definition of 'food security' has evolved considerably over time and additional terminology and concepts, including 'nutrition security', 'food security and nutrition' and 'food and nutrition security' have emerged over the past few decades. Each of these terms has varying connotations. While this signals a much more complex understanding of the interlinkages between food security and adequate nutrition, the lack of agreement on the use of terms often creates confusion, and can hold back meaningful discussions on how best to address concerns of food insecurity and malnutrition.

The 37th Session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) called on 'the CFS Bureau, in consultation with its Advisory Group and joint Secretariat, as well as with relevant international organizations, in particular World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), to propose options on the meaning and different uses, if any, of the terms "Food Security", "Food Security and Nutrition", "Food and Nutrition Security" and "Nutrition Security" to the CFS Session for the standardization of the official terminology that the Committee should use . ([CFS37 Final Report, 2011](#)).

As the CFS continues to build its reputation as the foremost inclusive intergovernmental and international platform on food security and nutrition related issues, it is of particular importance that it has a common and full understanding and appreciation of key terms and their implications for the work of the Committee and its constituents.

The UNSCN Secretariat together with the CFS Secretariat is guiding the process of the CFS Task Team on Terminology to help ensure that conceptual and programmatic bridges are made between food security and nutrition and evolve in a complementary and mutually reinforcing manner. The Task Team elaborated the draft document '[Coming to terms with terminology](#)' through a consultative process.

The paper proposes to move towards the more inclusive terminology *food and nutrition security* in order to better reflect the conceptual linkages between food security and nutrition security.

What are your views on this and the new proposed definition of *food and nutrition security*?

Your contributions will be consolidated and forwarded to the CFS Task Team as the common voice of the food security community at large. A revised version of the document will then be presented at the next joint Advisory Group and Bureau meeting in September, and it is anticipated that the final version will be presented at the CFS 39 Annual Session in October 2012.

We are looking forward to your comments

CFS Secretariat