

A photograph of a man standing next to a large, traditional thatched structure, possibly a granary or a storage container, in a rural landscape. The man is wearing a green shirt and dark pants. The structure is made of woven straw or reeds and has a conical, thatched roof. The background shows a field of tall grass and some trees under a clear sky.

Indicators of Food Security

Eliot Masters

Considerations

- Socioeconomic, Governance and Agro-Ecological Context – Regional / National / Local / Site Specificity
- Causation (as opposed to association); Identification of Drivers
- Practicality and Ease of Measurement (realistic and non-‘Cumbersome’)
- Non-Intrusive (respect for human dignity of respondents) – relief context may not be helpful
- Disaggregation of Sample (Gender and related socio-political and cultural dynamics)
- Mitigation as a Consideration (‘Reversibility’, ‘Directionality’ toward desired outcomes)

FAO Parameters of Food Security

- **Availability:** Household food production and crop diversity
- **Access:** Percentage food expenditure to total household expenditures
- **Utilisation:** Degree of access to services (water, health and sanitation)
- **Stability:** Stability of food prices and supply

Food Stability and Availability

- Indicator 1: **Stability of food price and supply**—beware assumptions of causality; disaggregation of (and inter-relationships between) drivers (Food Stability)
- Indicator 2: **Household food production** (total, and gendered) (Food Availability)
- Indicator 2b: **Food crop diversity** (Food Availability)

Food Access

- Indicator 3a: **Sufficiency of household food consumption** (Food Access)
- Proxy 1: **Percentage household expenditure on food**
- Proxy 2: **Number of meals taken in a day**
(important to determine whether/how these change over time or throughout a given year/agricultural cycle)
- Indicator 3b: **Household dietary diversity** (Food Access)

Food Utilisation

- Indicator 4: **Degree of access to utilities and services**, *e.g.* water, energy, health and sanitation (Food Utilisation)
- N.B.: Access may be gendered

Assessment Tools and Levels of Inquiry



Availability

- Tool: Crop production survey (area and yield by crop type), seasonality
- Indicator: household food production and crop diversity
- Scale: Household and community levels

Access

- Tool: Household consumption survey
- Indicator: percentage food expenditure to total household expenditures
- Scale: Household and community levels

Utilisation

- Tool: Water, health and sanitation survey on access to services, including female education and infrastructure, access to energy
- Indicator: Degree of access to utilities, services
- Scale: Household and community levels

Stability

- Tool: Market monitoring - trade patterns and infrastructure, price and supply of key commodities
- Indicator: Stability of food prices and supply
- Scale: Community and key informant levels

