

DEFINITIONS OF FOOD SECURITY & INSECURITY

FOOD SECURITY & INSECURITY

Food security means access to enough food for an active, healthy life. It includes at a minimum:

- (a) ready availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods and
- (b) assured ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways (e.g., without resorting to emergency food supplies, scavenging, stealing, or other coping strategies).

Food insecurity exists whenever the availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or the ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways is limited or uncertain. [\(1\)](#)

THREE ELEMENTS OF FOOD SECURITY

1. Food availability:
Food must be available in sufficient quantities and on a consistent basis.
2. Food access:
People must be able to regularly acquire adequate quantities of food, through purchase, home production, barter, gifts, borrowing or food aid.
3. Food utilization:
Consumed food must have a positive nutritional impact on people. It entails cooking, storage and hygiene practices, individual's health, water and sanitation, feeding and sharing practices within the household.

MEASUREMENT

Food Security

- High food security: no reported food-access problems or limitations.
- Marginal food security: one or two reported indications—typically of anxiety over food sufficiency or shortage of food in the house. Little or no indication of changes in diets or food intake.

Food Insecurity

- Low food security: reports of reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet. Little or no indication of reduced food intake.
- Very low food security: Reports of multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake.