

# Measurement of Food Deprivation

**J. Mernies**

Chief, Socio-economic Statistics and Analysis Service ,  
Statistics Division, FAO  
Rome, Italy

This paper describes the methodology and data used by FAO for estimating food deprivation for the purpose of monitoring hunger reduction targets (World Food Summit, 1996 and Millennium Declaration, 2000). The basic methodological framework consists of a frequency distribution of food consumption - expressed in terms of dietary energy - and a cutoff point defined on the basis of minimum energy requirement norms. The data and procedures used for estimating the frequency distribution of food consumption and the cutoff point are conditioned by the nature and scope of the FAO mandate for world-wide monitoring of the food situation. The meaning and significance of the FAO measure of food deprivation have to be considered in the light of this objective and also of some limitations placed by the data and procedures used. The paper also discusses the current efforts for introducing methodological improvements.