

Role of FAO Regional Office to the ASEAN Network of Food Data System (ASEANFOODS)

Ms. Shashi Sareen
Senior Food Safety & Nutrition Officer
FAO Regional Office for the Asia & the Pacific
E-mail: shashi.sareen@fao.org

Coverage

- Importance of food composition
- FAO's mandate
- Food security & food composition relationship
- FAO's food composition activities in the region - Role of FAORAP in ASEANFOODS
- Some issues
- Future activities & possible funding opportunities



Food composition

- Definition:
 - ❖ “Nutritional value of foods”
 - OR
 - ❖ “Content of specific substances” - e.g. energy, macronutrients (protein, fat & carbohydrates), micronutrients (vitamins & minerals) and other nutrients

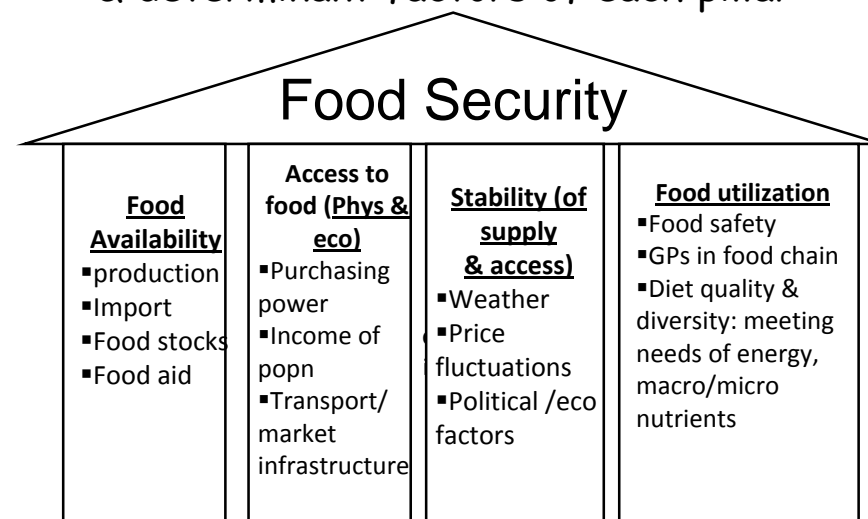
FAO's mandate

- Achieving **food security** for all is at the heart of FAO's efforts - to make sure people have regular access to enough high-quality food to lead active, healthy lives.
- FAO's mandate is to “raise levels of nutrition”, improve agricultural productivity, better the lives of rural populations and contribute to the growth of the world economy.

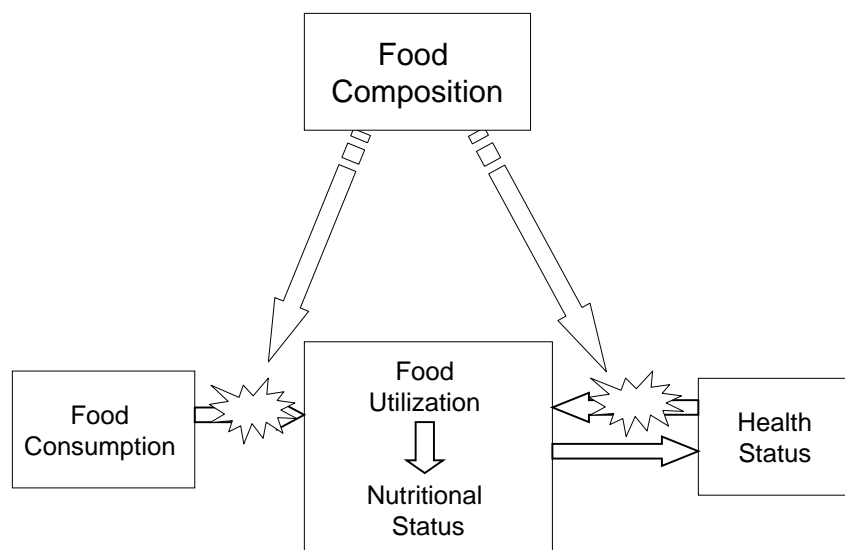
Food Security & Food Composition

- **Food security:** all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. [World Food Summit, 2009]
- The four pillars of food security

Pillars of Food Security & determinant factors of each pillar



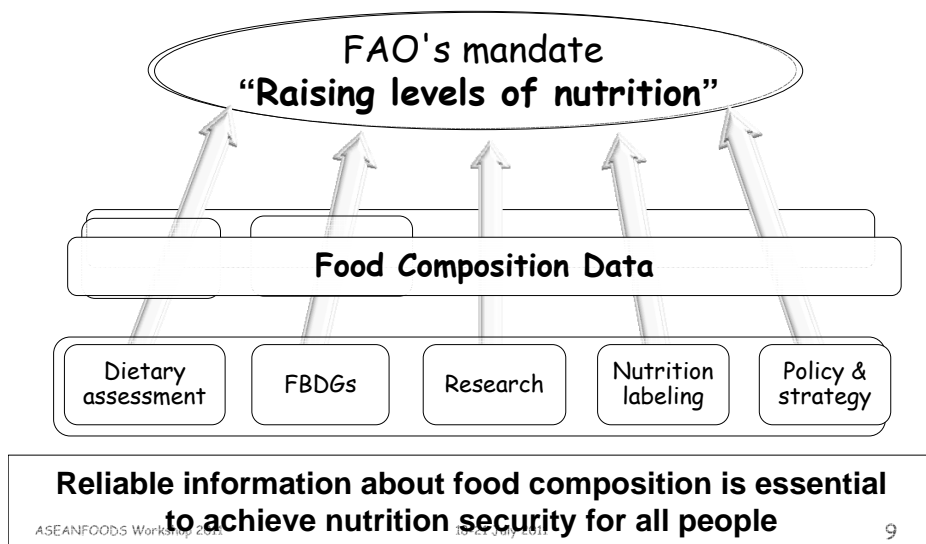
Food Security & Food Composition



Food Composition Data (FCD)-the why?

- FCD is fundamental to:
 - Assess dietary adequacy & evaluate nutrient intakes (under- & over nutrition and deficiencies)
 - Assess intakes & diet-related disease relationships
 - Develop food-based dietary guidelines (FBDGs)
 - Calculate nutrients in national food balance sheet (FBS)
 - Formulate institutional & therapeutic diets
 - Diets for special purposes – space, defence, etc
 - Identify & promote nutritionally important foods
 - Nutrition labelling & claims of products-consumer information
 - Nutrition education & training
 - Biodiversity & agricultural research
 - Formulate appropriate policy & strategy

FAO & food composition



Some issues...

- Lack of awareness & priority by governments
- Limited budget for FC activities
- Lack of / weak IT systems for data management
- Lack of resources - laboratories, skilled personnel (data collection/interpretation), equipment & chemicals to generate FCD
- Problems related to sampling, methodology & data quality
- Lack of proper understanding on the use of FCT
- Consumer understanding

FAO's role in ASEANFOODS

- Provide technical & financial assistance in:
 - Capacity building for generation & compilation of FCD - training courses etc
 - Upgrading laboratory facilities
 - Organizing meetings, technical consultations, technical workshops etc
 - Assessing the needs & gaps in the generation, compilation & usage of FCD
 - Guideline on FC activities – sampling, QA, compilation, methodology, tools etc
 - Generation of IEC material

FAO's role in ASEANFOODS cont...

- Facilitate user-friendly materials / publications to promote usage of FCD at various levels - brochures, booklet etc
- Promote data information exchange & expertise sharing
- Advocate & raise awareness on FC activities among various stakeholders
- Monitor the progress of FC activities
- Improve the quantity of FCD of local & indigenous foods to ensure indigenous people's food systems, biodiversity and sustainable diets

FAO's food composition activities in Asia

- Promote regional FC activities through regional data centers
 - ASEANFOODS – Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam
 - SAARCFOODS – Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka
 - NEASIADOODS - China, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao

FAO's food composition activities in Asia, cont...

- Provide support in organizing meetings
 - SAARCFOODS
 - ASEANFOODS
 - NEASIADOODS
 - Regional expert consultation of the Asia-Pacific Network for Food and Nutrition on Food Composition Activities, Thailand, 2003
 - Asian course on food composition, India, 2006
- Provide support in the development/ strengthening of ASEAN FCT

FAO's food composition activities in Asia, cont...

- Provide technical assistance in implementing projects
 - Managing biodiversity for sustainable food security & nutrition in Afghanistan (GCP/AFG/047/GER) – managing local species with high nutritional value through development of computerized database on composition, maintaining communities knowledge & use of local species
 - Sustainable insect farming & harvesting for better nutrition, improve food security and household generation (TCP/LAO/3301) – compiling data qualities of various insect species etc

Suggested future activities....

ASEAN level

- Assessment of facilities available within countries (incl labs)
- Data-base management systems
- Regional trainings
- PT at regional level
- Include additional nutrients eg trans fats, GI, etc
- Linkages b/w govt, private food industry & labs
- Identify correct departments in countries/ experts

Suggested future activities....

FAO level

- Regional conference/WS (possibly on consumer awareness)
- Support in initiating TCP project at regional / country level
- TCP Facility
 - Formulation of TCP project proposal
 - Workshop / training
 - Study / assessment