



## **The role of International Organizations in monitoring food security**

Pietro Gennari\*

FAO, Italy – PIETRO.GENNARI@FAO.ORG

International Organizations play a crucial role in monitoring internationally agreed development objectives. While recognizing that national institutions and governments will always play the prominent role in terms of field data collection, the distinct role that international organizations can play includes functions that span from contributing to the theoretical definition of the selected metrics, to the validation and documentation of methods, standards and tools for data collection, to the technical support provided to countries for the implementation of the methods and standards, to the actual reporting of indicators in a way that ensures international comparability.

This paper reviews these roles through examples of existing trade-offs that should be considered when moving from national to global monitoring of development goals with reference to food security. In shifting from the MDG to the SDG framework, in particular, the emphasis on monitoring food security has greatly increased and consequently the indicators and approaches proposed by FAO for national and global monitoring. The paper will discuss first the crucial questions of validity, reliability and comparability of proposed indicators, and then the specific problems of how to determine the optimal coverage and to ensure financial sustainability of monitoring efforts. The paper will conclude with a summary of the main lessons that can be drawn in view of promoting the most effective partnership and synergy between national and international institutions.