Learning objectives

At the end of this lesson you will be able to:

- understand the concept of vulnerability and how it is applied to food security; and
- comprehend the relationship of food security to the concepts of hunger, malnutrition and poverty.
Example: Changing level of child malnutrition
A recent global study analyzed the determinants of changing levels of child malnutrition between 1970 and 1995, as measured by the percentage of underweight children under five. The most important factor in explaining reductions in malnutrition was the growth in per capita income. However, this factor alone could only explain roughly half the reduction in child malnutrition over this period. The remainder was explained by improvements in health, clean water, sanitation, and education (particularly women’s education).

The implication is that economic growth alone will not take care of the problem of food security. What is needed is a combination of income growth, supported by direct nutrition interventions and investments in health, water and education.