

# HOUSEHOLD DIETARY DIVERSITY SCORE

Outcome indicator, Cluster indicator, DEVCO indicator

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## Indicator Phrasing

**English:** the average number of different food groups consumed by the household the previous day or night

**French:** le nombre moyen des différents groupes d'aliments consommés par le ménage le jour ou la nuit précédents

**Portuguese:** número médio dos diversos grupos alimentares consumidos pelo agregado familiar no dia ou noite anterior

**Czech:** průměrný počet potravinových skupin konzumovaných členy domácnosti během uplynulého dne a noci

## What is its purpose?

The Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS) indicator assesses a household's economic access to food (i.e. its ability to produce, purchase or otherwise secure food for consumption by all household members). It does not provide data on the nutritional quality of a person's diet.

## How to Collect and Analyse the Required Data

Collect the following data by conducting interviews with the members of a [representative sample](#) of persons responsible for food preparation for the household on the previous day:

- 1) Check whether yesterday was a **special day** (religious festival or celebration) when unusually varied or limited diet was eaten - if so, do not proceed with collecting dietary data as it is likely that they will not reflect a typical diet.
- 2) **List all meals** which the household ate in the previous day in the Recording Meals Form (see link below).
- 3) Double check the **meals' composition** (e.g. porridge with or without milk).
- 4) Check for any **snacks** (including fruits) which were not mentioned.

5) Only then **record in the questionnaire** which food groups were eaten. Ask the respondent regarding eaten foods from groups that were not mentioned (for example: "*Did your household members yesterday eat any eggs?*")

6) Count the **number of food groups consumed** by the interviewed household's members, creating their Household Dietary Diversity Score.

7) **Calculate the indicator's value** by summing up the scores of all the assessed households and dividing the result by the total number of assessed households.

## Disaggregate by

[Disaggregate](#) the data by [wealth](#).

## Important Comments

1) A household includes all persons living under the same roof who share meals.

2) As opposed to IDDS, which uses 7 or 9 food groups, **HDDS works with 12 food groups** (for details, see FAO's guidelines below).

3) HDDS is prone to **seasonal differences**. Do your best to collect baseline and endline data at the same time of a year; otherwise, it is very likely that they will not be comparable. Do not collect data during **fasting periods**, such as pre-Easter time or Ramadan.

4) **Do not include** foods that were purchased and eaten outside the home. These foods are excluded because the respondent may not know the foods which other household members purchased and ate outside the home. You can include foods that were 1) prepared in the home and consumed in the home or outside the home; or 2) purchased or gathered outside and consumed in the home. Due to this reason, the **HDDS indicator should not be used in contexts where eating outside the home is very common**.

5) When training the data collectors, **practice extensively** which meals belong to which food group (allocate at least 3 hours full of examples and exercises). For example, while pumpkin flesh belongs to Vitamin A Rich Foods, pumpkin leaves belong to Dark Green Leafy Vegetables (see more examples in the FAO Guidelines below). If your questionnaire includes examples of different foods per each group, **adjust them to the local context**.

6) Do not record foods in quantities lower than **one teaspoon** (for example, a small amount of fish powder added for flavouring).

For more tips, **read FAO's Guidance** on HDDS (see below).

## Access Additional Guidance

- FAO (2013) [Guidelines for Measuring Household and Individual Dietary Diversity](#)
- PIN (2015) [Practical Checklist for Conducting Nutrition Surveys](#)
- PIN (2016) [Recording Meals Form for Assessing Dietary Diversity - Household](#)

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