

FOOD CONSUMPTION SCORE

Impact indicator, Outcome indicator, Cluster indicator, ECHO indicator, DEVCO indicator

Indicator Phrasing

English: % of the target population with acceptable Food Consumption Score (FCS)

French: % de la population cible ayant un Score de Consommation Alimentaire acceptable (SCA)

Portuguese: % da população-alvo com uma Classificação De Consumo de Alimentos (CCA) aceitável

Czech: % cílové populace s přijatelným Food Consumption Score (FCS)

What is its purpose?

The Food Consumption Score (FCS) is a more complex indicator of a household's food security status, as it considers not only dietary diversity and food frequency but also the relative nutritional importance of different food groups (on the other hand, its use of relatively long, 7 days recall period, might make the data less precise).

How to Collect and Analyse the Required Data

Determine the indicator's value by using the following methodology:

1) **Conduct individual interviews** with a [representative sample](#) of the target household representatives assessing how many days in the past 7 days have the household members eaten foods from any of the 9 pre-defined food groups. Use the following question: "*I would like to ask you about all the different foods that your household members have eaten in the last 7 days, either inside or outside the home. How many days in the past 7 days have most of your household members eaten ...*" [name the foods included in the first food group, then continue asking the same question about foods from the following food groups; see slide 10 of WFP's training module below].

2) For each respondent, **multiply the consumption frequency obtained for each food group by its 'weight'** (see slide 26 of WFP's training module below to understand the 'weight' of each food group).

3) For each respondent, **sum the weighed food group scores**, thus creating his/her food consumption score (FCS).

4) According to the FCS's value, indicate the percentage of households with "poor" FCS (0-21 scores),

“borderline” FCS (21,5 - 35 scores), and “acceptable” FCS (more than 35 scores). In contexts where the consumption of oil and sugar is high, the thresholds are higher - see slide 37 of WFP's training module below.

5) To **calculate the percentage of households with “acceptable” FCS**, divide the number of households with FCS higher than 35 scores by the total number of surveyed households. Multiply the result by 100 to convert it to a percentage.

Disaggregate by

[Disaggregate](#) the data by [wealth](#) and other relevant criteria.

Important Comments

1) Take advantage of the **useful guidance provided in WFP's slides** on using the FCS indicator - see below.

2) **FCS is based on dietary diversity, not on Sphere recommendations of Kcal / day.** In countries where the Food Basket is based on Kcal / day, it might not include enough proteins and dairy products. Therefore, achieving an “acceptable” FCS would be extremely difficult in spite of household members eating sufficient calorie intake.

3) FCS is a good **indicator of a household's food security**; however, it does not help with understanding the quality of diets consumed by a specific group of household members, such as children 6-59 months of age.

4) FCS is prone to seasonal variations. Do your best to **collect baseline and endline data at the same time of the year**; otherwise, it is very likely that they'll not be comparable (i.e. providing largely useless data). Make sure you **do not collect data during fasting periods**, such as pre-Easter time or Ramadan.

5) In the context of this indicator, "*... most of your household members ...*" means **half or more of the household members** - make sure that the enumerators understand this well. Additionally, ensure that the enumerators emphasize that the main question concerns both **meals consumed inside and outside the home**.

6) When asking the main question, the enumerators must **ask "How many days ..."**, not "*How many times ...*". Household members may consume the same food group several times on the same day and this must be considered as 1-day consumption from the same group.

7) FCS is one of **ECHO's Key Outcome Indicators**. According to ECHO's guidance (see below), FCS's target value should "*be greater than 80%, but may be context-specific.*"

8) BHA phrases the indicator differently, as "*percent of households with poor, borderline, and acceptable Food Consumption Score (FCS)*".

E-Questionnaire

- [XLS form for electronic data collection - indicator Food Consumption Score](#)

Access Additional Guidance

- WFP (2008) [Food Consumption Analysis](#)
- ECHO (2016) [List of Key Outcome Indicators \(KOI\)](#)
- [Additional WFP guidance and forms on using FCS indicators](#)
- WFP (2018) [Slides on using FCS indicator](#)