

# Reaching Consensus on a Global Dietary Diversity Indicator for Women

Washington, DC, July 15–16, 2014

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# Dietary diversity indicators (1)

- DD is measured as the number of foods or **food groups** consumed over a reference time period (**day**)
- DD indicators are proxies for micronutrient adequacy of the diet
- **Women** have greater micronutrient needs related to reproductive functions

## Dietary diversity indicators (2)

**DD assessment reflects only one dimension of diet quality: micronutrient adequacy**

Other dimensions (balance, moderation) are becoming increasingly important public health concerns globally, in context of transition

# Background of the Women's Dietary Diversity Project

- WDDP-I 2005-2010, validation work using five 24h intake datasets to identify and develop candidate indicators as valid proxies of the gold standard. No single indicator based on a standard number of food groups or cut-points identified for global use.

*FANTA/USAID convened and funded the project, IFPRI led the validation work.*

- WDDP-II 2012-2014, responding to requests for standardized indicators for assessing micronutrient quality of women's diets, FAO reconvened some members from the WDDP-I to do further work to derive a dichotomous indicator useful for global, national and sub-national dietary assessment for women of reproductive age.

*FAO convened and funded the WDDP-II group; IRD led the validation work; FANTA/FAO sponsored the consensus workshop*

## Tasks of the Consensus Meeting, July 15-16

- Assess the WDDP-II analysis of nine 24h intake datasets to validate candidate food group proxy indicators for micronutrient adequacy of women's diets
- Select one of two candidate indicators recommended by the core WDDP-II group for global diet assessment
- Discuss appropriate uses and limitations of a global indicator for other purposes (e.g., in programs)
- Discuss issues around operationalization
- Discuss plans to move forward and communicate

# Summary of recommendations from the Consensus Meeting, July 15-16

- We recommend a dichotomous indicator for dietary diversity assessment;
- We recommend a positive (as opposed to a negative) indicator based on whether or not women meet a mean probability of adequacy (MPA) > 60%;
- We recommend a 10 food group indicator (with a 15 g restriction per food group) for dietary diversity assessment in women;
- We recommend a cut-off of **5 or more food groups**

The indicator will be called

**Minimum Dietary Diversity-Women (MDD-W)**

# Comparing the currently used FGI – 9 with the MDD-W (FGI-10)

FGI-9 currently used by USAID programmes and included in FAO Guidelines		FGI-10	
1	All starchy staples	1	All starchy staples
2	All legumes and nuts	2	Beans and peas
		3	Nuts and seeds
3	All dairy	4	All dairy
4	Organ meat	5	Flesh foods (including organ meat and miscellaneous small animal protein)
5	Flesh foods and misc. small animal protein		
6	Eggs	6	Eggs
7	Vitamin A-rich dark green leafy vegetables	7	Vitamin A-rich dark green leafy vegetables
8	Other vitamin A-rich vegetables and fruits	8	Other vitamin A-rich vegetables and fruits
9	Other fruits and vegetables	9	Other vegetables
		10	Other fruits

# Nutritional meaning of MDD-W

Desirable micronutrient-dense food groups are likely to be consumed by women scoring 5 or more groups out of 10

- Across the 9 datasets from WDDP-II, women consuming 5 or more food groups were more likely to consume:
  - At least one animal-source food (84%)
  - Legumes, beans, nuts and/or seeds (84%)
  - 2 or more fruit/vegetable groups (98%)

## Population-level assessment of women's dietary diversity

Groups/populations with a higher proportion at or above the cut-off are likely to have higher average micronutrient adequacy across 11 micronutrients:

- Based on the 9 datasets from WDDP-II, among women consuming 5 or more food groups, there was an increase of approximately **15 percentage points** in the mean probability of micronutrient adequacy compared to women consuming <5.
- This does NOT mean that the population at or above the cut-point has adequate intake of ALL 11 micronutrients in the MPA.

# Uses of the MDD-W

- Assessment of dietary diversity at national and sub-national levels (inclusion in large-scale population-based surveys) (**validated for this**)
- Monitoring indicator for projects with food-based interventions and plausible impact pathway for dietary diversification (**not validated for tracking change – need experience**)
- Always consider seasonality
- **SHOULD NOT** be used for individual level assessment OR Screening

# Dietary diversity indicators in M&E

- Programmes that aim to improve diets may choose to assess change in women's DD in **multiple** ways
  - a) against the target of consuming 5 groups out of ten (used as a dichotomous indicator)
  - b) change in mean DD score to capture overall improvement even at the lower ends of DD (used as a quasi-continuous indicator)

# Documentation on the MDD-W

- The analysis report produced by IRD will soon be completed and posted at the FAO website
- A short summary of the WDDP-II project results and a slide set will soon be available at the FANTA website for anyone's use
- A Users' manual on MDD-W, similar to the IYCF manuals, will be produced within the next year