

We propose that the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) is added to the DHS core questionnaire. FIES, developed by the FAO, is the only household food insecurity measurement tool that currently ensures the possibility to obtain internationally comparable, standard measures of severity. With the FIES it is possible to conduct a statistical validation and to calibrate the measures against a reference severity scale, which makes it an ideal instrument to be included in multipurpose household surveys intended for internationally comparable assessments. Two summary indicators are recommended for reporting purposes. Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population based on the FIES is Sustainable Development Goal indicator 2.12.

1. Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population (Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicator 2.1.2)

Definition: Proportion of individuals in the population who have experienced moderate or severe food insecurity during the reference period.

2. Prevalence of severe food insecurity in the population

Definition: Proportion of individuals in the population who have experienced severe food insecurity during the reference period.

Attached to this post is a completed submission form with full justification for the recommendation.

This recommendation originated in the September 2018 Technical Consultation on Measuring Nutrition in Population-Based Household Surveys and Associated Facility Assessments--a 2-day working meeting convened by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and United States Agency for International Development in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and coordinated by Data for Decisions to Expand Nutrition Transformation (DataDENT). The consultation included more than 60 technical experts, survey program representatives from DHS, MICS, LSMS and SMART, country data stakeholders, and donors from the nutrition measurement community.

This recommendation was authored by Carlo Cafiero (Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)) and reviewed by Megan Deitchler (FHI360/Intake Center for Dietary Assessment).

This recommendation is endorsed by the WHO-UNICEF Technical Expert Advisory Group on Nutrition Monitoring (TEAM). Out of the 10 sets of recommendations endorsed by TEAM, this recommendation was prioritized as Tier 2 of 3 (high priority data need).

This recommendation is also endorsed by Countdown to 2030, Alive & Thrive, Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), the nutrition team at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Department of International Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

File Attachments

Subject: Re: Measuring Household Food Insecurity
Posted by [ers_usda](#) on Wed, 13 Mar 2019 14:27:36 GMT
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This is a comment on the proposed inclusion of the Food and Agriculture Organization's Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) in the DHS. The FIES provides a validated common measure of food insecurity that can be used to track and study food insecurity around the world. This experiential food insecurity measure offers insight into the determinants of food insecurity at the individual level, making it possible to show the characteristics and geographic concentration of the food insecure. It provides the crucial ability to monitor progress towards the second United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG2), which calls for ending hunger and achieving food security for all people by 2030. The FIES was initially fielded in the Gallup World Poll in 2014, but as of 2017 has stopped being funded. Research from this initial implementation has already garnered increased understanding of those experiencing food insecurity around the world (see e.g., Frongillo et al. (2017), Frongillo et al. (2019), Jones (2017), Smith, Kassa, and Winters (2017), and Smith, Rabbitt, and Coleman-Jensen (2017)). Implementing the FIES into the DHS would allow researchers and government officials further insight about the prevalence, severity, and determinants of food insecurity and enable monitoring of the food security goals laid out in SDG2. The DHS is an appropriate survey vehicle for the FIES module and is similar in concept and some topical content to U.S. national surveys that have proven effective for food security monitoring and research.

References:

Frongillo, E. A., Nguyen, H. T., Smith, M. D., & Coleman-Jensen, A. (2017). Food Insecurity Is Associated with Subjective Well-Being among Individuals from 138 Countries in the 2014 Gallup World Poll. *The Journal of Nutrition*, 147(4), 680-687.

Frongillo, E. A., Nguyen, H. T., Smith, M. D., & Coleman-Jensen, A. (2019). Food insecurity was more strongly associated with poor subjective well-being in more-developed countries than in less-developed countries. *The Journal of Nutrition*, 149(2), 330-335.

Jones, A. D. (2017). Food Insecurity and Mental Health Status: A Global Analysis of 149 Countries. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 53(2), 264-273.

Smith, M. D., Kassa, W., & Winters, P. (2017). Assessing Food Insecurity in Latin America and the Caribbean using FAO's Food Insecurity Experience Scale. *Food Policy*, 71, 486-491.

Smith, M. D., Rabbitt, M. P., & Coleman-Jensen, A. (2017). Who are the World's Food Insecure? New Evidence from the Food and Agriculture Organization's Food Insecurity Experience Scale. *World Development*, 93, 402-412.

Subject: Re: Measuring Household Food Insecurity
Posted by [SUN Movement MEAL Team](#) on Thu, 14 Mar 2019 01:35:17 GMT
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We strongly support the addition of the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) to the DHS core questionnaire. This indicator is included in the SUN MEAL Results Framework and there is a great

need for internationally comparable data on a standard measure of food insecurity. To date, data are publicly available for only 24 of 60 SUN countries. The ability to further disaggregate the data by specific subgroups will also provide more useful information for country-level policy and programme decision makers.

Subject: Re: Measuring Household Food Insecurity
Posted by [Mauro Brero](#) on Thu, 14 Mar 2019 09:22:45 GMT
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UNICEF Tanzania Nutrition team proposes to maintain all indicators. However, indicator 1 should be about only about moderate food insecurity and indicator 2 about severe food insecurity.

These indicators are very important within the multisectoral approach to reduce malnutrition adopted in Tanzania and evidence will be used to support synergistic programming between nutrition and agriculture sectors.

UNICEF Tanzania Nutrition team

Subject: Re: Measuring Household Food Insecurity
Posted by [aperry](#) on Fri, 15 Mar 2019 14:35:32 GMT
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The FIES is an extremely valuable metric and the absence of systematic information on food insecurity in many countries is limiting ability to both prioritise support and monitor progress and as such the DFID Nutrition Policy team supports this proposal.

Subject: Re: Measuring Household Food Insecurity
Posted by [Rolf Klemm](#) on Fri, 15 Mar 2019 16:45:53 GMT
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Helen Keller International (HKI) endorses the inclusion of the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) to the DHS core questionnaire. There is a need to assess the degree and duration of household food insecurity in the face of changing food environments, access to markets, shocks and prolonged stresses for targeting interventions and measuring change at national and sub-national levels.

Subject: Re: Measuring Household Food Insecurity
Posted by [salayon](#) on Fri, 15 Mar 2019 18:40:29 GMT
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I support these recommendations.

Subject: Re: Measuring Household Food Insecurity
Posted by [salayon](#) on Fri, 15 Mar 2019 18:41:37 GMT
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I support these recommendations.

Subject: Re: Measuring Household Food Insecurity
Posted by [1000 Days](#) on Fri, 15 Mar 2019 19:28:38 GMT
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1,000 Days is the leading non-profit organization working in the U.S. and around the world to improve nutrition and ensure women and children have the healthiest first 1,000 days. We support the recommendation. Food security is a basic requisite for good nutrition. Better data on household food security is a major data gap.

Subject: Re: Measuring Household Food Insecurity
Posted by [Erin Milner](#) on Fri, 15 Mar 2019 21:52:16 GMT
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USAID supports this recommendation.

Subject: Re: Measuring Household Food Insecurity
Posted by [Olutayo](#) on Sat, 16 Mar 2019 03:49:24 GMT
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FAO Nigeria completely supports the recommendation to include the FIES in DHS. Understanding food-based determinants of malnutrition is an important gap in DHS, since health, environment and care aspects are more broadly covered. Food is a fundamental determinant of not just nutrition, but also health and reproductive function. Given that DHS is the authoritative data source for Nigeria and many other countries, the incorporation of FIES in the DHS will increase the utility and impact of the survey for informing decisions to improve nutrition and health.
