

FOOD CONSUMPTION ANALYSIS

Pathway Component: food access; diet

Search Category: food access; consumption

Date of Design: FCS first used in 1996; guide published in 2008

Designer: World Food Programme

Contact Institution: ODAN_info@wfp.org

URL:

http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/manual_guide_proced/wfp197216.pdf

CONTENT SUMMARY

Brief Description: The Food Consumption Score (FCS) is a composite score based on dietary diversity, food frequency, and the relative nutritional importance of different food groups. The FCS is calculated using the frequency of consumption of different food groups consumed by a household during the 7 days before the survey. Scores are clustered into three groups; the results of the analysis categorize each household as having either poor, borderline, or acceptable food consumption.

Uses: This composite score, measuring food frequency and dietary diversity, can be used in a variety of ways, including to:

- Compare food consumption across geography and time.
- Target households in need of food assistance.
- Monitor seasonal fluctuations in food consumption.
- Provide key diet information to early warning analyses.

Tool Components: Guidance on using the FCS is found in the Food Consumption Analysis

Guidelines. The primary technical components included in these guidelines include:

1. Current use of the Food Consumption Score
2. Calculation of the Food Consumption Score and Food Consumption Groups
3. Analysis of food consumption
4. Validation of the FCS and FCGs as a proxy indicator of food security
5. Considerations when using the FCS/FCGs in non CFSVA contexts
6. Discussion on key points of the FCS/FCG

OPERATIONS

Number of Staff Required: Not specified; this will be determined by the number of households included in the assessment.

Time: The time to administer the survey to a household will be relatively short. The analysis may be more complex but can be reduced in emergency contexts in which time is limited. When using the FCS within an emergency context, only two key steps are absolutely required in the analysis: creating the FCS and creating the three food consumption groups (poor, borderline, acceptable) based on analysis of the scores.

Cost of Assessment: Not specified; this will be determined by the size and scope of the assessment.

Training: Not specified, but enumerator training should be relatively simple (akin to Household Dietary Diversity Index and the Household Hunger Score). The analyst should have previous experience in data analysis.

Geographic Targeting: Not specified; this will be determined by the size and scope of the assessment.

Type of Data Collection: The FCS is a household survey.

Degree of Technical Difficulty: The guide recommends running a principle components analysis and cluster analysis on the collected data. These require advanced data analysis skills. This step, although important, may be skipped in emergency contexts in which time is limited.

Complements other Resources: The FCS is one indicator measuring dietary diversity and food frequency. A complete analysis of food security should include more comprehensive measures of food availability and utilization.