

MINIMUM DIETARY DIVERSITY - WOMEN

Outcome indicator, SDG indicator, DEVCO indicator

Indicator Phrasing

English: % of women of reproductive age (15 - 49 years) who ate foods from ≥ 5 food groups the previous day or night

French: % de femmes en âge de procréer (15 - 49 ans) ayant consommé des aliments appartenant à au moins 5 groupes d'aliments distincts le jour ou la nuit précédents

Portuguese: % de mulheres em idade reprodutiva (15- 49 anos de idade) que comeram alimentos de ≥ 5 grupos alimentares no dia ou noite anteriores

Czech: % žen v reprodukčním věku (15 - 49 let), které v uplynulém dni a noci konzumovaly jídlo z alespoň 5 potravinových skupin

What is its purpose?

MDD-W assesses the proportion of women 15-49 years of age who have consumed at least five out of the ten pre-defined food groups the previous day or night. It is an indicator of a diet's micronutrient adequacy, an important dimension of its quality.

How to Collect and Analyse the Required Data

Determine the indicator's value by conducting individual interviews with a [representative sample](#) of women aged 15 - 49 years:

- 1) Check whether yesterday was a **special day** (religious festival or celebration) when an 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) **Ask about and list all meals** which the respondent ate in the previous day in the Recording Meals Form (see below).
- 3) Double check the composition of the meal (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. **Double check** with the respondent regarding foods eaten from groups that were not mentioned (for example: "*Did you yesterday eat any eggs?*")

6) Count the **number of consumed food groups** consumed by the interviewed women during the previous day and night.

7) To **calculate the indicator's value**, divide the number of women who consumed food from at least 5 food groups by the total number of interviewed women. Multiply the result by 100 to convert it to a percentage.

Disaggregate by

[Disaggregate](#) the data by age groups and [wealth](#).

Important Comments

1) An alternative way of recording the data is to **use a list of all the food groups used by MDD-W**. The enumerators then ask women about consuming foods belonging to these food groups, always recording 'yes' or 'no' answers. Both the list-based method and the open recall method are open to overreporting, with the list method being more of a risk. See details in FAO guidance provided below.

2) According to FAO's Compendium of Indicators for Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture, **MDD-W has replaced WDDS** (Women's Dietary Diversity Score) indicator.

3) The main **difference between WDDS and MDD-W** is that while WDDS shows us the extent to which the target population changed the average diversity of its diet (for example, from an average of 3.5 to 4.3 food groups), MDD-W tells us the proportion of the target population whose diet is sufficiently varied (i.e. meet the requirement of including at least 5 food groups).

4) In addition to learning the proportion of women who consumed foods from 5 or more food groups, **MDD-W data can also be used to assess:**

- i) average dietary diversity score
- ii) proportion of women who consumed any specific food group, such as animal source foods

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

6) Record food groups in the questionnaire only after all meals were listed in the Recording Meals Form – **never record them straight away** as it is very likely that the number of food groups consumed will be underreported.

7) When training your 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**.

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

9) BHA phrases the indicator slightly differently, as "*percent of women of reproductive age consuming a diet of minimum diversity (MDD-W)*".

Take advantage of **FAO's guidance** on MDD-W (access below).

Access Additional Guidance

- FAO (2021) [Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women - An updated guide for measurement](#)
- PIN (2015) [Practical Checklist for Conducting Nutrition Surveys](#)
- [FAQs on MDD-W](#)
- PIN (2014) [Recording Meals Form for Assessing Dietary Diversity - Adults](#)