

INTRODUCTION OF SOLID, SEMI-SOLID OR SOFT FOODS

Outcome indicator, Output indicator, DEVCO indicator

Indicator Phrasing

English: % of infants aged 6 to 8 months of age who consumed solid, semi-solid or soft foods during the previous day

French: % de nourrissons âgés de 6 à 8 mois ayant consommé des aliments solides, semi-solides ou mous le jour précédent

Spanish: % de lactantes de 6 a 8 meses de edad que consumieron alimentos sólidos, semisólidos o blandos durante el día anterior

Portuguese: % de crianças com idades compreendidas entre os 6 e 8 meses que consumiram alimentos sólidos, semi-sólidos ou moles durante o dia anterior

Czech: % kojenců ve věku 6-8 měsíců, kteří během uplynulého dne konzumovali tuhou, polotuhou či měkkou stravu

What is its purpose?

At the age of 6 months, breastmilk is no longer sufficient to meet babies' nutritional needs and if complementary feeding is not introduced on time, they are at risk of undernutrition. This indicator therefore assesses whether children start complementary feeding at the appropriate age.

How to Collect and Analyse the Required Data

There are two main ways to determine the indicator's value. Both require conducting individual interviews with caregivers of a [representative sample](#) of children aged 6 - 8 months:

1) Using Data from Measuring Dietary Diversity

When measuring children's dietary diversity (see [guidance](#)), the recommended questionnaire also records how many different solid, semi-solid, or soft foods a child ate. You can use the data to determine the indicator's value.

2) Asking Directly

If you do not use the questionnaire mentioned above, you should then only use the following questions:

Q1: *Did [child's name] eat any solid, semi-solid, or soft foods yesterday?*

A1: yes / no / does not know

(if the previous answer is YES; verify it by asking the following question)

Q2: *What kind of solid, semi-solid, or soft foods did [child's name] eat yesterday?*

A2: (to be concluded by the interviewer)

- 1) yes, solid, semi-solid, or soft foods were eaten
- 2) no, solid, semi-solid, or soft foods were not eaten

To **calculate the indicator's value**, divide the number of children aged 6 - 8 months who ate any solid, semi-solid or soft foods during the previous day by the total number of children aged 6 - 8 months (excluding those where the "does not know" answer was provided). Multiply the result by 100 to convert it to a percentage.

Disaggregate by

[Disaggregate](#) the data by sex.

Important Comments

1) This indicator relies on an accurate age assessment. Since people often do not remember the exact dates of their children's birth, the data collectors should **always verify the child's age**. This can be done by reviewing the child's birth certificate, vaccination card or another document; however, since many caregivers do not have such documents (and since they can include mistakes), it is essential that your data collectors are able to **verify the child's age by using local events calendars**. Read FAO's Guidelines (see below) to learn how to prepare local events calendars and how to train data collectors in their correct use.

2) Most likely, the sampling of your survey will be the representative for "households with children aged 0 - 24/ 59 months", not for "6-8 months", resulting in **lower representativeness of the data for this indicator** (as only a small part of your sample will be children aged 6-8 months). Unless you have a separate (representative) sample for this age group, the best thing you can do is to ensure that your survey uses a larger sample of respondents (e.g. by using 95% confidence level and 4% margin of error).

E-Questionnaire

- [XLS form for electronic data collection - indicator Introduction of Solid, Semi-Solid or Soft Foods](#)

Access Additional Guidance

- WHO (2008) [Indicators for Assessing IYCF Practices Part 1: Definitions](#)

- PIN (2015) [Practical Checklist for Conducting Nutrition Surveys](#)
- WHO (2010) [Indicators for Assessing IYCF Practices Part 2: Measurement](#)
- FAO (2008) [Guidelines for Estimating the Month and Year of Birth of Young Children](#)