

SWEET BEVERAGE CONSUMPTION BY CHILDREN AGED 6 - 23 MONTHS

Indicator Phrasing

English: % of children aged 6 - 23 months who consumed a sweet beverage during the previous day

French: % d'enfants âgés de 6 à 23 mois ayant consommé une boisson sucrée le jour précédent

Portuguese: % de crianças com idades compreendidas entre 6-23 meses que consumiram uma bebida açucarada durante o dia anterior

Czech: % dětí ve věku 6 - 23 měsíců, které v uplynulém dni konzumovaly sladký nápoj

What is its purpose?

World Health Organisation guidance for complementary feeding advises against giving sweet drinks, such as soft drinks, to children. This is due to their ability to displace other nutritious foods, their links with obesity in childhood, increased risk of dental issues and links of fruit juice with child BMI z-scores. Therefore, this indicator assesses the proportion of children aged 6 - 23 months who consumed a sweet beverage during the previous day.

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 - 23 months:

1) Using Full WHO/UNICEF Liquids Questionnaire

WHO/UNICEF's "liquids questionnaire" (see pages 26 - 27 in the guidance below) also records data on the consumption of sweet drinks (questions 6Cswt, Q6Dswt, Q6Hswt, Q6Jswt, Q6E, Q6F and Q6G). You can use the data to determine the indicator's value. Since the questionnaire asks individually about various types of sweet drinks, its data might be more precise.

2) Asking About Sweet Drinks Only

If you do not want to administer the entire "liquid questionnaire", use the following question only:

Q1: *Yesterday, did [child's name] drink any sweet drink? For example, sweet tea, juice, soda, powdered sweet drink, sweet milk, sweet yoghurt, chocolate-flavoured sweet drink or any other sweetened drink?*

A1: yes / no / does not know

To **calculate the indicator's value**, divide the number of children aged 6 - 23 months who consumed a sweet beverage during the previous day by the total number of surveyed children aged 6 - 23 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 gender, age group and household wealth.

Important Comments

1) According to the WHO/UNICEF guidance (see below), **sweet beverages include:**

- commercially produced and packaged, sweetened beverages such as soda pop, fruit-flavoured drinks, sports drinks, chocolate and other flavoured milk drinks, malt drinks, etc.

- 100% fruit juice as well as fruit-flavoured drinks, whether made at home, by informal vendors or packaged in cans, bottles, boxes, sachets, etc.

- home-made drinks of any kind to which sweeteners (e.g. sugar, honey, syrup, flavoured powders) have been added.

It is very **important that the enumerators are trained on what would and wouldn't count** as a "sweet beverage". The training needs to cover a maximum number of the most common types of local beverages.

2) If a large proportion of the sweet drinks that children consume is purchased, the data might be prone to **seasonal differences**, as income and purchasing power of many families vary throughout the year. Do your best to collect baseline and endline data from the same time of year; otherwise, you will receive two sets of data which are not comparable.

3) If the caregiver is taking care of **two children aged 6 - 23 months** (from the same household) and household sampling has been used, then data should be collected for both children. If a list method has been used and children have been identified as the primary sampling unit, then data should only be collected for the sampled child.

4) This indicator relies on accurate age assessment. Since people often do not remember the exact dates of their children's birth, the enumerators should **always verify the child's age**. This can be done by reviewing the child's birth certificate, vaccination card or other document; however, since many caregivers do not have such documents (and since they can include mistakes), it is essential that the enumerators 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 enumerators in their correct use.

Access Additional Guidance

- WHO/UNICEF (2021) [Indicators for Assessing IYCF Practices](#)
- FAO (2008) [Guidelines for Estimating the Month and Year of Birth of Young Children](#)

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