



Measuring Success – Handbook

Part I: Quantitative Indicators - #ms02 FCS

#ms02 FCS – Households with acceptable Food Consumption Score (FCS)

Indicator Statements		
Indicator (in short)	Indicator	Number [actual value] (Share [%]) of households with acceptable Food Consumption Score (FCS)
	Unit of indicator	Number [actual value] of households
Project-level indicator statements	Baseline statement	<i>Result:</i> The number of households with acceptable FCS was x out of a total of N targeted households. (Sampling size = n households)
	Endline statement	<i>Result:</i> During the project period, out of a total of N targeted households, the number of households with acceptable FCS changed from x households (baseline) to y households (endline). (Sampling size = n households)

Background

Why do we use this indicator? Sustainable food and nutrition security (SFNS) represents a fundamental objective of WHH's #OnePlanetZeroHunger strategy. The Food Consumption Score (FCS) serves as a vital indicator for assessing household food and nutrition security. It enjoys widespread recognition and utilization by numerous institutional donors, including ECHO and WFP.

Malnutrition, in all its manifestations, stands as one of the primary channels through which poverty is transmitted from one generation to the next. Nutritional deficiencies compromise individuals' immune systems, potentially leading to physical disabilities or impaired cognitive development, particularly among children under the age of five.

Therefore, the attainment of adequate diets becomes a prerequisite for individuals to maintain good health, lead productive lives, and subsequently alleviate poverty. These diets encompass **not only access to food** in terms of caloric intake but also encompass **dietary diversity** and the consumption of various products with distinct nutritional values.



The **FCS indicator** is valuable in measuring **SFNS** as it assesses household food and nutrition security by considering **dietary diversity** and the consumption of different products with **varying nutritional values**.

What does this indicator assess? The #ms **FCS indicator** is a composite score for a household's food and nutrition security status based on **dietary diversity, food frequency**, and the **relative nutritional value of different food groups**. The FCS can thus be a proxy of households' food and nutrition security.

The **nine** predefined **food groups** are:

1. Main staples

2. Pulses

3. Vegetables

4. Fruit

5. Meat & fish

6. Milk

7. Sugar

8. Oil

9. Condiments

For which projects should this indicator be used? The indicator is suitable for projects and programs both in humanitarian and development settings **that aim to improve households' food and nutrition security.**

Typical intervention types for which this indicator is suitable are:

- **Agricultural interventions** directed at the increase of agricultural production, the diversification of food crops, improved storage capacities, post-harvest management, food processing, conservation packaging, marketing, and food commercialization
- Social and behavior change **activities promoting improved nutrition practices**
- **Kitchen gardens** for easy access to nutritious fresh foods (or fruit and vegetable production)
- **Year-round production** of or access to and regular consumption of animal source foods (poultry, eggs, fish, liver, heart, kidney, blood)
- **Food or cash distributions** or food- or cash-for-work interventions

Data Collection #ms02: FCS

Who should be interviewed? The **research unit** of the population (N) and the sample (n) for this indicator is **household**. The population size is composed of the number of households that are supposed to benefit directly from project intervention.

Questions should be addressed to **one member of each sampled household**, namely the person (adult) who is responsible for food preparation in the household. If the food is prepared by a child or young person, the questions should be addressed to the adult who makes the daily decisions about what will be prepared and eaten.

When should the data be collected? This indicator requires a baseline and comparison value(s) to yield meaningful information on project outcomes. **At minimum**, data should therefore be collected as part of both a **baseline** (early in the project before activity implementation starts) and an **endline** (shortly before or after the end of project implementation) **survey**.



Please note: Results may vary according to season (if collected during the period of greatest food shortage, such as immediately prior to the harvest, the score might be lower than if collected at a different time of the year). Therefore, **baseline and endline data collection** should be undertaken **at the same time of the year**.

Data should **not** be collected during fasting periods, such as pre-Easter time or Ramadan, nor on days after special feasts or occasions when dietary intake can be expected to be different from normal.



If the duration of an intervention is **shorter than one year** (e.g., a short-term food or cash assistance), *endline data does not necessarily have to (or cannot) be collected at the same time of the year as the baseline data. In this case, endline data should be collected **at or shortly after the end** of the intervention!*

Preparing data collection

Points to emphasize:

- The list of food groups is somewhat flexible as the individual foods mentioned in each food group/group should be **adapted to the regional context and season**. Knowledge of the local food habits as well as nutritional considerations should inform the creation of the list of mentioned foods. However, this list should not be too long as too many foods would confuse the respondent because detailed recall is difficult over a 7-day recall period.
- Enumerators should attend a **practical training session** led by CO MEAL staff or an external consultant and test the questionnaire before collecting data. In addition to advanced survey-collection skills, enumerators need a **basic understanding of nutrition**.
- Explain the idea behind food groups, using **images** to illustrate your point. It is easier for respondents to list the meals they have eaten if they can refer to a visual aid (for example a poster or a card with pictures).
- Do not gather information about actual quantities or the numbers of times certain foods have been eaten, but only about the **number of days** in which a food group has been consumed by the respondent household in the past 7 days.

Indicator calculation

The #ms FCS indicator assesses the **number of households with an acceptable FCS (>35)**.

To calculate the indicator, you first need to calculate the FCS, which is measured by the number of days a household has consumed different food groups during the 7 days before the survey. Each food group is weighted based on its nutritional importance (“importance weight”). The indicator is then calculated by counting the **number of households with an acceptable FCS**.

To **extrapolate**¹ the result from the survey to the (target) population:

1. Calculate the proportion of sampled households with an **acceptable FCS** out of the total number of sampled households; then
2. multiply the result by the total number of households within the (target) population (see below).

$$\frac{\text{Number of sampled households with **acceptable FCS**}}{\text{Total number of sampled households}} \times \text{Total number of households in the (target) population}$$

¹ Extrapolation is a process in which measured characteristics of a sample lead to estimates of unknown characteristics of the target population from which the sample was drawn. In a simple example, one might select a sample of targeted households, measure the share of households in the sample that achieve an FCS of > 35 (i.e., “acceptable”), and then use this share from the sample to estimate (i.e., extrapolate) the number of households with acceptable FCS among all targeted households.

Recommended calculation:

1. Assess **how many days** in the past 7 days the household members have eaten any of the 9 predefined food groups:

- Insert in the table the number of days a household has consumed each food group in the 7 days before the survey.

2. Create **weighted food group scores**:

- Add column for „weighted food group scores”.
- Multiply the obtained value for frequency of consumption of each food group by its “importance weight” (see table below).²
- Insert the obtained values in the new “weighted food group scores” (WFGS) column.



	Food items (<i>examples</i>)	Food groups	Weight ²
1	Maize, maize porridge, rice, sorghum, millet pasta, bread, and other cereals	Main staples	2
	Cassava, potatoes and sweet potatoes, other tubers, plantains		
2	Beans, peas, groundnuts and cashew nuts	Pulses	3
3	Vegetables, leaves	Vegetables	1
4	Fruits	Fruit	1
5	Beef, goat, poultry, pork, eggs, and fish	Meat and fish	4
6	Milk, yogurt, and other dairy	Milk	4
7	Sugar and sugar products, honey	Sugar	0.5
8	Oil, fats, and butter	Oil	0.5
9	Spices, tea, coffee, salt, fish powder, small amounts of milk in tea	Condiments	0

3. Calculate the **FCS**:

- Add column at the end of the table called “FCS”.
- Sum the “weighted food group scores” to calculate the FCS and insert the obtained value in the “FCS” column.
- **Please note:** Make sure to sum up only the **weighted food group scores** and **not the frequencies of food groups consumption**.

4. Identify **households with an acceptable FCS**:

- If the FCS is greater than 35 it means that the household has an acceptable FCS.
- **Please note:** For the #ms FCS indicator, it is sufficient to consider households with an acceptable FCS. However, it might be of interest for the project to classify households in three FCS profiles according to the thresholds in the following table.

² See p. 20 of [WFP's FCS technical guidance](#) for weights justification.



<i>FCS</i>	<i>Profile</i>
0 – 21	Poor FCS
21.5 – 35	Borderline FCS
> 35	Acceptable FCS



Calculate the **number of households with an acceptable FCS**:

- Sum up the number of households with an **FCS greater than 35** to obtain the #ms FCS indicator.

Please note that the threshold of 35 for an “acceptable FCS” is not valid in all contexts. If, for example, your target population homogeneously consumes oil and sugar nearly daily, the thresholds for the consumption groups can be raised **from 21 and 35 to 28 and 42** (by adding 7 to each threshold, this accounts for the daily consumption of oil and sugar which gives 7 points to the FCS).

Nevertheless, for #ms reporting, please refer to the threshold of 35 to allow for improved global comparability.



Please note: While **reporting on this indicator in ProMIS is done in absolute numbers** (number of households with acceptable FCS), the **global analysis at HO level is done in percentages** (share of households with acceptable FCS out of all targeted households in the project/program). We do this because relative analysis gives a much better picture of the status quo in a particular target group and allows for better comparability between projects/programs with different target group sizes.

Below is a calculation-matrix template for the #ms FCS calculation, where each row has been filled in for one respondent ([Link to the corresponding Excel matrix on WHH Intranet](#)).

Calculation matrix template (Link to the corresponding Excel matrix on WHH Intranet).

Step 1: Assess how many days in the past 7 days the household has eaten any of the 9 predefined types of food

1_main_staples	2_pulses	3_vege-tables	4_fruit	5_meat_fish	6_milk	7_sugar	8_oil	9_condiments
7	2	4	3	3	1	0	4	4
4	1	3	2	3	1	0	4	4
6	3	5	2	4	2	2	4	6

Step 2: Create extra columns for new weighted food group scores (weighed FGS)

Remark: Number in brackets represents **Food Group Importance Weight**; added columns are highlighted in darker grey; **Weighted FGS= Weighted Food Group Score**

1_main_staples	Weighted FGS (weight = 2)	2_pulses	Weighted FGS (weight = 3)	3_vege-tables	Weighted FGS (weight = 1)	4_fruit	Weighted FGS (weight = 1)	5_meat_fish	Weighted FGS (weight = 4)	6_milk	Weighted FGS (weight = 4)	7_sugar	Weighted FGS (weight = 0.5)	8_oil	Weighted FGS (weight = 0.5)	9_condiments	Weighted FGS (weight = 0)
7	14	2	6	4	4	3	3	3	12	1	4	0	0	4	2	4	0
4	8	1	3	3	3	2	2	3	12	1	4	0	0	4	2	4	0
6	12	3	9	5	5	2	2	4	16	2	8	2	1	4	2	6	0

Step 3: Add a column for the calculation of the Food Consumption Score (FCS). Calculate the FCS by adding up the values for the weighted food group scores (values in light grey cells)

1_main_staples	Weighted FGS (weight = 2)	2_pulses	Weighted FGS (weight = 3)	3_vege-tables	Weighted FGS (weight = 1)	4_fruit	Weighted FGS (weight = 1)	5_meat_fish	Weighted FGS (weight = 4)	6_milk	Weighted FGS (weight = 4)	7_sweets_sugar	Weighted FGS (weight = 0.5)	8_oil_fats	Weighted FGS (weight = 0.5)	9_condiments	Weighted FGS (weight = 0)	FCS
7	14	2	6	4	4	3	3	3	12	1	4	0	0	4	2	4	0	45
4	8	1	3	3	3	2	2	3	12	1	4	0	0	4	2	4	0	34
6	12	3	9	5	5	2	2	4	16	2	8	2	1	4	2	6	0	55

Step 4-5: Identify and count the number of households with an "acceptable FCS" (>35)

1_main_staples	Weighted FGS (weight = 2)	2_pulses	Weighted FGS (weight = 3)	3_vege-tables	Weighted FGS (weight = 1)	4_fruit	Weighted FGS (weight = 1)	5_meat_fish	Weighted FGS (weight = 4)	6_milk	Weighted FGS (weight = 4)	7_sweets_sugar	Weighted FGS (weight = 0.5)	8_oil_fats	Weighted FGS (weight = 0.5)	9_condiments	Weighted FGS (weight = 0)	FCS
7	14	2	6	4	4	3	3	3	12	1	4	0	0	4	2	4	0	45
4	8	1	3	3	3	2	2	3	12	1	4	0	0	4	2	4	0	34
6	12	3	9	5	5	2	2	4	16	2	8	2	1	4	2	6	0	55

All respondents with a score of min 35 have an acceptable FCS

Total	2
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Questionnaire for #ms Indicators - #ms02 FCS

This section contains the #ms questionnaire for all eleven indicators and is consistent with the Akvo Flow #ms template.

This section includes not only the questions and answers but also comments for enumerators (which can be used in training) and specifications for the person designing/adapting the project-level template.

Question ID	Question and Answer		Remarks for Different Users of #Measuring Success	
	Questions	Answers	Enumerators	Designer of Project-Specific Questionnaires
0.1	0.1: Before starting the interview			
0.1.1	WHH project ID	Project ID		This question is currently formatted as free text. You may change it to a multiple-choice format if necessary (e.g., when one survey covers two or more project IDs).
0.1.2	Date of interview	Date		

0.1.3	Consent to interview: I would like to ask you to provide your objective responses regarding your situation. Your participation is voluntary, and your information will be kept confidential. I have informed you about what type of data will be collected, for which purposes it will be used, with whom the data may be shared, and that you have the right to access your data and to ask for correction or deletion. Do you agree to the collection and processing of your data?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If "yes", proceed with questions - If "no", do not proceed with any further questions 		
0.2	0.2: Interviewee information			
0.2.1	Household location	Remark: Answer categories must be project-specific:		Free text question can be replaced by a cascading question if you wish
0.2.2	Geographical coordinates	Geo-coordinates		
0.2.3	Who is head of the household?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Father - Mother - Grandmother - Grandfather - Child/Youth - Other 		

0.2.4	Name & surname of interviewee	<p>Name / surname</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Interviewee is Head of Household</p>	<p>Before starting the interview, make sure that relevant persons are present, mainly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For #ms01 MAHFP and #ms02 FCS: the person (adult) who is responsible for food preparation in the household. - For #ms03 MDD-W: a woman aged 15-49 - For #ms04 Drinking water: the person (adult) who is responsible for handling the household's drinking water - For #ms05 Sanitation: the person (adult) who is responsible for maintaining the sanitation facility used by household members - For #ms06 Income: the head of the household or a person responsible for or aware of the care and organization of the household - For #ms07 Skills: a training graduate - For #ms08 Agriculture and #ms09 Climate Resilience: the person (adult) who is responsible for the usage of the promoted measure and who received input and/or trainings from WHH/partners/the project. - For #ms10 Women in decision-making: an adult woman - For #ms11 Participants' satisfaction: a project participant 	
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0.2.5	What is the sex of the interviewee?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Female - Male - Other - Don't know / No answer 		
0.2.6	Age of the interviewee?	Figure		Allow only numeric values up to 99
0.3: Choice of Indicators				
0.3.1	On which indicators will you collect data in this household?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - #ms01: Food Access (MAHFP) - #ms02: Food Consumption Score (FCS) - #ms03: Nutrition Diversity (MDD-W) - #m04: Drinking Water - #ms05: Sanitation - #ms06: Income - #ms07: Employment - #ms08: Agriculture - #ms09: Climate Resilience - #ms10: Women in Decision-making - #ms11: Participants' Satisfaction 		

02	Food Consumption Score (FCS)			
02.1	Verification of interview partner: TO BE FILLED IN BY ENUMERATOR: Verify that the selected respondent is the person (adult) in the HH responsible for food preparation. [If the food is prepared by a child, address questions to the adult who makes the decisions about the food prepared and eaten.]	- Yes - No		
02.2	I would like to ask you about all the different foods that your household members have eaten in the past 7 days : Could you please tell me how many days in the past week has your household eaten the following foods [name one by one the 9 predefined food groups]?			Adapt the list of food groups (02.3-02.11) according to the local context (remove those food types that are not consumed and add those that are missing; the list should be detailed enough to distinguish among food groups)
02.3	Cereals, grains, roots and tubers, such as: Rice, pasta, bread, sorghum, millet, maize, potato, yam, cassava, white sweet potato	Number between 0 and 7		Allow only numeric values between 0 and 7

02.4	Pulses/legumes/nuts, such as: beans, cowpeas, peanuts, lentils, nuts, soy, pigeon pea and/or other nuts (including hummus, tofu and tempeh)	Number between 0 and 7		Allow only numeric values between 0 and 7
02.5	Vegetables and leaves, such as: spinach, onion, tomatoes, carrots, peppers, green beans, lettuce, etc.	Number between 0 and 7		Allow only numeric values between 0 and 7
02.6	Fruits, such as: bananas, apples, lemon, mango, papaya, apricot, peach, etc.	Number between 0 and 7		Allow only numeric values between 0 and 7
02.7	Meat, fish and eggs, such as: goat, beef, chicken, pork, blood, fish, including canned tuna, escargot, and/or other seafood, eggs	Number between 0 and 7		Allow only numeric values between 0 and 7
02.8	Milk and other dairy products, such as: fresh milk / sour, yoghurt, cheese, and other dairy products	Number between 0 and 7		Exclude margarine/butter or small amounts of milk for tea/coffee Allow only numeric values between 0 and 7
02.9	Sugar, or sweet, such as: sugar, honey, jam, cakes, candy, cookies, pastries, cakes and other sweet (sugary drinks)	Number between 0 and 7		Allow only numeric values between 0 and 7
02.10	Oil/fat/butter, such as: vegetable oil, palm oil, shea butter, margarine, and other fats/oil	Number between 0 and 7		Allow only numeric values between 0 and 7

02.11	Condiments/ spices, such as: tea, coffee/cocoa, salt, garlic, spices, yeast/baking powder, lanwin, tomato/sauce, meat or fish as a condiment, condiments including a small amount of milk/tea coffee	Number between 0 and 7		Allow only numeric values between 0 and 7
02.12	Type of survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Baseline survey - Endline survey - Midterm or other survey 		