

## Household Food Consumption Tool

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This food consumption tool will help you to measure and monitor the quantity and quality of food eaten by people in the project area. The goal is to report the percentage of the population who are not eating enough or well enough. By repeating the survey at various times, you can track changes in the amount and quality of food being eaten – are people eating more, less, or the same? This tool is based on the FANTA Guide *Measuring Household Food Consumption: A Technical Guide*, available in .pdf format from the FANTA website ([www.fanta.org](http://www.fanta.org)) or from the Foodgrains Bank.

### Data Collection

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Add the food frequency and diversity tables (below) to the questionnaire that you will use with households. **Make sure that you review each food on the diversity list.** Eliminate any foods that are not relevant or important to the target population. Add any foods that are relevant and important. Allow people from the target population to help you identify the key foods through focus group discussions and by testing the tool before you use it for the survey. **This is very important.** Including irrelevant foods will increase your workload. Ignoring locally important foods will reduce the usefulness of the tool.

#### Food Frequency Table

(Add this table to your questionnaire)

During the previous 24-hour period, did you or anyone in your household consume:

	Yes	No
a) Any food before a morning meal		
b) A morning meal		
c) Any food between morning and midday meals		
d) A midday meal		
e) Any food between midday and evening meals		
f) An evening meal		
g) Any food after the evening meal		
TOTAL		

**NOTE: Ask about each possible meal or snack. People often leave out or forget certain meal times. Record the total number of mealtimes for the household (number of “yes” responses).**

### Food Diversity Table

During the previous 24-hour period, did you or anyone in your household consume:

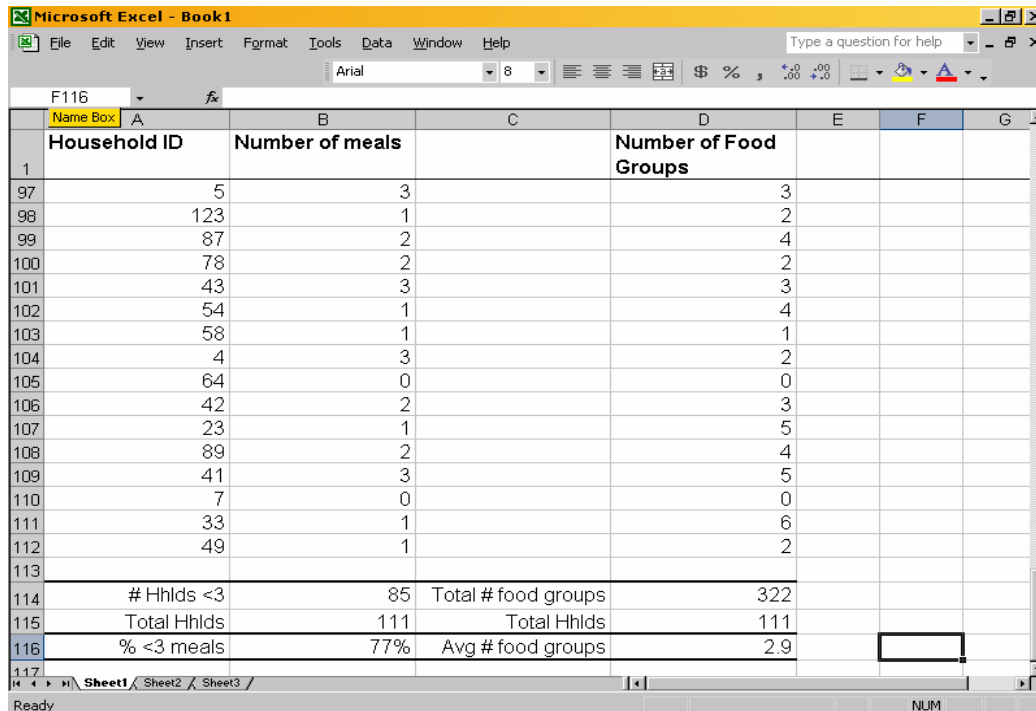
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
a) Cereals (maize, rice, bread)		
b) Roots/Tubers (potato, cassava)		
c) Legumes (lentils, beans, peas)		
d) Milk/Milk Products (milk, yogurt, cheese)		
e) Eggs		
f) Meat/offal		
g) Fish/Seafood		
h) Oil/Fat (butter, vegetable oil, palm oil)		
i) Sugar/Honey		
j) Fruits (banana, orange, mango)		
k) Vegetables (spinach, onion, carrot)		
TOTAL		

**NOTE: Substitute local foods as examples in each food group. Record the total number of food groups consumed by the household.**

## Data Analysis

The results from each questionnaire should be entered into a computer spreadsheet (e.g. Excel) or statistical package. Set up the spreadsheet as follows: leave one row for each household, one column for number of meals and one column for number of food groups. In each row enter the household ID (a number that you use to identify individual households) and the total number of meals and food groups (from the questionnaire)

We will use a simple example where 111 households were surveyed regarding their food consumption. The data were entered into an Excel Spreadsheet:



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
	Name Box						
	Household ID	Number of meals		Number of Food Groups			
1							
97	5	3		3			
98	123	1		2			
99	87	2		4			
100	78	2		2			
101	43	3		3			
102	54	1		4			
103	58	1		1			
104	4	3		2			
105	64	0		0			
106	42	2		3			
107	23	1		5			
108	89	2		4			
109	41	3		5			
110	7	0		0			
111	33	1		6			
112	49	1		2			
113							
114	# Hhlds <3	85	Total # food groups	322			
115	Total Hhlds	111	Total Hhlds	111			
116	% <3 meals	77%	Avg # food groups	2.9			
117							

## Diet Quantity

Once all data have been entered, you can do the analysis. The most straightforward method is to calculate the % of households eating less than (for example) three meals per day. This cut-off can be altered, depending on local consumption patterns (for example, you might use two meals per day as the cut-off).

If you are using a spreadsheet such as Excel, you can use the COUNTIF formula to automatically calculate the number of households eating less than three meals per day. (In the example, the formula is =COUNTIF(B2:B112,"<3") – in other words, calculate the number of households with values less than three between B2 and B112).

You can then calculate the % by dividing the number of households consuming less than three meals per day by the total number of households (in the example: 85 households divided by the total of 111 households = 77% eating less than three meals per day). By doing a repeat survey at the mid-point or end of the project, you can assess whether the number of households with inadequate intake (less than three meals per day) has increased or decreased (a decrease might indicate an improvement in access to food).

### **Diet Quality**

Once you have entered the number of food groups consumed by each household, you can do the analysis. The most straightforward method is to calculate the average number of food groups consumed. Simply add the total number of food groups eaten (322 in the example) and divide by the total number of households surveyed (111 in the example). This gives you the average number of food groups eaten by households in the survey area (2.9 in the example).

By doing a repeat survey at the mid-point or end of the project, you can assess whether the average number of food groups in the diet has increased or decreased (an increase might indicate an improvement in the quality of the diet – people are eating a more diverse range of foods).

### **Presentation**

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When you report this information, you may use a simple table as follows. Final reports should contain both the pre-project (baseline) results and the end-of-project results, to assess whether there has been any change in diet quantity and quality.

*Table 1. Diet quantity and quality among households in Anywhereia Region*

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>End of project</b>
% Eating less than three meals per day	77	40
Average number of food groups consumed	2.9	4.5

As always, your report should contain a clear description of your methods of data collection and analysis, and your interpretation of the results.