

Affordability of a Healthy Diet

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NATIONAL BUREAU OF STATISTICS



Food Prices for
Nutrition 

The logo for the Food Prices for Nutrition initiative, featuring a row of colorful human figures in various colors (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple) standing on a white base.

How many people cannot afford a healthy diet?

- Affordability analyses compare Cost of a Healthy Diet to a measure of income
 - Global level: Compare CoHD to 52% of income using national accounts data compiled by World Bank ICP
- National measurement options:
 - Household expenditure
 - Wages



Affordability of Healthy Diets: Example

Person 1

Location: Abia Rural

Month: June 2023

Cost per adult per day: 767 Naira

Income per day: 1000 Naira

Person 2

Location: Abuja Urban

Month: June 2023

Cost per adult per day: 431 Naira

Income per day: 400 Naira

Findings from global CoAHD analysis

- For about 3 billion people (40% of the global population), healthy diets remain unaffordable
- Nutrient-rich foods are more costly to grow and distribute than starchy staples, vegetable oil & sugar
- Most unaffordability is due to low incomes, so healthier diets will require higher earnings or safety nets

National and global CoAHD may differ

- **Price data**
 - Overall, national data are likely to result in lower costs
- **Dietary standard**
 - The cost of national FBDG and HDB can have small differences, as we have seen
 - *In Nigeria, use HDB because it aligns closely with Eat Well to Live Well*
- **Affordability standards**
 - The % of income spent on food; in many countries the actual % of income spent on food is different than 52%
 - *In Nigeria, about 56%*

Global data is online at
<https://databank.worldbank.org/source/food-prices-for-nutrition>
and
<https://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/CAHD>

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International Comparison Program (ICP) / Briefs

Food Prices for Nutrition DataHub: global statistics on the cost and affordability of healthy diets

Food Prices for Nutrition

Over 3 billion people - 42% of the global population - could not afford a healthy diet in 2021

Population who cannot afford a healthy diet, 2021

Share of population (%) Millions of people who cannot afford a healthy diet

0% 50% 100% 100 400 1,000

DATA ACCESS

2023 Update

DataBank

Download Food Prices for Nutrition data from the World Bank's DataBank

www.fao.org/faostat/en#data/CAHD

Navigation bar showing browser address (fao.org/faostat/en#data/CAHD), search bar, and various utility icons (Gmail, Calendly, Diet cost metrics f..., ChatGPT, Country Engagem..., RGilbert_MealPre..., FPN Dash, Kristina / Anna / R..., Time, All Bookmarks).

Domain Code	Domain	Area Code (M49)	Area	Element Code	Element	Item Code	Item	Year Code	Year	Unit	Value
CAHD	Cost and Affordability of a Healthy Diet (CoAHD)	566	Nigeria	6121	Value	7005	Percentage of the population unable to afford a healthy diet (percent)	2017	2017	%	90.2
CAHD	Cost and Affordability of a Healthy Diet (CoAHD)	566	Nigeria	6121	Value	7005	Percentage of the population unable to afford a healthy diet (percent)	2018	2018	%	91.1
CAHD	Cost and Affordability of a Healthy Diet (CoAHD)	566	Nigeria	6121	Value	7005	Percentage of the population unable to afford a healthy diet (percent)	2019	2019	%	91.8
CAHD	Cost and Affordability of a Healthy Diet (CoAHD)	566	Nigeria	6121	Value	7005	Percentage of the population unable to afford a healthy diet (percent)	2020	2020	%	93.1
CAHD	Cost and Affordability of a Healthy Diet (CoAHD)	566	Nigeria	6121	Value	7005	Percentage of the population unable to afford a healthy diet (percent)	2021	2021	%	93.5

Affordability Indicators

- Ratio of the cost of a healthy diet to food expenditure per adult per day
 - Ratio of the cost of an energy-sufficient diet to food expenditure per adult per day
 - Can also do this with wage data as in Ethiopia bulletin
- Proportion of the population whose food budget is less than the cost of a healthy diet
 - In global analysis, food expenditure data are also from [the International Comparison Program](#) dataset
 - At the national level, we can use household surveys (e.g., NLSS 2018/19) to estimate a food budget

Why is this useful?

- Identifying least-cost items and diet costs helps guide intervention
 - **Cost:** which items and food groups have the most potential to improve affordability of healthy diets?
 - **Incomes:** Which people would need higher incomes or safety nets to afford healthy diets?
 - **Preferences:** How and why unhealthy foods enter to displace the items in least-cost healthy diets