

Takeaway report for the convening of stakeholders and workshop on
**Monitoring the Cost and Affordability of a Healthy Diet
Within Countries and Globally**

Hosted at the World Bank Headquarters in Rome, Italy from 28-30 October 2024



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Key messages from our workshop

1. Country experiences show how to generate and use diet cost and affordability data

- In **Nigeria**, data are collected and analyzed by the national bureau of statistics (NBS). CoHD results are published and downloaded by hundreds of people each month, widely covered in national media, and used in policy debates such as the decision to raise Nigeria's minimum wage in 2024.
- In **Ethiopia**, health officials (EPHI) lead analysis of price data from the national statistical service (ESS). Initial use of the metric is to implement the new national dietary guidelines for public health and nutrition.
- In **Malawi**, the national statistical office (NSO) leads data collection and analysis. The price statistics unit is expanding from one person to a team, digitizing data collection, and preparing to publish CoHD bulletins alongside rebasing the CPI with new household survey data.
- In **Ghana**, agriculture officials (MoFA) collect and analyze food market data. To monitor diet costs, item lists were expanded to include additional vegetables so that data about all foods needed for healthy diets can be used to inform decision making including around Ghana's new national dietary guidelines.
- In **Pakistan**, the national bureau of statistics (PBS) will work with the agricultural research council (PARC) to monitor diet costs. The scale and capabilities of PBS are expected to facilitate timely analysis of variation in diet costs decision making by the Ministry of Planning and other agencies.
- In the **Caribbean**, the FAO regional office supports country governments in calculating CoHD, providing a streamlined method to update previous efforts, and contributing to national and regional goals such as CARICOM's 25x2025 Initiative.

2. International organizations provide global standards for analysis and use of national data

- **Global statistics** on diet costs and affordability are jointly calculated and reported by FAO and the World Bank in FAOSTAT and the World Bank DataBank. FAO has established a precedent for global monitoring of CoAHD by publishing results in each SOFI report since 2020 and leverages price and income data provided by the World Bank under a newly signed MoU.
- **Interventions and impact assessments** led by WFP and IFAD are informed by diet cost and affordability analyses. WFP uses proprietary tools (ENHANCE, FNG) to improve program decisions, and IFAD seeks to use CoAHD as an indicator in impact evaluations.

3. Countries share strategies to meet ongoing needs and face similar constraints

- **CoAHD is calculated from existing food price data collection.** In most countries, CoAHD requires no new data collection. National price offices provide food item price data used for CPIs, and knowledge of data collection protocols. Data collection practices vary across countries and hinder CoAHD calculations when processes are not digitized and the data requires intense cleaning (e.g. Malawi, Ghana). Difficulties sharing data within regional and national offices of the same agency or between agencies can constrain timely analysis (e.g. Ethiopia).
- **Diet cost calculation and data analysis responsibilities vary between countries.** To calculate CoHD, national statistics agencies frequently collaborate with another sectoral agency (health in Ethiopia, agriculture in Pakistan, health and agriculture in Caribbean countries), or sometimes

stand on their own to calculate CoAHD (Nigeria, Malawi). CoAHD calculations are done by a small number of analysts within national government agencies, who are overstretched and require technical assistance. Further technical assistance is needed to support affordability calculations.

- **Interpretation, publication, and communication of results are the next frontier.** Most countries have yet to publish CoAHD results on a regular basis but have clear visions for their publication strategy. Educational materials are needed to help the public, media, and civil society understand CoAHD results.
- **Collaboration between government agencies is needed to integrate CoAHD into policy decisions.** The role of decision-makers in CoAHD analysis varies across countries, as some are involved from the beginning and others are not yet involved. Key sectors include agriculture, labor, social protection, and health.

4. Future opportunities can be realized with additional resources and collaboration

- **Current efforts by national governments to calculate CoAHD face challenges to be sustained in the long term.** The knowledge, skills, and political will to calculate diet cost and affordability metrics rest with a small number of motivated individuals within national government agencies which means that continued efforts may be compromised by personnel changes. Additional technical training is required to diffuse knowledge across agencies to mitigate the risks of turnover.
- **Method standardization can help more countries adopt these indicators.** Clearer guidance on calculating and reporting CoAHD from international organizations (UNSC, FAO, WB) can make it easier for new countries to pursue this agenda and was requested in the workshop. Analyses and protocols can be harmonized across regions, learning from Cadre Harmonisé, SADC, COMESA, and others to integrate this agenda in broader goals, increase collaborative efforts, and protect against political risks within one country. Establishing CoAHD as an indicator of development goals (Post-SDG, Post-Malabo) could also increase demand for the indicator and motivate more collaboration between those monitoring at national and global levels.
- **Increased use of annual data from countries can improve global monitoring.** Current global monitoring of CoAHD is limited by long gaps and lags in the global price dataset produced by the International Comparison Program (ICP). Increasing the frequency of price updates, and collaboration with NSOs, would improve timeliness and relevance for countries.
- **Highlight the relevance of Diet cost and affordability for decision-making.** Regular reporting of CoHD in Nigeria has gained media attention and been used to increase the minimum wage, demonstrating the potential of these indicators to inform decision making when they are readily available. Customized analysis can inform interventions in agriculture to increase supply of low-cost foods, social protection to increase affordability, and health to mitigate displacement.

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Workshop slides are [here](#) and photos are [here](#).

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Roadmaps for national level monitoring

The following section contains workplans for calculating, reporting, and using CoAHD in 2025 created by workshop participants representing national government agencies in Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Malawi.

Nigeria

The Cost of Healthy Diet (CoHD) has been institutionalized in the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in Nigeria and is now being reported monthly at rural-urban level for each state on the NBS website. Key next steps for the monitoring of the cost and affordability of healthy diet (CoAHD) in Nigeria focus on monitoring of affordability; increasing the understanding of CoAHD indicators by policymakers, the media, and the public; and translating CoAHD findings into transformative agricultural and social protection policies.

Timeline for Improving the Monitoring of CoAHD in Nigeria in 2025

Activity	Organization(s) Responsible	Jan– Feb	Mar– Apr	May– Jun	Jul– Aug	Sep– Oct	Nov– Dec
Monitoring the affordability of healthy diets							
Technical capacity building for computing affordability and CoHD. There is need for periodic retraining to include newly deployed staff	NBS GAIN With FPN support						
Determine affordability of CoHD using the 2022/2023 Nigeria Living Standards Survey Consumption data	NBS GAIN With FPN support						
Develop advocacy materials to mobilize support for frequent monitoring of wages (of daily wage earners) to calculate a proxy measure of CoHD relative to income (wages affordability of CoHD) that can be monitored routinely	GAIN						
Increase understanding of CoAHD indicators							
Organize media roundtables to increase understanding of journalists about CoAHD	NBS GAIN						
Develop visual representations of some least-cost baskets to aid understanding of indicators	GAIN University of Ibadan						

	With FPN support		
Translating CoAHD into policy actions			
Identification and protocol development for collection of additional data to support decision making using CoAHD	NBS		
Literature review and development of modelling tools that can be used to identify policy options that will increase affordability of CoAHD	NBS FMAFS		
Use the CoHD method to calculate the least cost of healthy school meals at state level and necessary budget of school meal per child (factoring in cost of transport and meal preparations) and develop policy briefs to disseminate findings	NBS FMAFS GAIN		

Ethiopia

- Engage higher officials (ESS and EPHI).** To strengthen support for the implementation of the cost of a healthy diet indicator, it is crucial to secure the commitment and active participation of senior leaders from the Ethiopian Statistics Service (ESS) and the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI). This engagement will ensure institutional backing and enhance the integration of the indicator into national systems. An official letter has been prepared by EPHI, and an in-person visit to the Ethiopian Statistical Service is scheduled.
 - Who: ESS (Hagos Haile) and EPHI (Tadesse Kebebe/ Dawit A.)
 - When: December 1st, 2024
- Disseminate 2023 results via EPHI Website and NiPN Portal.** To ensure stakeholders have timely access to data and insights, findings will continue to be shared through the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI) website and the National Information Platform for Nutrition (NiPN) Portal. These platforms provide a reliable and accessible means of disseminating key information, supporting informed decision-making and fostering broader stakeholder engagement.
 - Who: ESS (Hagos Haile: data provider) and EPHI (IFPRI: Tirsit G./Tadesse Kebebe/Dawit A.)
 - For 2023, December, 2024
 - For 2024, March 15, 2025
- Involve key stakeholders and organize consultative workshops.** Expand engagement by involving relevant ministries such as Agriculture, Health, Education, and Labor and Social Affairs across national and regional levels for coordinated action. Mobilize budget and facilitate workshops in collaboration with Tufts FPN and NiPN Ethiopia at federal and regional levels to build

understanding, gather feedback, and enhance stakeholder collaboration. (Undergo at least 3 regional and 1 Federal/National workshop)

- Who: Rachel Gilbert and FPN team, EPHI-NiPN (Tadesse Kebebe/Dawit A., IFPRI: Tirsit) and from ESS (Hagos Haile)
- When: February 15-20, 2025
- **Expand outreach via webinars and seminars through NiPN.** Use virtual and in-person platforms to broaden dissemination and discussion, reaching a wider network of stakeholders.
 - Who: EPHI (Tadesse Kebebe/Dawit A./ IFPRI: IFPRI: Tirsit G.) and From ESS (Hagos Haile)
 - When: January 27 - February 5, 2025
- **Appoint a focal point for newsletters.** Identify a dedicated person to develop and circulate regular newsletters or updates, keeping stakeholders informed of progress and developments.
 - Who: EPHI (Dawit A./Tadesse Kebebe) and ESS (Hagos Haile)
 - When: December, 2025
- **Establish a feedback mechanism.** Create a structured process to collect stakeholder feedback on dissemination activities, enabling continuous improvement in communication and engagement strategies.
 - Who: EPHI (Tadesse Kebebe/ Dawit A./IFPRI: Tirsit G.) and From ESS (Hagos Haile)
 - When: February, 2025

Malawi

Data analysis:

- **Most recent data:** Update the CoHD results with the most recent data i.e. 2024. It will be of interest to the stakeholders to receive the most recent results. We only have up to 2022 results, but we could plan to analyze and disseminate the 2024 CoHD results.
- **Disaggregation:** Break down the analysis by district, region, urban/rural areas, to identify disparities and inform targeted interventions.

Stakeholder engagement and dissemination:

- **Monthly bulletins:** We plan to publish monthly bulletins a week or two weeks after the publication of the corresponding National CPI and inflation rates, like the NBS in Nigeria. The draft bulletin has been designed and awaits approval before publication.
- **Tailored communication:** Develop clear and concise communication materials that are tailored to different audiences, such as policymakers, researchers, and the public in addition to the bulletin since this seems to be a new indicator in the country. This should be done in the first year of publishing the CoHD results.
- **Interactive data visualization:** Utilize interactive data visualizations to make the CoHD results more engaging and accessible.
- **Policy recommendations:** Based on the findings, develop specific policy recommendations to improve food access and affordability. Findings may inform targeted social protection programs; agricultural interventions to boost production of nutrient-dense foods; food fortification programs; and consumer education campaigns.

- **Collaboration with international organizations:** Partner with organizations like the World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to share experiences and best practices.

Additional considerations:

- **Long-term monitoring:** Establish a regular monitoring system to track changes in the CoHD over time and assess the impact of interventions.
- **Capacity building:** Continue to invest in capacity building for data analysts and policymakers to ensure the sustainability of CoHD analysis and policy implementation. In the Prices and Index numbers section, we currently have four Statisticians and a Principal Statistician. These officers may be part of the team that works on the cleaning and analysis of the price data. As a first step, we recommend a training for these officers focusing on advanced Excel and/or STATA or even R packages to allow them to choose the software they are comfortable with. If agreed, this could be done in January or February next year. We also have a team of over thirty data collectors from the Head office and the regional officers. The training that was conducted in June this year was very useful and targeted this group of officers. They appreciated the need for the timely processing of the data and for capturing all the three samples for each item in all markets as required. The training saw the team understand how the price data primarily collected for the CPI compilation could also be used in other analysis like CoHD calculation.
- **Migrating to CAPI based questionnaire:** NSO Malawi plans to migrate to an electronic system of data collection from the current paper-based system to improve the quality of price data and to expediate the data processing cycle. The process has already started with the World Bank providing technical and financial assistance. Currently, the electronic questionnaire has been developed using World Bank's Survey solutions platform. A consultant from the World Bank is currently in Malawi to assist the NSO in this work. The team from NSO is populating the instrument with items, outlets and markets for each target location. When this activity is done, the next step would be to conduct a pre-test so that the tool is tested, and all observations are corrected. Upon successful completion of the pilot phase and if the team is satisfied with the system, the plan is to observe the instrument for six months before we fully migrate to CAPI. In this migration, the NSO requires equipment such as Tablets, Power banks, and dedicated servers. This equipment should be very reliable ones since price data collection is an on-going activity indefinitely every month. The first round of tablets will be procured under the World Bank project. However, we require this kind of support now and again, i.e. every 3 years or 5 years depending on the performance of these tools over time.
- **Financial support:** As discussed in Rome, most of these activities would require some financial assistance for the additional work done.

Workshop agenda

Day 1: Progress to date within countries and globally | October 28

Goals:

- Understand the history, purpose, and use of the Cost and Affordability of a Healthy Diet (CoAHD) indicator
- Understand progress on monitoring CoAHD in Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Nigeria, Pakistan, and the Caribbean
- Understand the role of the World Bank and FAO in maintaining a global monitoring system for CoAHD

Session topic	Participants
Welcome and introductions	
Welcome remarks: World Bank, Food Prices for Nutrition, FAO	Gero Carletto, William Masters, Anna Herforth, José Rosero Moncayo
Introduction of participants	William Masters
Development & use of the new diet cost and affordability metrics	Anna Herforth
National governments share reporting and use of diet cost and affordability indicators	
Nigeria	Anthony Ayo, Bukola Mercy Babalola, Nuhu Kilishi, Olutayo Adeyemi
Ethiopia	Dawit Chekol (remote)
Pakistan	Ghulam Sadiq Afridi (remote), Sarwar Gondal
Ghana	Eunice Arhin
Malawi	Imran Chiosa
Grenada	Gardeina Savoury
Cross-country comparisons and lessons learned	Open discussion
International organizations share reporting and use of diet cost and affordability indicators	
FAO vision for global monitoring and links to global frameworks	José Rosero Moncayo
WB data and methodology collaboration for global monitoring	Marko Rissanen
FAO LAC regional and subregional monitoring	Maxime Luciéné
World Food Programme - Fill the Nutrient Gap and CoAHD	Saskia de Pee
IFAD program evaluation and policy	Tisorn Songsermsawas
Global stock taking and lessons learned	Open discussion

Day 2: Future directions for national and global monitoring | October 29

Goals:

- *Determine future workflows for national governments, and between national governments and the World Bank and FAO for global monitoring*
- *Address how and what financing and support are needed to realize future workflows*
- *Understand best practices for supporting the adoption of CoAHD monitoring by additional national governments*

Session topic	Participants
<i>Future plans for CoAHD monitoring</i> Recap and overview of day one Visioning activity for the future of monitoring Small group discussion of common constraints and solutions	William Masters National level and global level teams Paired country teams, global level teams
<i>Share lessons learned & links between global and national monitoring</i> Discuss constraints and solutions and lessons for current and future monitoring efforts	Full group

Day 3: Technical workshop | October 30

Goals:

- *Identify and address technical barriers to CoAHD calculation with representatives from national government agencies*
- *Finalize protocols for calculating and reporting CoAHD by national government agencies*

Session topic	Participants
<i>Presentations on and discussion of technical issues and CoAHD methods</i> Calculating affordability WFP support of cost and affordability analysis	FPN project team Saskia de Pee
<i>Technical support session for finalizing bulletins and protocols</i> Video tutorial (here) Review of needed actions to update the food list when the CPI is rebased Visualizations in Excel Adaptations of the Excel workbook for different contexts	National government teams

Participant directory

(Alphabetical by first name)

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