



Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations

## FAO Statistics Working Paper Series

Issue 21/25

### **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FOOD INSECURITY AND DIETARY OUTCOMES**

AN ANALYSIS CONDUCTED WITH NATIONALLY REPRESENTATIVE DATA FROM  
KENYA, MEXICO, SAMOA, AND THE SUDAN





# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FOOD INSECURITY AND DIETARY OUTCOMES

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Required citation: Alvarez-Sanchez, C., Moltedo, A., Troubat, N., Manyani, T., Yassin, F., Kepple, A. and Cafiero, C. 2021. *The relationship between food insecurity and dietary outcomes – An analysis conducted with nationally representative data from Kenya, Mexico, Samoa, and the Sudan*. FAO Statistics Working Paper 21-25. Rome, FAO. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb6217en>

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ISBN 978-92-5-134819-2

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## Abstract

Households and individuals that experience moderate or severe food insecurity may have poorer diets, in quantity or in quality, than their food secure counterparts. Much of the evidence highlighting the associations between food insecurity and diet comes from North America. However, far less research has been conducted on the association of food insecurity, particularly at the moderate level, and dietary consumption in low- and middle-income countries. This study expands on previous work by considering cross-country comparable measures of food insecurity that are calibrated against the global Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES). We use three household consumption and expenditure surveys, two from lower-middle-income countries (Kenya and the Sudan), and one from an upper-middle-income country (Samoa); as well as an individual dietary intake survey from Mexico (upper-middle-income country). The four surveys are nationally representative and include the FIES (Kenya, Samoa and the Sudan) or a similar experience-based food insecurity measure (Mexico). Estimates of the average usual consumption of foods from ten food groups, dietary energy, and macronutrients are computed by food insecurity class. Overall, the analysis reveals that people who experience moderate or severe food insecurity consume less meat and dairy products (in all four countries) and less fruits and vegetables (Kenya and the Sudan) than those who are food secure or mildly food insecure. Consumption of cereals, roots, tubers and plantains, and pulses, seeds and nuts either decreases slightly, remains similar, or increases, resulting in a higher proportional contribution of these food groups to the total diet. Consequently, the more food insecure people are, the larger the share of staples in their diet. This holds true even if food insecure people in Kenya and the Sudan reduce their consumption of staples, because they reduce consumption of other food groups even more.

## Keywords

ELCSA, food insecurity, FIES, Food Insecurity Experience Scale, food consumption, diet quality, Kenya, Mexico, Samoa, Sudan.



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