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Food Prices for Nutrition

Are healthy diets affordable?

Using new data on retail prices and diet costs to guide agricultural and food policy

Aims and agenda for a **World Bank Online Event** on Thursday July 14th, 2022

followed by an **IFPRI Policy Seminar** on Friday July 15th, 2022

both 10am ET (=7am Seattle, 4pm Rome, 7:30pm Delhi)

co-organized with the FAO and Tufts University

following the launch of SOFI 2022 on July 6th, 2022

Summary and motivation

This concept note provides the agenda and purpose for two global online events as part of the Food Prices for Nutrition project. These will follow immediately after the July 6th launch of the FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO joint 2022 State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World report which will announce publication of the UN system's standardized global data on Cost and Affordability of a Healthy Diet (CoAHD). Those data provide official FAO statistics for the daily cost of a healthy diet as well as the number and percentage of people who cannot afford a healthy diet in each country. The World Bank will also disseminate those three headline estimates plus more granular data and indicators on diet costs and affordability in a new *Food Prices for Nutrition Data Hub*. The planned events will address how these new findings can be used to guide agriculture and food systems towards improved nutrition.

To equip decision-makers and analysts with the new Food Prices for Nutrition data and results, the project will host a sequence of two global online events on successive days:

- the **World Bank Online Event** on July 14th, 10-11am ET, will feature the World Bank Acting Chief Economist, the FAO Chief Economist, the Director-General of IFPRI, and leaders of other global and national agencies discussing how Food Prices for Nutrition data will be used to improve food systems, and
- the **IFPRI Policy Seminar** on July 15th, 10:00-11:30am ET, will feature Food Prices for Nutrition project leaders and participants around the world, discussing how policy analysts and researchers can use the new methods and data in their own work.

These two global events complement the large number of country-specific, targeted outreach, engagement and training efforts undertaken by the Food Prices for Nutrition project, as shown on the project site: <https://sites.tufts.edu/foodpricesfornutrition>.

Objectives and expected outcomes

Coordinated global outreach and engagement events in July 2022 will help establish Food Prices for Nutrition data and metrics as key tools for policy analysis and monitoring in global and national food systems, focusing attention on:

- **how diet cost and affordability data have been used** by international agencies and national governments, starting with the [2020 State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World](#) report and [other studies](#), to monitor food access, guide policies and programs, and reach development goals, and
- **the Food Prices for Nutrition DataHub** [\[link TBD\]](#) as the comprehensive source for global diet cost and affordability metrics that complement the three headline data points for each country to be published in SOFI 2022
- **future opportunities to apply and extend these data** [in diverse ways](#) to improve nutrition and health and achieve development goals including poverty reduction, social inclusion, environmental sustainability, and resilience.

The new data and methods showcased in these events measure food access using retail prices of the most affordable items available at each place and time, in quantities needed to meet global nutritional standards for an active and healthy life. These diets achieve nutritional adequacy and meet national dietary guidelines using locally available items, with substitution among items to track whether agriculture and food systems deliver an adequate supply of healthy foods at affordable prices in each country. Subnational studies using the same data and methods allow disaggregation by market location and population group, together with analyses of trends, seasonality and vulnerability to shocks including extreme weather and pandemic disease.

Key innovations behind the new data and methods to monitor food access include:

- use of retail prices for many differentiated food products, not just a few farm commodities,
- conversion of item prices to standard units per gram or kcal, accounting for edible fraction,
- selection of least-cost items in quantities sufficient nutrient adequacy or dietary guidelines,
- comparison to income based on household survey data as a measure of affordability, and
- customization of standard methods to address specific needs in particular settings.

To publicize the value of these innovations, the events in July 2022 will be accompanied by blog posts and media outreach to engage policy audiences and the research community. These build on the project's previous [events and media](#), using diverse platforms for articles and data visualization at the World Bank, IFPRI, Tufts University and elsewhere. The twitter hashtag for this and related activity is [#FoodPricesForNutrition](#).

Event #1: Policy Symposium on Food Prices for Nutrition, hosted by the World Bank

Modality

World Bank Online Event (60 minutes), co-organized with FAO, IFPRI and Tufts

Target audience

Our primary audience is national government & development agency officials. World Bank online events may also be attended by the general public, and we expect significant interest from private sector organizations and food company representatives, as part of their corporate social responsibility efforts. Simultaneous translation to French would be desirable, but is not necessary.

Expected outcome

The main outcome of this event will be that decision-makers concerned with agriculture, food systems, nutrition, public health and social protection recognize the availability and usefulness of diet cost and affordability data, and direct their staff to use these resources to inform their policies and programs.

Date and time

Thurs July 14th, 10-11am Washington time (=starts 7am Seattle, 4pm Rome, 7:30pm Delhi)

Agenda

Are healthy diets affordable?

Policy symposium on use of new diet cost data to guide agricultural and food policy

Welcome

- Aart Kraay, Deputy (or Acting) Chief Economist, The World Bank Group
- Maximo Torero, Chief Economist, FAO
- Jo Swinnen, Director General, IFPRI

Introduction to the Food Prices for Nutrition DataHub

- Nada Hamadeh, Lead Economist/Manager, Development Data Group, The World Bank

Panel on the use of diet cost and affordability data [Moderated by W.A. Masters, Tufts Univ.]

- Saskia De Pee*, Team Lead, Systems Analysis for Nutrition, WFP
- Adeyinka Onabolu*, Senior Advisor on Food Security & Nutrition, Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Government of Nigeria
- Other representatives from Ethiopia, Pakistan and elsewhere
- Maybe a private-sector rep, e.g. Sunny Verghese, WBCSD Chair and CEO of Olam International

Closing remarks

- Shelly Sundberg, Senior Program Officer, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Note: Other speakers may be added; * indicates participation not yet confirmed.

Event #2: Research Forum on Food Prices for Nutrition, hosted by IFPRI

Modality

IFPRI policy seminar (90 minutes), co-organized with FAO, Tufts University and the World Bank

Target audience

Policy analysts and researchers working with food price data, and open to the public

Expected outcome

Analysts and researchers concerned with agriculture, food, nutrition, health and related topics are informed about and are able to use the new data and methods developed through the Food Prices for Nutrition project. IFPRI Policy Seminars may also be attended by the general public, and we expect significant interest from a wide range of food policy analysts and researchers around the world.

Date and time

Friday July 15th, 10-11:30am Washington time (=starts 7am Seattle, 4pm Rome, 7:30pm Delhi)

Agenda

Cost and affordability of healthy diets:

Policy seminar on use of retail prices for global food policy research and practice

Welcome and introduction to the Food Prices for Nutrition project

- Marie Ruel, Director, Poverty, Health and Nutrition Division, IFPRI
- William Masters, Principal Investigator, Food Prices for Nutrition project, Tufts University

Data sources and methods for policy-relevant analysis of diet costs and affordability

- Anna Herforth, Co-Principal Investigator, Food Prices for Nutrition project, Tufts University

Results and implications of global variation in diet costs and affordability

- Yan Bai, World Bank Development Data Group and Zhejiang University School of Public Affairs

Frontiers of research on food policy based on consumer prices, diet costs and affordability

- Derek Headey, Senior Research Fellow, IFPRI

Global monitoring of the cost and affordability of healthy diet and policy analysis to inform agrifood systems transformation

- Cindy Holleman, Senior Economist, FAO

Q&A with audience

Note: Other speakers may be added. Before and after this policy seminar, the project will hold a research workshop for all collaborators to share their work. The project also maintains continuous outreach and engagement events at <https://sites.tufts.edu/foodpricesfornutrition>.