

SNAP-Ed Toolkit

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R6: Food Security

Framework Component

Population Results – Trends and Reductions in Disparities

Indicator Description

This indicator represents changes in food security status, when SNAP-Ed eligible persons have access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

Background and Context

“Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. Household food security is the application of this concept to the family level, with individuals within households as the focus of concern.”¹ Food security status (or change therein) is both an outcome of, and a confounding factor in, other framework behavioral outcomes—e.g., individuals who participate in direct nutrition education or food budgeting may exhibit a positive change in food security status as a result. However, they may also be less likely than other participants to exhibit a positive change in other indicators such as fruit or vegetable consumption because they are food insecure. Lastly, please note that persons (e.g., children) may live in a food insecure household but may or may not be food insecure themselves. Detailed backgrounders, implementation guides, and contact information for further assistance may be obtained at the USDA Economic Research Service website.²

Outcome Measures

R6a. Number or percentage of SNAP-Ed eligible persons whose food security status improved over baseline from [glossary]Very Low Food Security[/glossary], [glossary]Low Food Security[/glossary], or [glossary]Marginal Food Security[/glossary].³ (Each food security status is defined in the glossary.)

What to Measure

At the program level, it is important to consider pre-post changes in SNAP-Ed participants' food security across all of its ranges (i.e., high, marginal, low, or very low) to demonstrate an effect. At the population level, a potential impact of SNAP-Ed programming would be an overall reduction in the household food insecurity rate (or an overall improvement in the household food security rate). Pre-Intervention Food Security Status:

- Standard EARS demographic data
- Unique, anonymous identifier to facilitate matching of pre-post pairs (e.g., MM/DD/YYYY birthdate)
- Date of survey administration
- Baseline food security status of program participants (a composite/index indicator created by tabulating responses to individual module questions)

Post-Intervention Food Security Status (30-day or 12-month reference period):

- Unique, anonymous identifier to facilitate matching of pre-post pairs (e.g., MM/DD/YYYY birthdate)
- Date of survey administration
- Number of completed interventions (where applicable)
- Post-intervention food security status of program participants (a composite/index indicator created by tabulating responses to individual module questions):

Food Security Status of Non-Participant Comparison Group(s):

- Pre-Intervention Comparison Group (OPTIONAL): If program participants are known at least 30 days (or 1 year) in advance of program participation, consider administering the pre-post surveys in the same manner to these future participants who are, in effect, a “delayed intervention comparison group.”
- Cross-sectional Data/De-Identified Public Data (OPTIONAL): Consider comparing the pre-post percentage of food secure participants or households within an at-risk population category to the overall percentage of food secure participants or households within the total at-risk population in a given community. Due to the time “lag” in availability of population-based data, such comparisons between food security status of program participants and the general population do not align. Even though these data will therefore not be as relevant or sensitive as within-group pre-post comparisons for actual program participants, the comparison may still be worthwhile.

Population

English-speaking adults ages 18+ (or heads of household less than 18 years of age), Spanish-speaking adults ages 18+ (or heads of household less than 18 years of age), English-speaking children ages 12–17, Spanish-speaking children ages 12–17

Surveys and Data Collection Tools

ADULTS [collapse title="USDA Survey Data"] **U.S. Household Food Security Survey Module** (18 items) <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/survey-tools.aspx#household>
U.S. Household Food Security Survey Module (18 items – Spanish) <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/survey-tools.aspx#Spanish> **U.S. Adult Food Security Survey Module** (10 items) <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/survey-tools.aspx#adult> **Short Form of the U.S. Food Security Survey Module** (6 items) <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/survey-tools.aspx#six> [/collapse]
CHILDREN & YOUTH [collapse title="USDA & CDC Survey Data"] **U.S. Household Food Security Survey Module** (18 items) <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/survey-tools.aspx#household>

U.S. Household Food Security Survey Module (18 items – Spanish) <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/survey-tools.aspx#Spanish> **Self-Administered Food Security Survey Module for Youth Ages 12 and Older** <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/survey-tools.aspx#youth> **YRBS: Behavioral Risk Factors Surveillance System** <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm4941a2.htm> “In the past 30 days, have you been concerned about having enough food for you or your family?” [collapse] Additional evaluation tools to measure R6 can be found in the [SNAP-Ed Library](#).

Key Glossary Terms

[glossary]Food security[/glossary] [glossary]Food insecurity[/glossary] [glossary]High food security[/glossary] [glossary]Hunger[/glossary] [glossary]Low food security[/glossary] [glossary]Marginal food security[/glossary] [glossary]SNAP-Ed eligible persons[/glossary] [glossary]Very low food security[/glossary]

Additional Resources or Supporting Citations

Cross-sectional Data/De-identified Public Data Examples:

- CPS Food Security Supplement Data: <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-security-in-the-united-states.aspx>
- Map the Meal Gap – County Level Food Security (Supplementary data – not an authoritative source) <https://map.feedingamerica.org/>

References: ¹ FAO Economic and Social Development Department. Chapter 2. Food security: concepts and measurement Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; 2003. Available from <https://www.fao.org/docrep/005/y4671e/y4671e06.htm>. ²United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service. Food Security in the U.S.—Overview [webpage]. 2016, May 4. Available from <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us.aspx>. ³United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service. Definitions of Food Security [webpage]. 2015, September 8. Available from <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/definitions-of-food-security.aspx> ⁴United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service. Food Security in the U.S.—Survey Tools [webpage]. 2015, September 8. Available from <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/survey-tools.aspx>