

Nigeria General Household Survey-Panel (Wave 5) 2023/2024

*Tracking Nigerian Households
to Understand Their Resilience Over Time*

Data Snapshot Series No. 2: Dietary Diversity in Nigeria



The General Household Survey – Panel (GHS-Panel) is Nigeria's only nationally representative panel survey, allowing researchers to track the same households over time. Thus far, five waves of the GHS-Panel have been conducted: in 2010/11 (Wave 1), 2012/13 (Wave 2), 2015/16 (Wave 3), 2018/19 (Wave 4), and 2023/24 (Wave 5). The GHS-Panel is the result of a partnership that the National Bureau of Statistics has established with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the World Bank. The ability to

follow the same households over time makes the GHS-Panel a powerful tool for understanding income-generating activities and socio-economic outcomes in Nigeria.

GHS-Panel Wave 5 included a survey module to collect information on dietary diversity through the Diet Quality Questionnaire (DQQ). This questionnaire is a standardized tool to collect data for calculating indicators of diet quality for individuals 15 to 49 years of age.

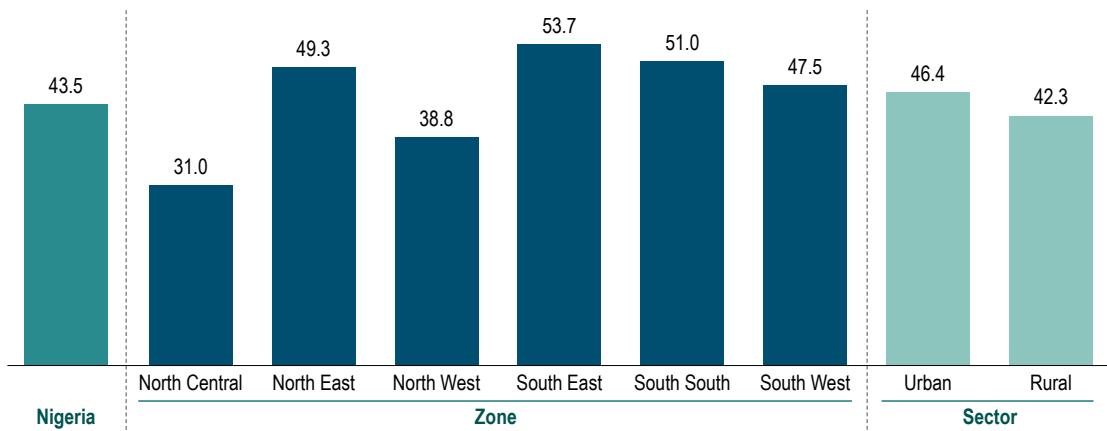
Key Results

Only 43.5 percent of women ages 15 to 49 years reported consuming diets that meet standards for minimum dietary diversity (MDD-W)¹. There are geographical differences, smaller between the rural (42.3 percent) and urban (46.4 percent) sectors, but more significant at the zonal level. North Central exhibits the lowest zonal rate of MDD-W, with only 31.0 percent of women reporting minimum dietary diversity. In contrast, in the South East zone, more than half of women achieve the threshold (53.7 percent). These levels may reflect a higher risk of inadequate micronutrient intakes, highlighting the need for greater variety in food consumption to ensure a more balanced and nutritious diet².

“All-5” is an indicator of food group adequacy that measures the proportion of the total population consuming all five food groups typically recommended for daily consumption in food-based dietary guidelines around the world (fruits; vegetables; pulses, nuts, or seeds; animal-source foods; and starchy staples). A score of five indicates minimal adherence to dietary guidelines, while a score of less than five indicates that not all five recommended food groups were consumed.

FIGURE 1 • Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women of Reproductive Age (MDD-W)

(Share of women ages 15 to 49 years consuming minimum dietary diversity [MDD-W \geq 5])



¹ This is achieved when an individual consumes five or more out of 10 food groups over the course of a day (Global Diet Quality Project 2024).

² Global Diet Quality Project (2022). Measuring what the world eats: Insights from a new approach. Geneva: Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN); Boston, MA: Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Department of Global Health and Population.

GHS-Panel Wave 5 found that only one in four individuals consumed all five recommended food groups on the day before their survey interview.

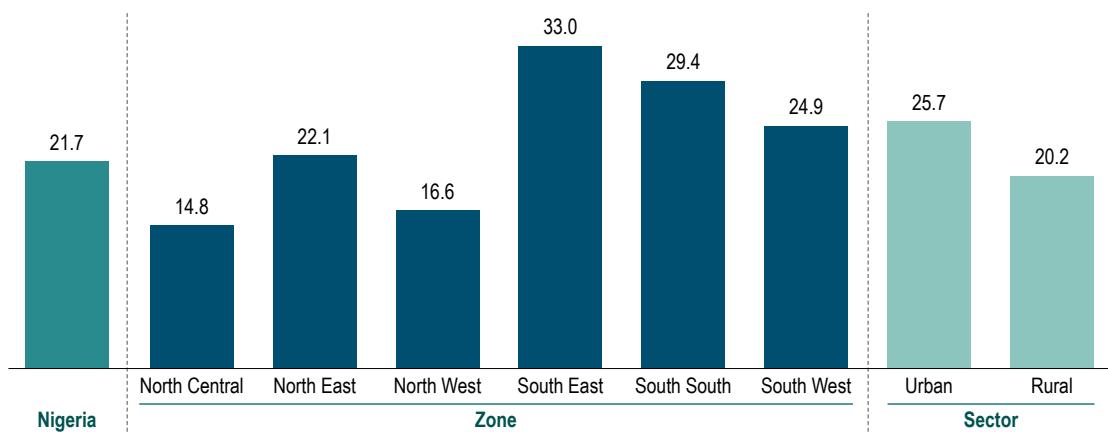
Results suggest large differences between northern and southern zones. North Central exhibits the lowest zonal “All-5” rate (14.8 percent), compared to South East, which achieved the highest rate (33.0 percent) (Figure 2). The rural sector reports lower rates of food group adequacy (20.2 percent) compared to the urban sector (25.7 percent).

Consumption levels vary across recommended food groups. The least consumed is fruits (38 percent), while the most-consumed group is starchy staples (94.5 percent), followed by vegetables (79.7 percent). Fewer Nigerians consume legumes, nuts, or seeds (74.8 percent) and animal-source food (64.3 percent).

At sectoral level, a higher proportion of individuals in the urban sector consume each of the food groups compared to persons in the rural sector (except for the pulses, nuts, or seeds food group). At zonal level, the consumption of fruits ranges from 27.7 percent in North West to 56.0 percent in South East. Southern zones consume more animal-source food compared with northern zones. The consumption of pulses, nuts, or seeds is more prevalent in North East and North West (81.1 percent in each) and less common in South South (63.7 percent). The South West zone has the highest consumption rate for vegetables (90.6 percent) and North Central the lowest (67.1 percent). More than 9 out of 10 people in all zones consume starchy staples.

FIGURE 2 • Consumption of All Five Recommended Food Groups (“All-5”)

(Share of self-respondents ages 15 to 49 years)



Takeaways for Policy

- ◎ Monitoring diet quality supports efforts to boost household resilience through adequate nutrition, especially in vulnerable populations.
- ◎ Policies to enhance Nigerians' access to agricultural resources, inputs, and technical training can improve agricultural productivity and dietary diversity.
- ◎ Empowering women's agricultural productivity is especially crucial, as it is associated with greater food consumption and improved household nutritional status³.

³ Food and Agriculture Organization (2022). Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in the context of Food Security and Nutrition.

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