



## ETHIOPIA FOOD SECURITY SCALE FOCUS GROUP REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PREPARED FOR: THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED  
NATIONS (FAO)

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) commissioned Gallup to conduct five focus groups in Ethiopia to determine the feasibility and comprehension of custom questions regarding food security. Specifically, ten questions developed to measure food security were tested in local Ethiopian languages, Amharic and Oromo, to test for comprehension and understanding. Findings from this study will be used to linguistically and culturally adapt the ten food security questions in each local language used on the Gallup World Poll in Ethiopia in 2013 and beyond. These focus groups were conducted between April 11-16, 2013 among males and females of various age groups in urban and rural Addis Ababa, as well as in rural Adama.

## II. METHODOLOGY

The focus group moderator's guide used for discussion was created by FAO's researchers in consultation with Gallup. The questions tested in these focus groups were crafted by FAO and Gallup researchers based on previous research and work on food security in developing countries. Ten questions were tested during each focus group (see Appendix A).

Gallup partnered with a local field team to recruit, organize, and conduct the five focus groups. Local field team members were trained by a Gallup researcher on all materials, including the recruitment screener and moderator's guide. A comprehensive, in-person moderator's training was conducted on April 10, 2013.

**Table 1. Description of focus groups**

<b>GROUP NUMBER</b>	<b>DATE/TIME</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>COMPOSITION</b>
1	April 11, 2013	Urban Addis	Males aged 15-40 years old
2	April 12, 2013	Rural Addis	Females aged 15-40 years old
3	April 15, 2013	Rural Addis	Males aged 15-40 years old
4	April 16, 2013	Rural Adama	Females aged 15-40 years old
5	April 16, 2013	Rural Adama	Females aged 40+ years old

Male groups were moderated by a male moderator and female groups by a female moderator. All respondents were re-screened before the sessions to ensure participants still qualified for the group. All groups were audio and video recorded with an additional audio-video link where a Gallup representative watched with a translator. Each group lasted approximately three hours and 20 minutes.

There were several logistical challenges faced in conducting this research. Common in Ethiopia, there were power outages during the last 30 minutes of the fourth and fifth focus groups. The translator took notes and debriefed with the Gallup representative at the end of the group session due to the loss of video and audio recording.

The groups took approximately three hours each to complete the session. This was longer than anticipated. This necessitated a short 15 minute break for respondents to have refreshments. It was evident that the three hours were too long for the younger male respondents in rural Addis and Adama.

### III. KEY FINDINGS

The experiential concepts of food security were generally understood by focus group participants; however, for more complex items, participants had difficulty in expressing better language or phrasing. Despite extensive probing, participants found it too burdensome to formulate better questions. This exercise might have been too onerous to conduct in a group setting. In the future, one-on-one cognitive interviews may be a more appropriate approach. All participants were willing to express their personal food insecurity experiences, but were simply disengaged with assessing the questions being tested. However, participants still offered interesting and detailed insights that will help in guiding recommendations for adapting the food security scale to eliminate ambiguities or misunderstandings among different types of respondents. The data from the five focus groups also provides invaluable context to food security in Ethiopia.

As a result of these limitations, Gallup has analyzed the English transcripts, videos, observer and moderator notes, and previous reports to provide recommendations for revising items where necessary. English transcripts were translated from Amharic and Oromo/Oromifa. Report findings are based on the above materials. Recommendations for adapted English items are based upon focus group findings and expert review. These focus groups also serve to guide an appropriate adaptation to Amharic and Oromo/Oromifa.

#### Sources of food and eating habits

There are many similarities in food sources between urban and rural focus group participants. For those participants who live in both urban and rural areas, food is purchased from shops and markets. These businesses and markets specialize in providing a variety of grains. Grains are purchased raw or milled, and are cooked at home. Participants typically buy food in bulk depending on financial situation and earning cycles: weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly. Participants say they are not likely to barter for a better exchange of good or discounted prices.

Focus group participants associated food security with the ability to consume three meals in a day i.e. breakfast, lunch, and supper or dinner. For participants, the inability of families to access three meals in a day was perceived as a factor of food insecurity.

Variations exist between urban and rural focus group participants. The differentiating characteristics are as follows.

Urban participants typically:

- Buy from farmers who retail in town;
- Buy from government-run retail stores where stock is sold at subsidized prices; and
- Get food from rural areas where extended family members have access to land and are able to farm.

Rural participants typically:

- Have immediate or extended family members who owned farms or owned farms themselves, and hold a small portion of the harvest as food while the larger share was sold for cash to finance other family needs;

- Are at times hardly able to produce enough to take their families through to the next harvest. They were one crisis away from hunger;
- Attempt to alleviate food insecurity by selling more expensive grains, such as *teft* and bought cheaper grains, including maize. As a result, they acquire higher volume at a lower cost; and
- Experience land tenure problems. A significant number of rural participants claim they are unable to produce their own food for lack of either fertile or sufficient land.

*Most of us don't have farm land to grow crops. We were not here at the time when the land was reallocated. That is why we have to purchase everything from market including grains and things for sauces. There is a scarcity of plot of land to cultivate crops in the area. Even the available land is being taken away by investors. Even, those who have plowing plots are losing their land and being forced to purchase food to cover family consumption. (Male, 15-40 years, rural Adama)*

- Feel that food insecurity is related to family size. Some participants believe that those with slightly larger or extended families in rural areas are more likely than their urban counterparts to be food insecure.

*The main reason for me not eating nutritious food is because of living with my family. Our family has around eight or nine people. In the middle of this situation how could it be even possible to think of getting nutritious food? For instance, when I get money, I have to purchase food immediately. That means there is no remaining money with me and tomorrow you again are expected to live similar life with yesterday's. No way to lead your life with plan and save or invest the money you get. (Male, 18-40 years, rural Adama)*

## Gender

Female participants across all female groups were more interested in the issue of food security compared to all males in this study. Generally, female participants are the custodians of domestic consumption including food purchases. In terms of food shortages, participants say females navigate the family through lean times by juggling what and how much was cooked, how often, who was served first and last, and in what quantity.

Some differences regarding the female role in providing food exist between urban and rural female focus group participants. Rural female participants appeared to have stronger social structures and bonds with other females, especially neighbors and food retailers (shop keepers). This is not the case with females living in urban areas. Such relationships cushioned their families from hunger when they ran out of food. They were easily able to borrow money or grains from neighbors, which were reimbursed when the family's financial situation improved.

*There is kindness between the people I am living with. I will not let her and her children get starved, while my children and I are eating. I share what I have with two or three kids. I will give what I have to the person that does not have one. (Female, 15-40 years, rural Akaki)*

Often, food is obtained from shopkeepers on credit and the debts were paid back as soon as the family received an income. Many participants often find themselves locked in a repetitive cycle of credit, debt, and repayment.

*Yes sometimes I am facing difficulty till I receive my salary. I may pass through lots of problems, but till the next salary comes I will take loan from other people to repay them during salary*

*time. I will give back the loan on the next salary. I have one child and I have to pay for his schooling. (Female, 15-40 years, rural Akaki)*

*You would take credit from the nearby business persons. The bad thing is that if you already took credit this month, you have to pay when your salary comes. Again, you have to go back to the same life for the next month, for you have already finished your money by paying for what you already consumed. (Female, 15-40 years, rural Akaki)*

Female participants were more knowledgeable than males on the science of nutrition and child health. Several participants say they regularly follow radio broadcasts that educate people about food and nutrition. If their financial situations improve, they said they would feed their families better.

*If I had a better income, I would buy good foods like meat, shiro and peas. But, because my life is in poverty, I can't afford buying these things. I just eat shiro, and no chance to feed them [children] on a variety of foods. (Female, 15-40 years, rural Akaki)*

Male participants had a specific perspective on food security woes, namely having steady employment. Compared to females, the males simply express their need for work and money so they are able to provide food for their families.

While participant experiences provide unique insight into the distinct gender roles in Ethiopian households, these gender differences do not hinder the understanding of the food security scale items. Instead, the gender differences discovered in this study provide important context for analysis.

### **Urban/rural**

Focus group participants have varied perception of food security depending on their geographic location: rural or urban. In both settings, participants say they purchase food with cash; therefore, differences in cash flow impacts their food security. Urban participants tend to have more opportunities for temporary employment, thus improving access to food simply because they have a daily wage. Urban participants noted a significant challenge: wage is just enough to provide the requisite quantity of food, but not the quality of food. Scarcity of food is most associated with the monotony of consistently eating the same foods. Participants from rural areas have less cash flow, which prevents families from accessing the ideal number of daily meals (three) or meals in adequate quantities.

*Now, we are not at the status to think whether the food we eat is healthy or nutritious or not. Just we are eating for survival purpose. (Female, 15-40 years, rural Akaki)*

*For me the story is different. I may not totally run out of money to support my family but I am always in deficit. For instance I am sometimes able to buy sheep for holiday but I will have no money remaining to buy enough teft. Such occasions are very common with me. (Male, 15-40 years, urban Addis Ababa)*

### **Definition of “food”**

Participants understand “food” as either the consumption of the three important meals of the day, or at its most basic level, “anything” that one can eat to survive.

*Food is all kinds of things being eaten. .... So, everything that is important for human being is food. For example like Injera. All kinds of grains are used to prepare food. Bread, vegetables and fruits and others help our body too. Tomato by itself is food if I eat it. (Male, 15-40 years, Adama)*

According to other participants, food was defined as what a person eats to be healthy and to be alive. Food is typically consumed at breakfast, lunch, and dinner. These participants say food is what fills and satisfies. Participants say food is the most important thing for humans on a day to day basis.

In urban areas, variety is preferred within a meal and across meals, while in rural areas variety is limited and preferred within the meal. This difference in understanding will greatly impact the data collected for the concept “eating a few types of foods”.

### Daily food consumption

Participants report variation in the amount of food they consume both day to day as well as variation in between salary periods. Commonly, participants report taking loans or making credit arrangements in order to secure food for themselves or family members. For some participants, there was a strong desire to use new income to invest and thus solve food insecurity problems in a more sustainable way.

*If my monthly budget is finished before the end of the month, I have to look for alternative to reach the end of the month. I will buy bread instead of injera for instance or ask the nearby shop cooking oil for credit. (Female, 15-40 years, Akaki)*

*If I have enough money I would buy and fatten oxen. (Male, 18-40 years, rural Adama)*

Participants report that increased income would change their eating habits. Additionally, participants report that increased income can lead to an overall increase in quality of life and improved eating habits through crop production and growing ones assets.

*Now we are skipping lunch after eating breakfast. If my income improved definitely I will improve that condition by eating the three meals and its variety like any other people. (Female, 15-40 years, Akaki)*

*If there is improved income, I will not only change my food habits but also improve my life style regarding land possession. For example, somebody who had one hectare can make two or three hectares of land so that to produce crops. This condition would also help to collect assets or money by harvesting again and again. He can also improve his eating habits to better one. (Male, 15-40 years, rural Adama)*

### Healthy and nutritious food

Participants consider basic staples, such as *injera* and *shiro*, healthy and nutritious. Within the context of “healthy and nutritious”, participants say people are physiologically happy to be eating “good food”.

*Though we eat shiro all the time, we are living healthy till now. There are no such serious health problems we faced for the only reason of eating shiro. (Female, 15-40 years, rural Akaki)*

*I believe eating shiro makes me healthy and happy. It does not have impact on us. (Female, 15-40 years, rural Akaki)*

*Healthy foods contain different things such as vegetables and fruits. Carrot and other things that one can afford could be considered as healthy foods. But, that is not for us. (Female, 40+ years, rural Adama)*



## Difficulty in accessing food

For those participants who have experienced a lack of food in the past, the discussion evoked painful and emotional memories. Participants say it reminds them of times of famine or irresponsible family members causing the household to experience seasons of acute food shortages, even with the mother working to provide for the family.

*I went outside and begged at some small restaurant for leftovers and I ate that. It is a painful memory. (Male, 15-40 years, urban Addis Ababa)*

For urban dwelling participants, the situation is different because they are able to work and plan for their families. Some younger participants share stories of begging for food. Participants from rural areas explain their current experiences are not as dire as they used to be, but it is common for families to go without food. Some even remember migrating to other areas because of drought which affected the amount of food available.

During times of insecurity, participants say they would consume “just about anything” in order to survive. Participants say they would mix some foods with liquids or other foods to increase the volume; for example, mixing rice with pasta and vegetables. Participants say they would make traditional drinks made of roasted sorghum mixed with sugar and water to expand their nutrient consumption.

## IV. ITEM ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Q1. In the past 12 months, were you worried you would run out of food because of a lack of money or other resources?

- **“Worried”**
  - **Current Understanding:** Only older participants seemed to have worried more in their lives as opposed to the younger ones about food insecurity. This concept is universally understood as being preoccupied with finding money for self and family, not knowing what one will do tomorrow, feeling anxious, thinking about the situation all of the time, mental tension, mental division (inability to concentrate), or thinking about finding a way out.

*Worry is to think or it could be feeling nervous or becoming concerned. For example if one has a family and food is almost finished, he would worry because the family has no more food to eat. So, worry is thinking about something. Again, if one has lost somebody’s money he should worry because he is going to miss community confidence. (Male, 15-40 years, rural Adama)*

- **“Run out of food”**
  - **Current understanding:** Participants understand this phrase to mean if food stock was consumed before the intended time period, when something happens that uses the budget intended for food, when there is just no food at home, relates with overspending, or when one cannot afford the basic staple (*injera*).

*To run out of food means to run out of teft earlier than the expected time. Most of the time teft is purchased for a year as yearly budget of the family. If it runs out of the budget time line, chaos, stress and instability is the result.*

(Male, 15-40 years, urban Addis Ababa)

- **“Last 12 months”**

- **Current understanding:** Some participants understand this to mean “during/in the course of/within the last year, last 12 months period”. This is the intended meaning.
- **Issues:** Most participants considered the time period within the last year of the Ethiopian calendar year, which starts in September and ends in August. The notion of “past 12 months” however was disliked by many.

*I prefer if it says ‘one year’ instead of ‘the last 12 months’.*

(Male, 15-40 years, urban Addis Ababa)

*No, it means the months from September to August, 2004 Ethiopian calendar.*

(Female, 15-40 years, rural Adama)

- **“Lack of money or other resources”**

- **Current understanding:** Participants understand this phrase to mean shortage, scarcity, or absence of money or other resources that can quickly generate cash. This phrase is associated with being out of work or not having animals or other produce that could be taken to market.

*Lack of money or other resources means lack of any sources, ways, and methodology of getting or acquiring money.* (Male, 15-40 years, urban Addis Ababa)

*This resource is different from money like goat or oxen. For instance, we can sell livestock to overcome our problems. So, livestock is also another resource. Building, chicken and home can be considered as other resources. Because, you can sell them during difficult time and use it to overcome your problems.*  
(Female, 15-40 years, rural Adama)

**Recommendation:** In the past one year, were you worried you would run out of food because of a lack of money or other resources?

**Rationale:** Change “In the past 12 months” to “In the past one year” based on findings from Q1.

## **Q2. In the past 12 months, were you unable to eat healthy and nutritious food because of lack of money or other resources?**

- **“Healthy and nutritious”**

- **Current understanding:** Some participants from the urban focus group find no difference between “healthy” and “nutritious” words. For most other participants, “healthy” is associated with additional food from the main staple that they do not regularly eat (e.g., vegetables, potatoes, carrots, eggs, fruits). These participants regard *injera* and *shiro* to be nutritious, but they do not find eating only one type of food to be healthy. “Healthy” introduces the idea of a balanced diet. “Healthy” is

understood by some to mean clean, fresh, or hygienically prepared food. “Nutritious” is understood as a higher amount of a nutrient in the food in question.

*Nutritious describes fatness.* (Female, 40+ years, rural Adama)

*Meat and beans are among nutritious food. When I eat shiro, I am getting a nutrient; one can get from eating meat. So, there is no problem with eating shiro. But, a healthy food is a kind of food prepared with clean materials and environment. I will never cook food with unclean utensils because it can affect my health.*

(Female, 15-40 years, rural Adama)

*I don't think I eat a healthy and nutritious food....Because we eat a kind of food prepared one day before. Could such food be healthy? It can't be totally healthy food. That is why I don't think we eat healthy food.* (Male, 15-40 years, rural Adama)

**Recommendation:** In the past one year, was there a time you were unable to eat healthy foods because of lack of money or other resources?

**Rationale:** Focus group participants did not know the concept which to respond: healthy or nutritious. Additionally, the phrase “healthy and nutritious” did not resonate with focus group participants in terms of evaluating access to quality foods. The most important aspect of food to participants was variation and balance. Gallup recommends selecting one phrase rather than several to represent this concept. Not only will the idea behind this item be clearer for respondents, the item will no longer be double-barreled with either option.

Change “In the past 12 months” to “In the past one year” based on findings from Q1.

### Q3. In the past 12 months was there a time when you only ate a few kinds of foods because of lack of money or other resources?

- “A few kinds of foods”
  - **Current understanding:** This item had a wide variation in understanding from one group to another. The urban group associates this phrase with “less variety of meals” (e.g. Eating *injera* with *shiro* without eating rice or pasta in other meals or days). Participants understood this as eating similar foods repeatedly or eating one type of food a lot more than others. On the other hand, rural people associate this statement with “less variety within the meal/serving (fewer sauces)”, “fewer meals in a day” and even “fewer amounts of different kinds of foods”.

In Ethiopia, the preferred way of eating is to have the basic staple food served with many sauces or a variety of foods served on the same plate (see Figure 1). This is especially common among those living in urban areas. However, consuming only one type of food such as *injera* is normal in rural areas. Respondents in rural areas will likely not think of other kinds of food when answering this question. It seems some respondents simply misunderstood what the question was asking due to confusion in this terminology.

*I would reduce the amount of food my family eats on breakfast, lunch or dinner during problem time. That is a few kinds of food for me. (Female, 40+ years, rural Adama)*

*For example, if we've been eating breakfast, lunch and dinner before and if we are forced to eat only one of it now that is called few kind of food. (Female, 15-40 years, rural Adama)*

- **“A meal”**

- **Current understanding:** Participants understood this phrase to mean several different ideas: important foods like bread or *injera*, the food that is taken in a large amount for someone to survive, breakfast, lunch and dinner, what is eaten on the dining table, or important eating when the family is together around a table.

For some participants, a meal was anything that could be eaten regardless of time. This includes snacks or makeshift meals (e.g. roasted sorghum mixed with sugar or water) made when the household is out of food.

*Breakfast, lunch and dinner are called meal. (Female, 40+ years, rural Adama)*

*It is a major eating event in family. (Female, 15-40 years, rural Akaki)*

*If I couldn't have injera at home I eat locally produced bread /kita/, and roasted grain. I will roast the grain and eat it for my dinner (Female, 15-40 years, rural Akaki)*

**Recommendation:** In the past one year, was there a time when you had to eat a limited variety of foods because of lack of money or other resources?

**Rationale:** Focus group participants in rural areas typically eat only a few types of foods, and sometimes even consume only one type of food, such as *injera*. Gallup recommends changing the question to “ate less variety of foods than you thought you should” to adjust for these geographical inconsistencies.

Change “In the past 12 months” to “In the past one year” based on findings from Q1.

**Q4. In the past 12 months, was there a time when you had to skip a meal because of lack of money or other resources?**

- **“Skip a meal”**

**Current understanding:** Participants understood this concept as postponing eating for four or more hours, having lunch as dinner at 5:00 pm, eliminating one of the three meals of the day (breakfast, lunch, or dinner), eating twice a day instead of three times a day, being unable to find food at the desired time, and being unable to eat at the usual time.

While there is consensus on this meaning that one eats fewer than three meals a day, a few participants understand it as not eating for a whole day. To some participants, "skipping" is when one misses the three meals of the day.

*Skipping a meal means eating lunch without eating breakfast or eating dinner without eating lunch. (Female, 40+ years, rural Adama)*

*Skip is only missing one of the three meals not include all the three. (Female, 15-40 years, rural Akaki)*

*For we cannot get food all the time due to lack of money, we skip some days within a week. We skip meals without eating for a day. (Male, 15-40 years, rural Adama)*

**Recommendation:** In the past one year, was there a time when you had to skip a meal because of lack of money or other resources?

**Rationale:** Change "In the past 12 months" to "In the past one year" based on findings from Q1.

#### **Q5. In the past 12 months, was there a time when you had to eat less than you thought you should because of lack of money or other resources?**

- "Ate less than you thought you should"

**Current understanding:** Participants are divided in understanding on this item. Participants from all groups, regardless of location or gender, understood this item differently. Some understood it correctly as not eating until one is satisfied, eating less than one desires to eat, sharing a plate, or eating with limit. However, some participants understood it as eating lower quality foods because of lack of spices or oil or having less variety within the meal or eating fewer meals in a day, which is different than the intended meaning.

*If I ate less than what my stomach needs due to lack of resources. Or eating by reducing the amount we eat before. And we could also eat one injera with three people because of shortage of money and other resources. (Female, 40+ years, rural Adama)*

*I understand that the question is asking us about the quantity of food we take at a time. (Male, 15-40 years, Addis Ababa)*

*It means that I ate less than I need to eat with quality. (Female, 15-40 years, rural Akaki)*

*For instance, I can plan to eat a kilo of meat when I get money. And if I lend or pay my loan what I have, I will never afford to eat the meat. Instead I will be forced to eat shiro. A person who wanted to eat meat and drink beer ended up*

*eating shiro and drinking tela/traditional beer. (Male, 15-40 years, rural Adama)*

**Recommendation:** In the past one year, was there a time when you had to eat less than you thought you should because of lack of money or other resources?

**Rationale:** While focus group participants differed in conceptual understanding of this item, it is recommended to keep the item as is to maintain the normative aspects of the concept.

Change “In the past 12 months” to “In the past one year” based on findings from Q1.

**Q6. In the past 12 months, was there a time when your household ran out of food because of lack of money or other resources?**

- **“Household”**

- **Current understanding:** This item was clearly understood by participants as meaning that the majority as members of the family living together cooking and eating together. Participants say they thought of family members sharing the same utensils, the family sharing everything they have, people not cooking for themselves individually but sharing the same dishes, and living in such a way that when one has, everybody has and when all don't have, none has.

*My household is my wife, children and others who are living with me in one home. (Male, 15-40 years, rural Adama)*

*A daughter or son who already got married and established their own family is not members of the same household. Only sharing same compound cannot be called household. They should be people who live under one roof. (Female, 15-40 years, rural Adama)*

*A household is those who are assisting me to make me a fruitful citizen. It is not only talking about people sharing same house. (Female, 15-40 years, rural Akaki)*

*Though our children are living in different place, they are members of our family till we are pay their house rent and providing them food. (Female, 40+ years, rural Adama)*

- **“Ran out of food”**

- **Current understanding:** Participants clearly understood this phrase as having nothing or when a food stock is finished before the time it was intended to cover. Some participants understood this to mean dwindling food reserve resulting in greater rationing (e.g., family members are served a less amount or fewer meals in a day; or when only children eat and adults skip meals).

*Finishing a food planned for a month before that period of time.  
(Female, 15-40 years, rural Akaki)*

**Recommendation:** In the past one year, was there a time when your household ran out of food because of lack of money or other resources?

**Rationale:** While some participants expanded “household” to include family members living outside of their direct housing structure, the majority of participants across all groups understood this item to include only those regularly eating in the household. This item was understood as intended.

Change “In the past 12 months” to “In the past one year” based on findings from Q1.

**Q7. In the past 12 months, was there a time when you were hungry but did not eat because there was not enough money or other resources for food?**

- **“Hungry but did not eat”**
  - **Current understanding:** This item was clearly understood by some participants as inability to get food when one needed to eat, inability to eat because of a money problem, or being starved for lack of money.

*It means I am unable to get food or having no food, because there was no money to buy it with. (Female, 15-40 years, rural Adama)*

**Recommendation:** In the past one year, was there a time when you were hungry but did not eat because there was not enough money or other resources for food?

**Rationale:** Change “In the past 12 months” to “In the past one year” based on findings from Q1.

**Q8. In the past 12 months, was there a time when you went without eating for a whole day because there was not enough money or other resources for food?**

- **“Went without eating for a whole day”**
  - **Current understanding:** Participants think of this as going the entire day without breakfast, lunch, or dinner specifically because there is not enough money to afford the meal.

Some participants understand it to mean missing meals for over 24 hours including breakfast of the next day, while other participants considered just breakfast, lunch, and dinner within the day.

*The phrase means staying without eating from morning to evening.  
(Female, 15-40 years, rural Adama)*

*It means spending 24 hours without eating any form of food.  
(Female, 15-40 years, rural Adama)*

**Recommended revision:** In the past one year, was there a time when you went without eating for a whole day because there was not enough money or other resources for food?

**Rationale:** Change “In the past 12 months” to “In the past one year” based on findings from Q1.

**Q9. In the past 12 months, was there a time when any of the children younger than 5 years did not healthy and nutritious food because there was not enough money or other resources for food?**

- “Healthy and nutritious”
  - **Current understanding:** Participants explained the contention between “healthy” and “nutritious” in the previous question here.

Participants who were parents strongly felt the question on children should focus more on balanced diets instead of nutritious or healthy foods.

**Recommendation:** In the past one year, was there a time when any of the children younger than 5 years did not eat healthy food because there was not enough money or other resources for food?

**Rationale:** Focus group participants rejected the concept and importance of “healthy and nutrition” food for children. Participants, particularly females in both locations, requested the question ask about the variety of foods children consume, as variety is more telling of food security than healthy or nutritious types of food. It is recommended to keep only one term, “healthy”, from the original question so respondents can respond about that specific concept. Not only will the idea behind this item be clearer for respondents, the item will no longer be double-barreled with either option.

Change “In the past 12 months” to “In the past one year” based on findings from Q1.

**Q10. In the past 12 months, was there a time when any of the children younger than 5 years was not given enough food because there was not enough money or other resources for food?**

- “Not given enough food”
  - **Current understanding:** The notion of “enough” was understood by some to mean “amount” or “quantity”. For others, this meant “not enough variety” while for others, it even meant “not enough quantity of the each variety given”.

Female participants most strongly felt children should be given a variety of food, even if it meant little in quantity. Most participants thought of “variety” even when the question asks specifically about other aspects of food security. Female participants explained that a child’s dietary requirement is different from an adult’s.

**Recommendation:** In the past one year, was there a time when any of the children younger than 5 years was not given enough food because there was not enough money or other resources for food?



**Rationale:** While this item is similar to Q5 and issues related to quantity versus quality of food are present, the item should remain as is for now. Altering this item with more nuanced language might make data collected non-comparable.

Change “In the past 12 months” to “In the past one year” based on findings from Q1.

# APPENDIX A

**Table 1. Intended meanings of FIES questions**

Item	Intended Meaning
<p>During the last 12 months, was there a time when...</p>	
<p><b>Q1. You were worried you would run out of food because of a lack of money or other resources?</b></p>	<p>The question refers to a state of being <b>worried, anxious, apprehensive, afraid or concerned</b> that there might not be enough food or that the respondent would run out of food, (because there was not enough money or other resources to get food.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The worry or anxiety is due to circumstances affecting their ability to get food, such as: loss of employment or other source of income, or other reasons for not having enough money; insufficient food production for own consumption; disrupted social relationships; loss of customary benefits or food assistance; environmental or political crises.</li> </ul> <p>It is not necessary that the respondent or the household where s/he lives actually ran out of food in order to answer affirmatively to this question.</p>
<p><b>Q2. You were unable to eat healthy and nutritious food because of a lack of money or other resources?</b></p>	<p>This question asks the respondent if s/he was not able to get foods they considered <b>healthy</b> or those that make a <b>nutritious or balanced diet</b> (because there was not enough money or other resources to get food.) <i>Since this combination of adjectives (healthy <u>and</u> nutritious) has led to much discussion in several settings, it might be better to quickly verify if they are understood together in the language and if not, to focus on “healthy foods”.</i> For example, <b>foods that are good for you/for your body</b> or <b>foods that make you healthy</b>. Another possible alternative is: <b>You were unable to eat a healthy diet</b>.</p> <p>This question refers to the <u>quality</u> of the diet and not the quantity of foods eaten.</p>
<p><b>Q3. You ate only a few kinds of foods because of a lack of money or other resources?</b></p>	<p>Alternative phrases to “a few kinds of foods”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ate meals with a limited variety of foods or</li> <li>Ate the same foods or just a few foods kinds of foods every day (because there was not enough money or other resources to get food.)</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: This question is getting at having limited variety in the diet not because that might be the cultural norm but specifically because there isn’t enough money to eat a greater variety. It may work best to pose the question highlighting this constraint at the beginning of the question, for example:</i></p> <p><u>Had to</u> eat a <b>limited variety of foods</b> or <u>Had to</u> eat <b>the same foods</b> or <b>just a few kinds of foods</b> every day (because there was not enough money or other resources to get food).</p> <p>This question refers to <u>quality</u> of the diet and not the quantity of foods eaten.</p>
<p><b>Q4. You had to skip a meal because there was not enough money or other resources to get food?</b></p>	<p>This question inquires about the experience of having to <b>miss</b> or <b>skip</b> a major meal (for example, breakfast, lunch or dinner depending on the norm for number and times of meals in the culture) that would normally have been eaten (because there was not enough money or other resources to get food).</p> <p>This question refers to <u>insufficient quantity</u> of food.</p>
<p><b>Q5. You ate less than you thought you should because of a lack of money or other resources?</b></p>	<p>This question enquires about eating less than what the respondent considered they should, even if they did not skip a meal (because the household did not have money or other resources to get food).</p> <p>The answer depends on the <u>respondent’s own opinion or perception</u> of how much <i>they</i> think they should be eating.</p>

Item	Intended Meaning
	<p>This question refers to <u>quality</u> of the diet and not the quantity of foods eaten.</p> <p>This question does <i>not</i> refer to special diets to lose weight or for health or religious reasons.</p>
<p><b>Q6. Your household ran out of food because of a lack of money or other resources?</b></p>	<p>This item is referring to any experiences when there was actually no food for the household because there was not enough money or other resources.</p>
<p><b>Q7. You were hungry but did not eat because there was not enough money or other resources for food?</b></p>	<p>This question asks about the physical experience of the person feeling hungry, and specifically, feeling hungry and not being able to eat enough (because of a lack of money or resources to get enough food).</p>
<p><b>Q8. You went without eating for a whole day because of a lack of money or other resources?</b></p>	<p>This question asks about a specific behavior—not eating anything all day (because of a lack of money and other resources to get food).</p> <p>It does not mean dieting to lose weight or fasting for health or religious reasons.</p>
<p><b>During the last 12 months, was there a time when any of the children younger than 5 years old...</b></p>	
<p><b>Q9. Did not eat healthy and nutritious foods because of a lack of money or other resources?</b></p>	<p>Same meaning as Q2 – this question should be formulated in the same way that Q2 is.</p>
<p><b>Q10. Was not given enough food because of a lack of money or other resources?</b></p>	<p>The question refers to whether an adult in the household had to serve less food than what they thought the child should be eating because there was not enough money or other resources to get food. This question refers to the adult’s own opinion or perspective on how much is “enough food” for the child.</p> <p><i>If there is confusion about whether “enough food” implies quantity in a particular language, an alternative phrasing could be:</i></p> <p>Was not given enough quantity of food (because of a lack of money or other resources)?</p>

# APPENDIX B

Table 1. Amharic

English	Amharic
During the last 12 months, was there a time when...	ባለፉት 12 ወራቶች፣
Q1. You were worried you would run out of food because of a lack of money or other resources?	በገንዘብ ወይም በገንዘብ ምንጭ እጥረት ምክንያት ለመጨረሻ ግዚያት ምግብ ላይኖረኝ ይችላል ብለው እጅግ የተጨነቁበት ወቅት ነበር?”
Q2. You were unable to eat healthy and nutritious food because of a lack of money or other resources?	በገንዘብ ወይም በገንዘብ ምንጭ እጥረት ምክንያት ጤነኛ እና በንጥረ ነገር የበለጸገ ወይም የተመጣጠነ ምግብ ለመመገብ አለመቻል የደረሱበት ወቅት ነበር?
Q3. You ate only a few kinds of foods because of a lack of money or other resources?	በገንዘብ ወይም በገንዘብ ምንጭ እጥረት ምክንያት የጥቂት ዓይነት ምግቦች ብቻ ወይም ተመሳሳይነት ያላቸውን ውስን የሆኑ ምግቦችን ብቻ የተመገቡበት ወቅት ነበር?
Q4. You had to skip a meal because there was not enough money or other resources to get food?	በቀን ውስጥ በተለመደው ሰዓት መመገብ ለሚገባዎት ምግቦች እንደ ቁርስ፣ ምሳ፣ ራት ዓይነት ውስጥ በገንዘብ ወይም በገንዘብ ምንጭ እጥረት ምክንያት አንዱን ወይም ሌላውን ያሳለፉበት ወይም እንዲያሳልፉ የተገደዱበት ጊዜ ነበር?
Q5. You ate less than you thought you should because of a lack of money or other resources?	በቀን ውስጥ በተለመደው ሰዓት መመገብ በሚኖርበት ሰዓት እየተመገቡ ነገር ግን በገንዘብ ወይም በገንዘብ ምንጭ እጥረት ምክንያት መብላት አለብኝ ብለው ካሰቡት ወይም እንደ ራሴ መብላት ያለብኝ መጠን ይህ ነው ብለው ከሚያምኑት በታች የበሉበት ጊዜ ነበር?
Q6. Your household ran out of food because of a lack of money or other resources?	በገንዘብ ወይም በገንዘብ ምንጭ እጥረት ምክንያት እርስዎ በቤትዎ ምግብ አልቆላት ወይም ምንም ዓይነት ምግብ በቤትዎ ውስጥ ሳይኖር ቀርቶ ያውቃል?
Q7. You were hungry but did not eat because there was not enough money or other resources for food?	በገንዘብ ወይም በገንዘብ ምንጭ እጥረት ምክንያት ተርበው ያልበሉበት ጊዜ ነበር?
Q8. You went without eating for a whole day because of a lack of money or other resources?	በገንዘብ ወይም በገንዘብ ምንጭ እጥረት ምክንያት ቀንን ሙሉ ሳይበሉ የዋሉበት ጊዜ ነበር?
During the last 12 months, was there a time when any of the children younger than 5 years old...	ባለፉት 12 ወራቶች፣ ዕድሜያቸው ከ5ዓመት በታች ከሆናቸው ህፃናቶች፣
Q9. Did not eat healthy and nutritious foods because of a lack of money or other resources?	በገንዘብ ወይም በገንዘብ ምንጭ እጥረት ምክንያት ጤናማ የሆኑ ወይም በንጥረነገሮች የዳበሩ/የተመጣጠነ/ ምግቦችን ሳይመገቡ የቀሩበት ጊዜ ነበር?
Q10. Was not given enough food because of a lack of money or other resources?	በገንዘብ ወይም በገንዘብ ምንጭ እጥረት ምክንያት በቂ ምግብ መመገብ የሚገባቸውን የምግብ መጠን ሳይሰጣቸው የቀረበት ጊዜ ነበር?

**Table 2. Oromifa**

English	Oromifa
During the last 12 months, was there a time when...	Ji’ottan 12an darbban keessatti, yeroon ati itti
Q1. You were worried you would run out of food because of a lack of money or other resources?	naaddofte ykn dhiphatte tarii nyaata dhabina laata jette jiraa sababii maallaqa ykn qabeenyaa biroo ille waan hin qabneef?
Q2. You were unable to eat healthy and nutritious food because of a lack of money or other resources?	nyaata qulqulla’a fi madaalawa ta’e nyaachuu dadhabde jiraa sababii maallaqa ykn qabeenyaa biroo ille waan hin qabneef?
Q3. You ate only a few kinds of foods because of a lack of money or other resources?	nyaata baay’e xiqoo nyaatte jiraa sababii maallaqa ykn qabeenyaa biroo ille waan hin qabneef?
Q4. You had to skip a meal because there was not enough money or other resources to get food?	nyaata itti dhiifte/irra darbite jiraa sababii maallaqa ykn qabeenyaa biroo ille waan hin qabneef?
Q5. You ate less than you thought you should because of a lack of money or other resources?	hanga nyaachuun sirra turee gadii nyaate jiraa sababii maallaqa ykn qabeenyaa biroo ille waan hin qabneef?
Q6. Your household ran out of food because of a lack of money or other resources?	maatiin kee nyaata dhabaan jiraa sababii maallaqa ykn qabeenyaa biroo ille waan hin qabneef?
Q7. You were hungry but did not eat because there was not enough money or other resources for food?	beeloftee garuu hin nyaatin hafte jiraa sababii maallaqa ykn qabeenyaa biroo waan ittin nyaata bitatu waan hin qabneef?
Q8. You went without eating for a whole day because of a lack of money or other resources?	guyyaa guutuu hin nyaatin oolte jiraa sababii maallaqa ykn qabeenyaa biroo ille waan hin qabneef?
During the last 12 months, was there a time when any of the children younger than 5 years old...	Ji’ottan 12an darbban keessatti, yeroon itti ijolleen wagga 5 gadii
Q9. Did not eat healthy and nutritious foods because of a lack of money or other resources?	nyaata qulqulla’a fi madaalawa ta’e nyaachuu dadhabde jiraa sababii maallaqa ykn qabeenyaa biroo ille waan hin qabneef?
Q10. Was not given enough food because of a lack of money or other resources?	nyaata gaha hin argatin hafte jiraa sababii maallaqa ykn qabeenyaa biroo ille waan hin qabneef?

**Table 3. Tigrinya**

English	Tigrinya
During the last 12 months, was there a time when...	ኣብ ዝሓለፉ 12 ኣዋርሕ፤
Q1. You were worried you would run out of food because of a lack of money or other resources?	ብስእነት ገንዘብ ወይ ከዓ ካልእ ፍልፍል ኣታዊ ብዘይምህላወ ምኽንያት፣ ፀገም ዝብላዕ መግቢ ከጋጥም ይኸውን ኢሎም/ለን ዝተጨነቐ/ቐሉ እዋን ዶ ነይሩ?
Q2. You were unable to eat healthy and nutritious food because of a lack of money or other resources?	ብስእነት ገንዘብ ወይ ከዓ ካልእ ፍልፍል ኣታዊ ብዘይምህላወ ምኽንያት፣ ንጥዕናኡም/ኣን ጠቓሚ ዝኾነ ምሩፁን ሃናጻይን ናይ መግቢ ዓይነታት ንምብላዕ ዘይካኣልሉ/ላሉ እዋን ዶ ነይሩ?
Q3. You ate only a few kinds of foods because of a lack of money or other resources?	ኣብ ዝሓለፉ 12 ኣዋርሕ፣ ብስእነት ገንዘብ ወይ ከዓ ካልእ ፍልፍል ኣታዊ ብዘይምህላወ ምኽንያት፣ ኣማሪያም/ፀን ምብላዕ ስለዘይከኣሉ/ላ፣ ሒዲተይ ዝተወሰና ናይ መግቢ ዓይነታት ደጋጊሞም/መን ዝተመገብሉ/ባሉ እዋን ዶ ነይሩ?
Q4. You had to skip a meal because there was not enough money or other resources to get food?	ኣብ ዝሓለፉ 12 ኣዋርሕ፣ ብስእነት ገንዘብ ወይ ከዓ ካልእ ፍልፍል ኣታዊ ብዘይምህላወ ምኽንያት፣ ስሩዕ ኸይዲ ኣመጋግባ (ቁርሲ - ምሳሕ - ድራር) ንኸዕፀፍ ዝተገበረሉ እዋን ዶ ነይሩ?
Q5. You ate less than you thought you should because of a lack of money or other resources?	ኣብ ዝሓለፉ 12 ኣዋርሕ፣ ብስእነት ገንዘብ ወይ ከዓ ካልእ ፍልፍል ኣታዊ ብዘይምህላወ ምኽንያት፣ ክበልዕዎ/ኦ ኢሎም/ለን ካብ ዝሓስብዎ/ኦ ዓይነት መግቢ፣ ብዓይነቱ ዝተሓተ መግቢ ዝተመገብሉ/ባሉ እዋን ዶ ነይሩ?
Q6. Your household ran out of food because of a lack of money or other resources?	ኣብ ዝሓለፉ 12 ኣዋርሕ፣ ብስእነት ገንዘብ ወይ ከዓ ካልእ ፍልፍል ኣታዊ ብዘይምህላወ ምኽንያት፣ ቤተሰብም/ብን ዝብላዕ መግቢ ዝስእነሉ እዋን ዶ ነይሩ?
Q7. You were hungry but did not eat because there was not enough money or other resources for food?	ኣብ ዝሓለፉ 12 ኣዋርሕ፣ ዋላኳ ጠምይዎም/ወን እንተነበረ፣ ብስእነት ገንዘብ ወይ ከዓ ካልእ ፍልፍል ኣታዊ ብዘይምህላወ ምኽንያት፣ ጥምየቶም/ተን ከይዓንገልሉ/ላ ዝተረፍሉ/ፋሉ እዋን ዶ ነይሩ?
Q8. You went without eating for a whole day because of a lack of money or other resources?	ኣብ ዝሓለፉ 12 ኣዋርሕ፣ ብስእነት ገንዘብ ወይ ከዓ ካልእ ፍልፍል ኣታዊ ብዘይምህላወ ምኽንያት፣ ምሉእ መዓልቲ መግቢ ከይተመገቡ/ባ ዝውዓልሉ/ላሉ እዋን ዶ ነይሩ?
During the last 12 months, was there a time when any of the children younger than 5 years old...	ኣብ ዝሓለፉ 12 ኣዋርሕ፣ ካብ ዕድሜኦም ትሕቲ 5 ዓመት ዝኾነ ዕሸላት/ህፃውንቲ ሓዲኦም፣
Q9. Did not eat healthy and nutritious foods because of a lack of money or other resources?	ብስእነት ገንዘብ ወይ ከዓ ካልእ ፍልፍል ኣታዊ ብዘይምህላወ ምኽንያት፣ ንጥዕናኡ/ኣ ጠቓሚ ዝኾነ ምሩፁን ሃናጻይን ናይ መግቢ ዓይነታት ንምብላዕ ዘይከኣሉ/ትሉ እዋን ዶ ነይሩ?
Q10. Was not given enough food because of a lack of money or other resources?	ብስእነት ገንዘብ ወይ ከዓ ካልእ ፍልፍል ኣታዊ ብዘይምህላወ ምኽንያት፣ ቡብቕዕ መጠን ዝብላዕ መግቢ ዝስእነሉ/ትሉ እዋን ዶ ነይሩ?