



NATIONAL BUREAU OF STATISTICS



Global Alliance for
Improved Nutrition

COST OF A HEALTHY DIET

(JANUARY 2025)

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INTRODUCTION

HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ The Cost of a Healthy Diet (CoHD) is the least expensive combination of locally available items that meets globally consistent food-based dietary guidelines. It is used as a measure of physical and economic access to healthy diets. This is a lower bound (or floor) of the cost per adult per day excluding the cost of transportation and meal preparation.
- ◆ National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) recently rebased the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which is the source for the Cost of a Healthy Diet (CoHD) basket. This rebasing replaced the previous 2009 reference period to align the CPI with the current economic landscape. This involved updating the types of goods and services included, revising their weightings, adding new items to reflect evolving consumption patterns and removing obsolete items.
- ◆ The updated CPI now encompasses 934 product varieties categorized under the COICOP 2018 framework, with over 300 food varieties specifically used to calculate the CoHD. It's important to note that due to these changes in the basket, item specifications, and the addition of new items, the CoHD cannot be compared with previous bulletins.
- ◆ The National average Cost of a Healthy Diet was N1,328 in January 2025.
- ◆ In January 2025, the average CoHD was highest in the South-East at N1,662 per adult per day, compared to N992 per adult per day in North-West.

Food environments determine a household's physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food for an active and healthy life. A suite of indicators known as the Cost and Affordability of a Healthy Diet (CoAHD) have been developed to improve the measurement of food access and are now monitored globally by the United Nations and the World Bank as a metric of food security. The Cost of a Healthy Diet (CoHD) metric uses the availability, price, and nutritional composition of retail food items to identify the **least expensive** combination of items that meet requirements for a healthy diet.

To compute the Cost of a Healthy Diet indicator, the following data are required: (a) retail food prices, (b) food composition data, and (c) a healthy diet standard.

Retail Food Prices

The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) gathers **retail food price data** every month from 10,534 sources in both urban and rural areas across all Nigerian states. This data helps the NBS track **inflation** and includes prices for over 300 food items. These items are commonly part of a healthy diet, and their price data is used to calculate the Cost of a Healthy Diet (CoHD).

Healthy Diet Standard

In Nigeria, CoHD is the minimum cost of foods needed to meet international recommendations defined in the Healthy Diet Basket (HDB), a globally relevant set of criteria that captures similarities across most national Food-Based Dietary Guidelines (FBDG) (Table 1). The HDB was created as a comparable standard to calculate and compare the cost and affordability of healthy diets across countries; the HDB is most relevant for countries where there is not yet a quantified national FBDG, like Nigeria.

Table 1. Description of the Healthy Diet Basket (HDB)

Food Group	Number of food items selected	Energy content (kilocalories)	Share of total calories (%)	Typical weights of example foods (g)
Starchy Staples	2	1,160	50	322 g dry rice
Oils and Fats	1	300	13	34 g oil
Fruits	2	160	7	230-300 g
Vegetables	3	110	5	270-400 g
Legumes Nuts and Seeds	1	300	13	85 g dry bean
Animal Source Foods	2	300	13	210 g egg
Total	11	2,330	100	

Average Cost of a Healthy Diet (National, State & Zonal Levels)

The National average Cost of a Healthy Diet was N1,328 per adult per day in January 2025. At the State level, Bayelsa, Ekiti and Imo States recorded the highest cost with N2,014, N1,902, and N1,818 respectively. Kaduna, Kano and Yobe, accounted for the lowest costs with N819, N897 and N922 respectively.

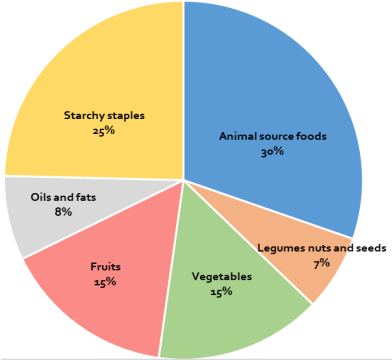
At the Zonal level, the average CoHD was highest in the South-East Zone at N1,662 per day, followed by South-South Zone with N1,607 per day. The lowest average Cost of a Healthy diet was recorded in North West Zone with N992 per day.

(Please see Appendix for full graphic representation)

Cost Share by Food Group

Animal Source foods were the most expensive food group recommendation to meet in January, accounting for 30% of the total CoHD to provide 13% of the total calories. Fruits and vegetables were the most expensive food groups in terms of price per calorie; they accounted for 15% each, of total CoHD while providing only 7% and 5% of total calories in the Healthy Diet Basket. Legumes, Nuts and Seeds were the least-expensive food group on average, at 7% of the total cost.

Figure 1 - Cost Share by Food Group



General and Food Inflation Relative to the Cost of a Healthy Diet

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) measures inflation, showing the average price change of everyday goods and services. The food index, a component of the CPI, specifically tracks changes in food prices paid by households. While both food prices and the Cost of a Healthy Diet are expected to increase over time, our focus here is on their relative inflation rates. The food CPI incorporates a broader range of items, including more packaged and value-added products, compared to the Cost of a Healthy Diet, which often emphasizes unprocessed, least-cost items.

Least-Cost Diets and Frequently Selected Least-Cost Items

Table 2, (Please see Appendix) showcases the most and least expensive places to find a healthy diet in January 2025. Enugu State (Urban) topped the chart with the highest Cost of a Healthy (CoHD) at N2,144 per adult per day. Conversely, Kaduna State (Rural) offered most affordable option at N753 for CoHD. Notably, Millet Whole grain was the only food item consistently found as a least-cost option in both locations, though its price varied between them. Also, some unique least-cost options emerged. For instance, Enugu State (Urban) had Agric Egg as the most affordable animal source foods, whereas in Kaduna State (Rural) it was cheese (local Wara).

Table 3, (Please see Appendix) shows frequently selected least-cost items in each food group across all state-sector combinations. This table demonstrates that some items are commonly the least-cost across different locations. For example, in the starchy staples food group, millet whole grain was the least expensive item in 20 percent of state-sectors, and kulikuli /groundnut cake was the least-expensive item in the legumes, nuts and seed food group in 26 percent of all the state-sectors. Dates palm fruits were selected as the least-cost item in the fruits food group in 30 percent of state-sectors.

Finally, Table 4 (Please see Appendix) offers a granular look at the least-cost food items consistently found across different Nigerian states, carefully chosen to represent each of the country's geopolitical zones. The analysis within this table illustrates that certain food items repeatedly stand out as the least expensive options, regardless of their geographical location. For example, yellow garri was the least expensive item within the starchy staples category in Lagos (South-West) and Rivers (South-South) states. In the fruit category avocado pear was selected as the least expensive item in all the states.

Similarly, Rivers (South-South), Anambra (South-East) and Bauchi (North-East) had palm oil as the least expensive item in the oils and fats group. Furthermore, in the legumes nuts and seeds category Anambra (South-East) and Bauchi (North-East) states had kulikuli/ groundnut cake as their least expensive item while Rivers (South-South) and Bauchi (North-East) had baobab leaves powder/kuka as their least-cost vegetable.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Cost of a Healthy Diet provides important information about food access, a key aspect of food security, which is useful for government, civil society and development partners, private sector, and researchers.

For instance, where the Cost of a Healthy Diet is high, it is possible to identify which least-cost items and food groups are driving the high cost. Stakeholders can identify supply challenges in specific foods or food groups to be addressed, for example with improved production, distribution, or market access.

The Cost of a Healthy Diet can also inform:

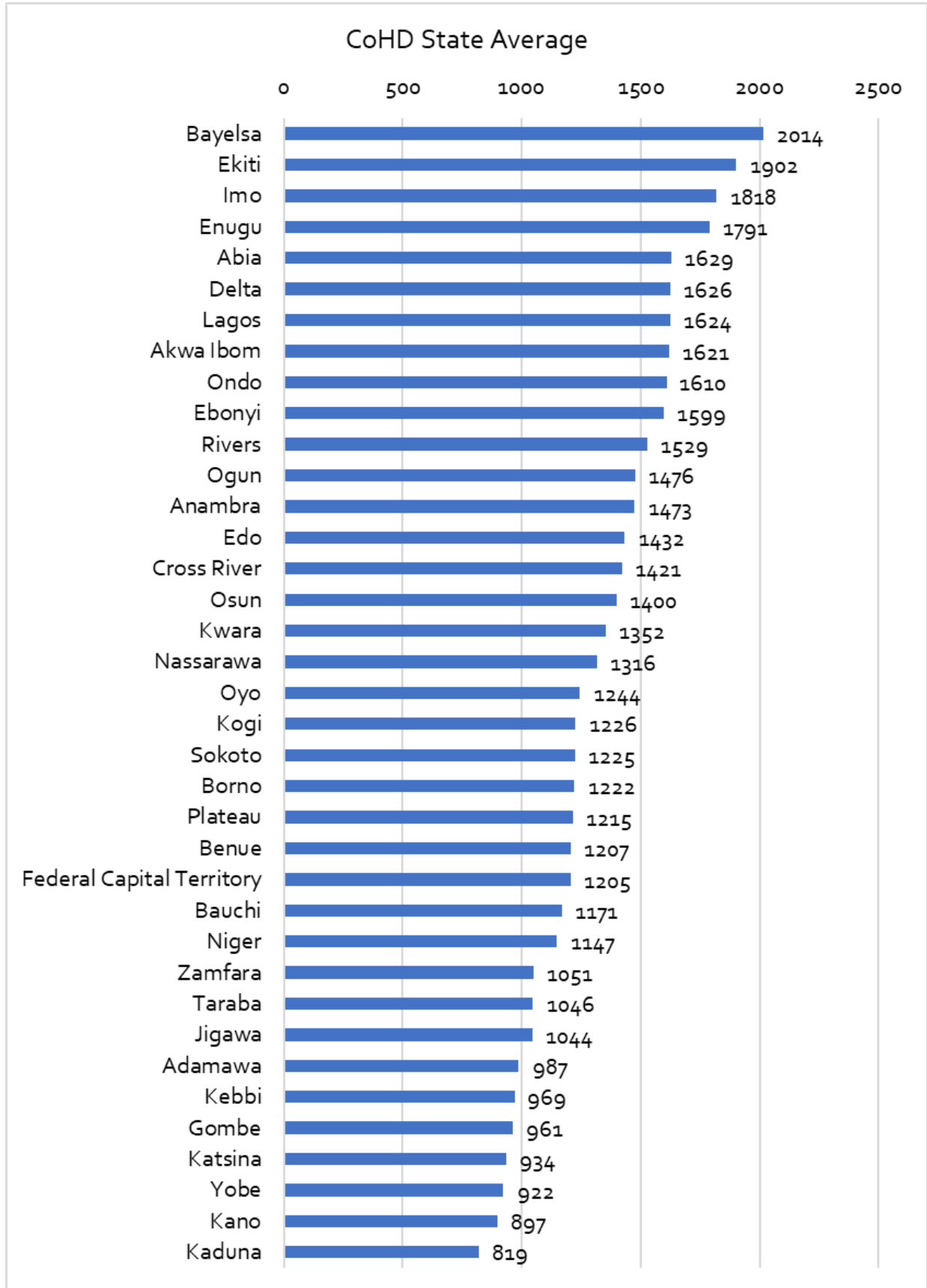
- ◆ The minimum income needed by households to access a healthy diet, and social protection and transfer amounts for vulnerable populations.
- ◆ Prioritization of commodities for agricultural production and trade policy interventions.
- ◆ Targeting interventions, including nutrition education, to populations with the most potential to benefit; nutrition education is only effective when people can afford to comply with the recommendations.
- ◆ Research on the relationship between food access and other food system factors and outcomes.

These results can also foster collaboration among a wide range of stakeholders, such as policymakers, researchers and civil society actors that focus on food security, to devise strategies that tackle access, availability, and affordability of healthy diet effectively. Future research incorporating income can also be used to determine the proportion and number of the population that are unable to afford a healthy diet.

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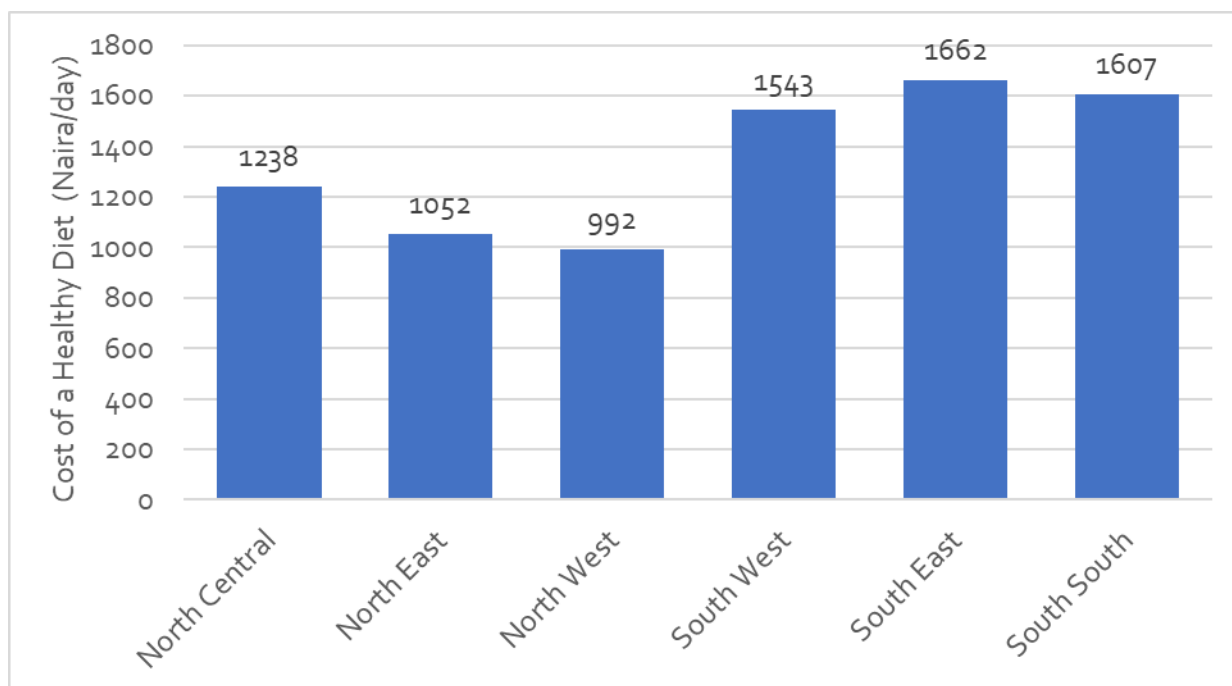
APPENDIX

Figure 2. Average Cost of a Healthy Diet by State



APPENDIX

Figure 3. Zonal Average CoHD



APPENDIX

Table 2. States with Least and Most expensive cost of items

	Most expensive:		Least expensive:	
Jan-25	Enugu Urban		Kaduna Rural	
	Least-cost item	Cost	Least-cost item	Cost
Starchy staples	Maize Grains White	159	Millet Whole grain	153
	Millet Whole grain	215	Plantain Flour, Sold loose	44
Oils and fats	Vegetable Oil, 75cl	120	Palm oil, 75cl	97
Fruits	Oranges, fresh	117	Desert Date Fruit /Aduwa	68
	Plum fruit	157	Mangoes, fresh	77
Vegetables	Cucumbers, fresh	151	Kuka Dried	18
	Green Leaf /tete	163	Okra, Dried	30
	Oha leaves	91	Tomatoes Dried	17
Legumes nuts seeds	Melon, (Egusi) shelled	141	Locust Beans (Dawadawa, Iru)	95
Animal source foods	Agric hen eggs, (a Crate of 30 pieces)	442	Cheese (local - wara)	96
	Tin Milk-Evaporated, Three Crown Milk, 16og	388	Shrimps white dried	58
Total (CoHD)		2,144		753

Table 3. Top Three (3) most frequently selected least-cost items by Food Group

Food Group	Item Name	Selected as least-cost % of possible selection
Starchy staples	Millet Whole grain	20%
	Maize Grains White	19%
	Garri White	11%
Oils and fats	Palm Oil, 75%	58%
	Vegetable Oil, 75%	20%
	Soya Bean Oil, 75%	9%
Fruits	Date Palm fruit (Debenu)	30%
	Avocado Pear	22%
	Desert Date Fruit /Aduwa	9%
Vegetables	Okra (Dried)	22%
	Tomatoes Dried	21%
	Oha leaves	13%
Legumes nuts and seeds	Kulikuli /Groundnut Cake	26%
	Groundnut (shelled)	23%
	Soya Beans	22%
Animal source foods	Cray fish small white	20%
	Cheese (local - wara)	20%
	Shrimps white dried	11%

APPENDIX

Table 4: Top most frequently selected least-cost items by food group in some State

Food Group	Item Name		
	Lagos	Rivers	Anambra
Starchy staples	Garri Yellow	Garri Yellow	Cassava Flour, Sold loose
	Millet Flour, sold loose	Guinea corn flour, sold loose	Maize Grains White
Oils and fats	Palm Kernel Oil, 75cl	Palm oil, 75cl	Palm oil, 75cl
		Soya bean oil, 75cl	Soya bean oil, 75cl
Fruits	Avocado Pear	African Star Apple (Cherry, Agbalumo, Udara, Ehya)	Avocado Pear
	Dates Palm fruits/ Debinu	Avocado Pear	Oranges, fresh
Vegetables	Grean Leaf /tete	Baobab Leaves Powder/ Kuka	Cucumbers, fresh
	Oha leaves	Carrots, fresh	Grean Leaf /tete
Legumes nuts and seeds	Groundnuts, shelled	Pigeon Beans (Broad Bean)	Kulikuli /Groundnut Cake
		Soya Beans	
Animal source foods	Cray fish small white	Cray fish small white	Agric hen eggs, (a Crate of 30 pieces)
	Shrimps white dried	Shrimps white dried	Powdered Milk Three Crown, 350g
Food Group	Item Name		
	Federal Capital Territory	Bauchi	Kano
Starchy staples	Guinea Corn/ Sorghum White	Garri White	Cassava Flour, Sold loose
	Maize Grains White	Guinea Corn /Sorghum White	Millet Whole grain
Oils and fats	Vegetable Oil, 75cl	Palm oil, 75cl	Soya bean oil, 75cl
		Vegetable Oil, 75cl	
Fruits	Avocado Pear	Avocado Pear	Avocado Pear
	Dates Palm fruits/ Debinu	Bananas	Desert Date Fruit /Aduwa
Vegetables	Kuka Dried	Baobab Leaves Powder/ Kuka	Okra, Dried
	Oha leaves	Okra, Dried	Tomatoes Dried
Legumes nuts and seeds	Groundnuts, shelled	Kulikuli /Groundnut Cake	Groundnuts, unshelled
	Soya Beans		Locust Beans (Dawadawa, Iru)
Animal source foods	Cray fish small white	Chicken Wings	Cheese (local - wara)
	Fresh Milk /Nono, 75cl	Cray fish small white	Oxtail (Cow Tail)



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