How did Nutrition Links participation affect household’s food security status?

“Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (World Food Summit, 1996)

How was food security assessed in Nutrition Links?

The following 15 questions were asked and the affirmative responses were summed up (1 point per affirmative response):

1. were you worried that your household would run out of food?
2. did your household run out of food?
3. did your household lack enough money or other resource to get healthy and nutritious food?
4. did you or any adult in your household have to consume a diet based on only few kinds of foods?
5. did you or any adult in your household not eat breakfast, lunch or dinner [or skip a meal]?
6. did you or any adult in your household eat less than you thought you should?
7. did you or any adult in your household feel hungry but did not eat?
8. did you or any adult in your household eat only one meal in a day or go without eating for a whole day?
9. did any child, aged 5 or younger, in your household not eat healthy foods?
10. did any child, aged 5 or younger, in your household have to consume a diet based on only few kinds of foods?
11. did any child aged 5 or younger in your household not eat breakfast, lunch or dinner?
12. did you have to serve less food to any child aged 5 or younger in your household?
13. did any child aged 5 or younger in your household feel hungry but did not eat?
14. did any child aged 5 or younger in your household eat only one meal in a day or go without eating for a whole day?
15. did any child aged 5 or younger in your household not eat healthy foods?

The resulting score was then used to create the following four food security categories:

- **Food secure**: 0
- **Mildly food insecure**: 1 to 5
- **Moderately food insecure**: 6 to 10
- **Severely food insecure**: 11 to 15

Food Security prevalence by intervention group and year

- **Year 1**
  - Control %
  - Intervention %
- **Year 2**
  - Control %
  - Intervention %

Notes

- There was a lower prevalence of food insecurity in the second year in both control and intervention groups.
- There was an effect of the intervention on severe food insecurity in the second year.
- Qualitative data shows some women diversified their diet, had money for market, and did not worry as much as before their participation in Nutrition Links.