Food affordability

*Dealing with seasonal variation of purchasing power
and monitoring hunger*
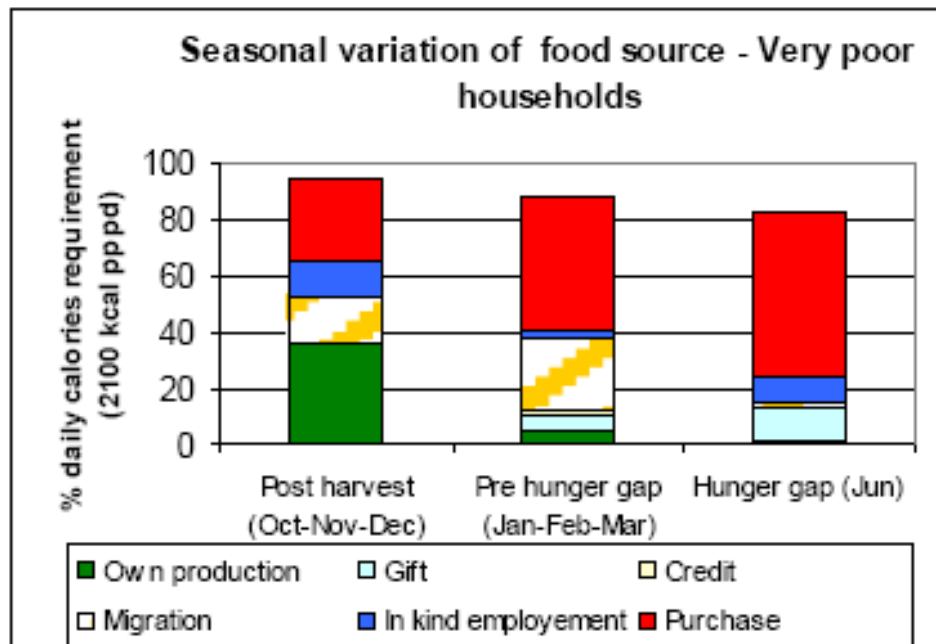
Save the Children UK

We Save the Children — Will you?
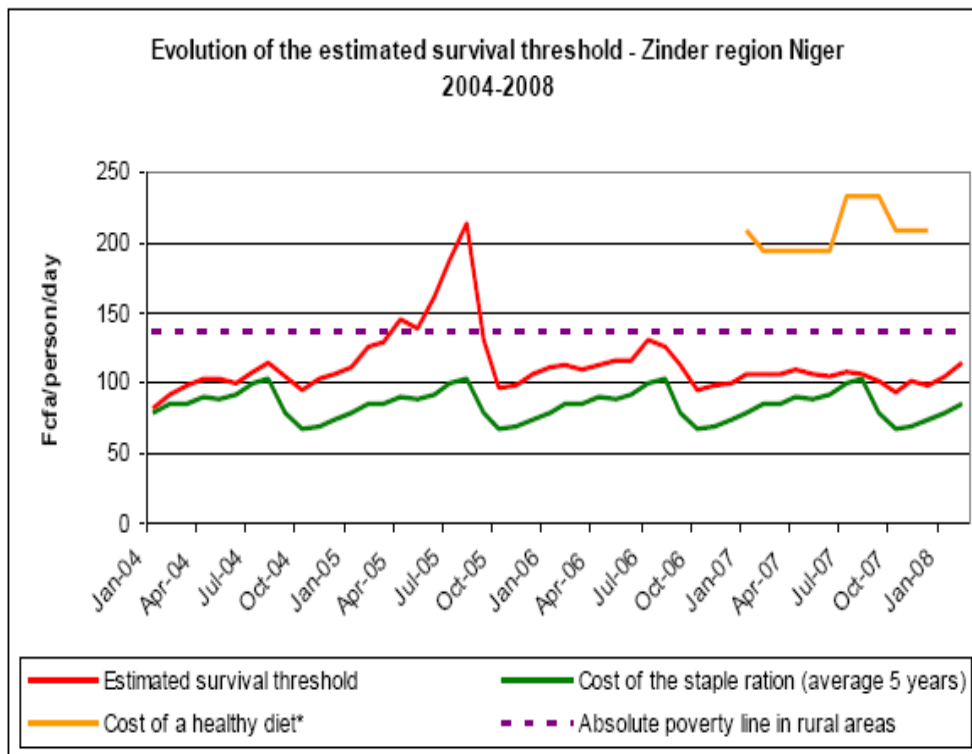
Brighton, 8th of July 2009

Hunger and purchasing power

• The poorest in the developing world rely increasingly on a cash economy

• Purchasing power is becoming one of the main determinant of food security

Seasonal variation of food source - Very poor households

Legend:
- Own production
- Migration
- Gift
- In kind employement
- Credit
- Purchase

• The importance of purchasing power in ensuring food security varies according to seasons

Ex : Kantche in Niger

The seasonal variation of the cost of food

Evolution of the estimated survival threshold - Zinder region Niger 2004-2008

- Estimated survival threshold
- Cost of a healthy diet*
- Cost of the staple ration (average 5 years)
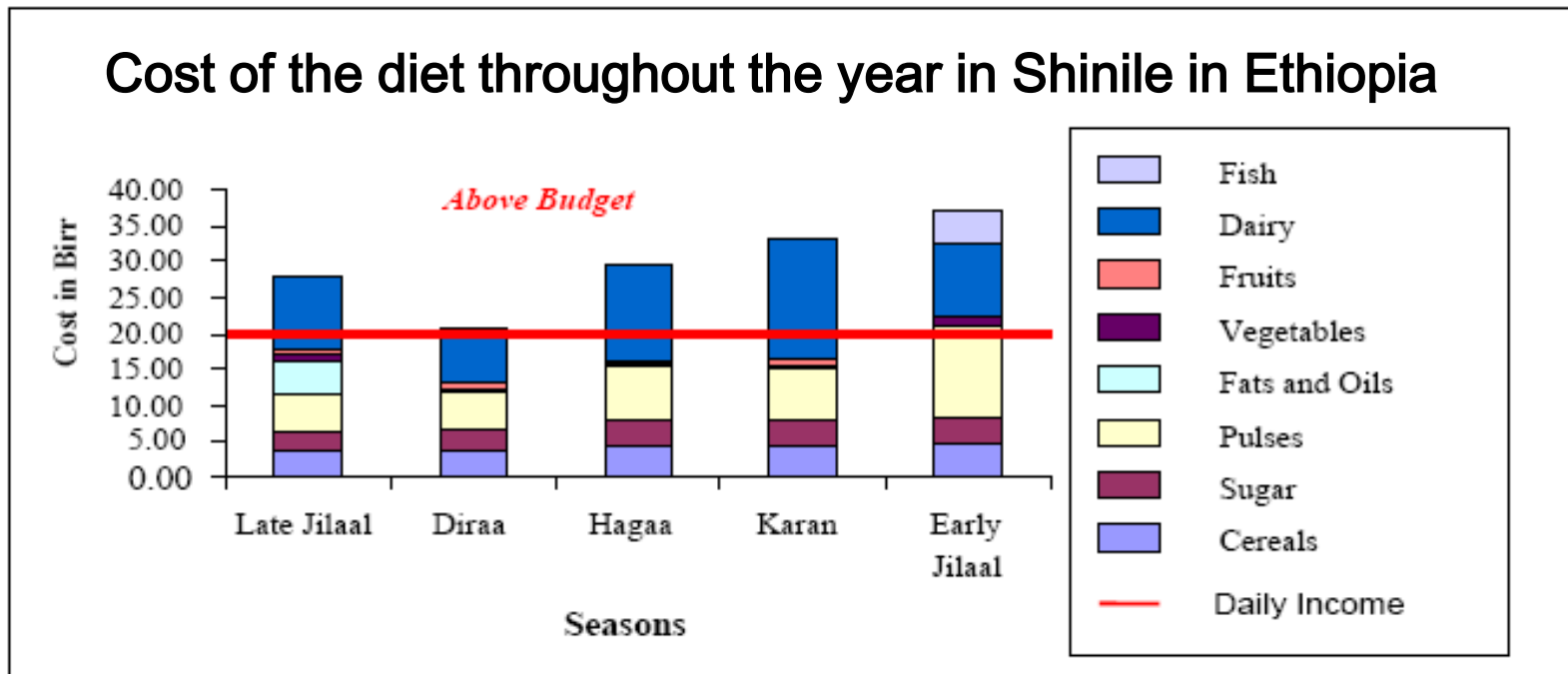- Absolute poverty line in rural areas

In many developing countries, the cost of food varies greatly from one season to another, due to the seasonal changes in the price of staple food.

The cost of a healthy diet can vary even more according to the availability and cost of nutritious food items.
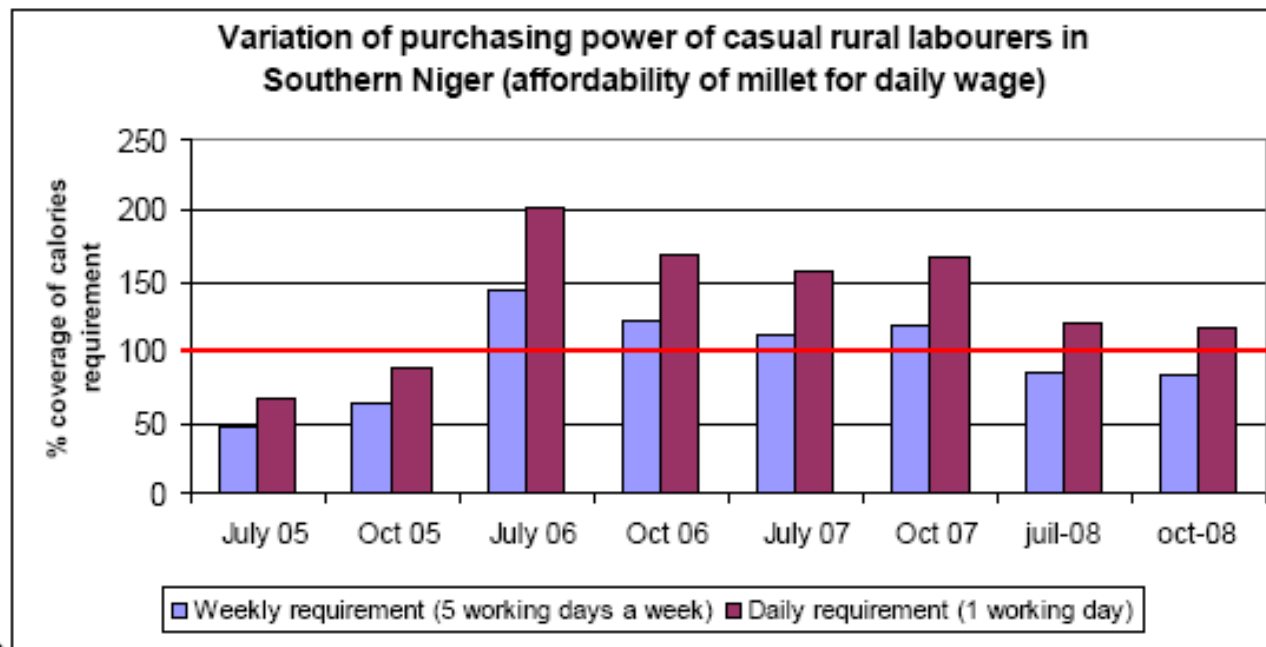
Iyou?

Estimating the cost of a healthy diet

Save the Children has developed software to calculate the cost of the cheapest diet on the basis of the food items available locally taking into consideration the seasonal variations of the nutritious food items and their costs.

Cost of the diet throughout the year in Shinile in Ethiopia

Will you?

Seasonal variation of the availability of income

• The poorest rely increasingly on casual labour and seasonal sources of income, which are very uncertain and fickle

• Identifying periods of high and low employment is therefore very important in understanding whether households can afford an appropriate diet

Variation of purchasing power of casual rural labourers in Southern Niger (affordability of millet for daily wage)

Save the Children's Hunger Monitoring System

• The affordability of food throughout the year is insufficiently taken into consideration in Early Warning Systems.

•A systematic approach is required to measure and understand the factors that affect food access by poor families throughout the seasons and also to understand the nature of food-related crisis that typically occur on a seasonal basis.

•Save the Children has recently developed a hunger Monitoring System, which combines measurement of selected indicators including economic access to food and the nutritional situation.

We Save the Children Will you?

Thank you !

We Save the Children — Will you?