**The financial crisis, food consumption and quality of diets: An international perspective**

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**Abstract**

Food consumption behaviours, calorie intakes, and the quality of diets are considered a major determinant of the incidence of non-communicable diseases. However, there is still uncertainty on how economic factors such as income levels, income distribution and price levels influence diets and health outcomes.

Using FAO data on food disappearance for 184 countries over the period 1961 to 2013, we build a diet quality index based on the compliance with the World Health Organization recommendations. We explore the macro-relationships between diet quality and macroeconomic variables by combining the FAO data with economic data (income levels, income distribution, price levels) from other international sources such as World Bank and IMF. By exploiting the heterogeneity over time and across countries, and – wherever possible – the panel structure of the data, we provide an estimate of the impact of the financial crisis on different groups of countries, and how it has affected the so-called “triple burden of malnutrition”, and the extent of undernutrition, overnutrition and inadequate nutrition quality.