

Feeding India's babies: *Insights on trends and patterns from the National Family Health Surveys, 2015-16 to 2019-21*

ABOUT THIS DATA NOTE

Early life nutrition sets the stage for the health, nutrition, and development of young children. Optimal infant and young child feeding (IYCF) practices begin with timely initiation of breastfeeding, followed by exclusive breastfeeding and complementary feeding. This Data Note provides an overview of trends and patterns in IYCF practices in India at the national-, state-, and district levels based on the 2015-16 and 2019-21 National Family Health Surveys (NFHS) data. IYCF indicators were created following World Health Organization and UNICEF's 2021 guidelines¹.

FIGURE 1: Trends in breastfeeding practices, between 2015-16 and 2019-21

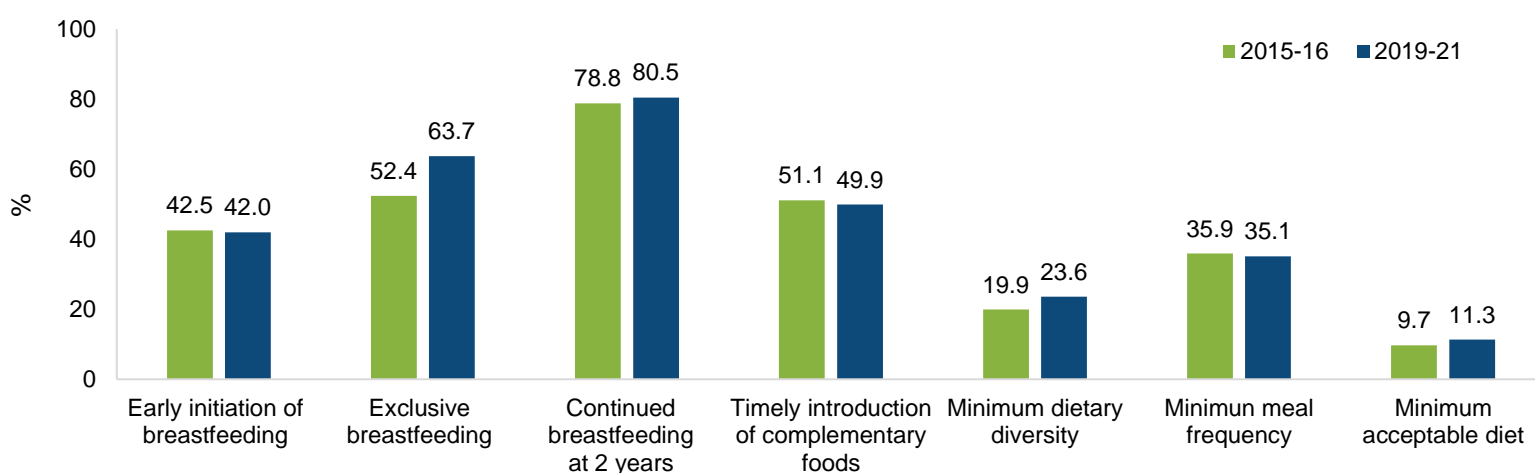
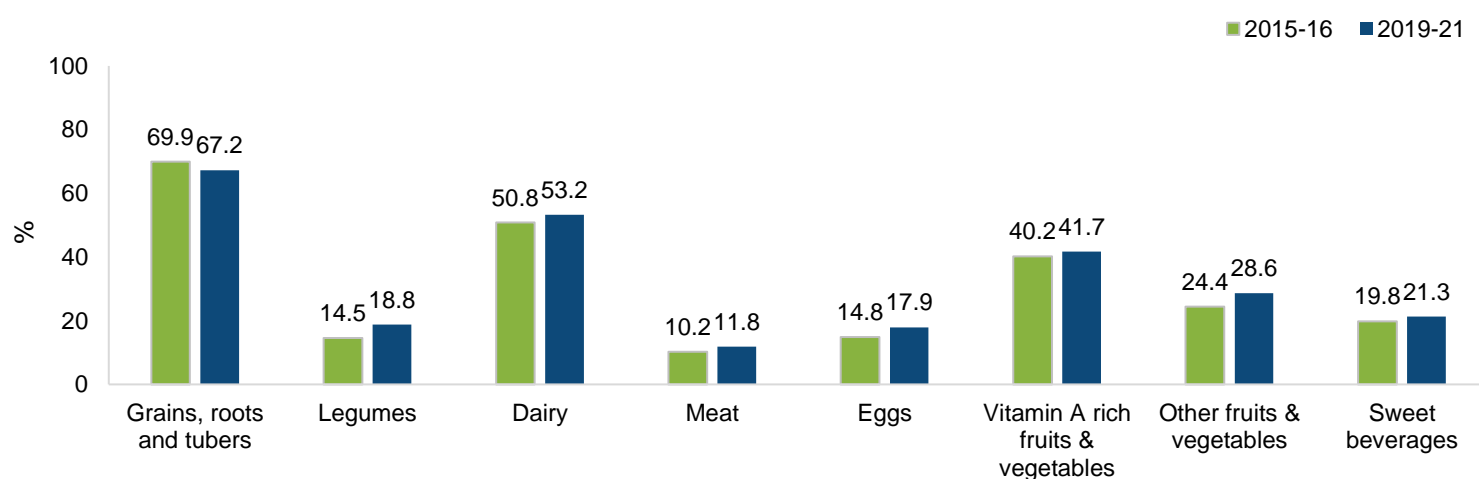


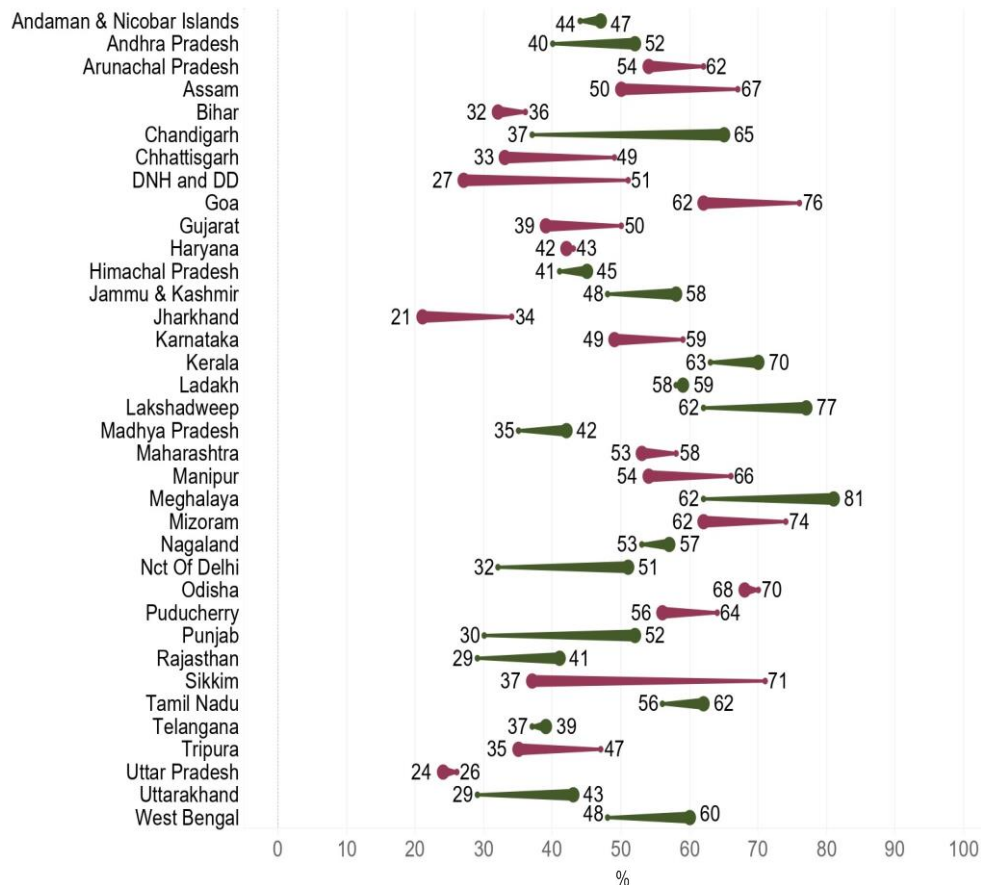
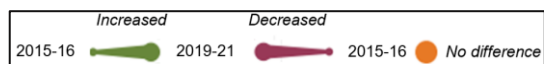
FIGURE 2: Trends in consumption of foods and beverages, between 2015-16 and 2019-21



¹Indicators for assessing infant and young child feeding practices: definitions and measurement methods. Geneva: World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund, 2021.

Source: NFHS-4 and NFHS-5 unit-level data [IFPRI estimates].

FIGURE 3: Trends in early initiation of breastfeeding by state, between 2015-16 and 2019-21

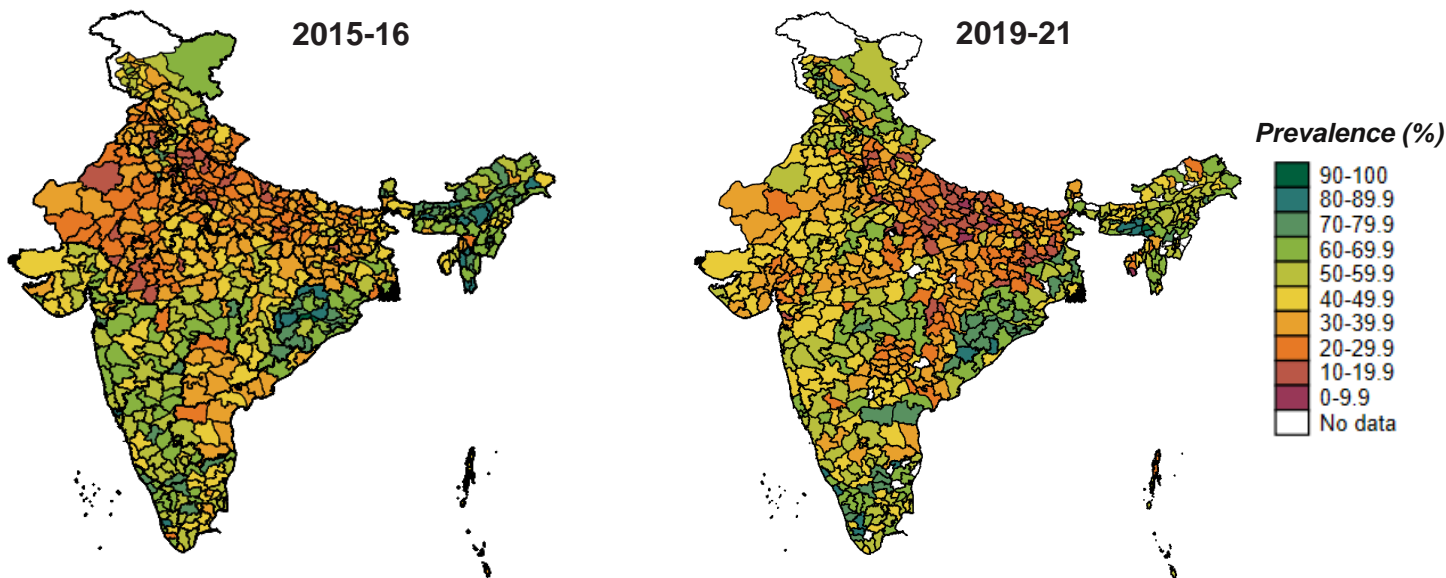


| States/UTs with highest increase | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| State/UT | pp change |
| Chandigarh | +28 |
| Punjab | +22 |
| Delhi | +19 |
| Meghalaya | +19 |
| Lakshadweep | +15 |

| States/UTs with highest decrease | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| State/UT | pp change |
| Sikkim | -34 |
| DNH and DD | -24 |
| Assam | -17 |
| Chhattisgarh | -16 |
| Goa | -14 |

DNH and DD: Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu

MAP 1: Early initiation of breastfeeding by district, between 2015-16 and 2019-21

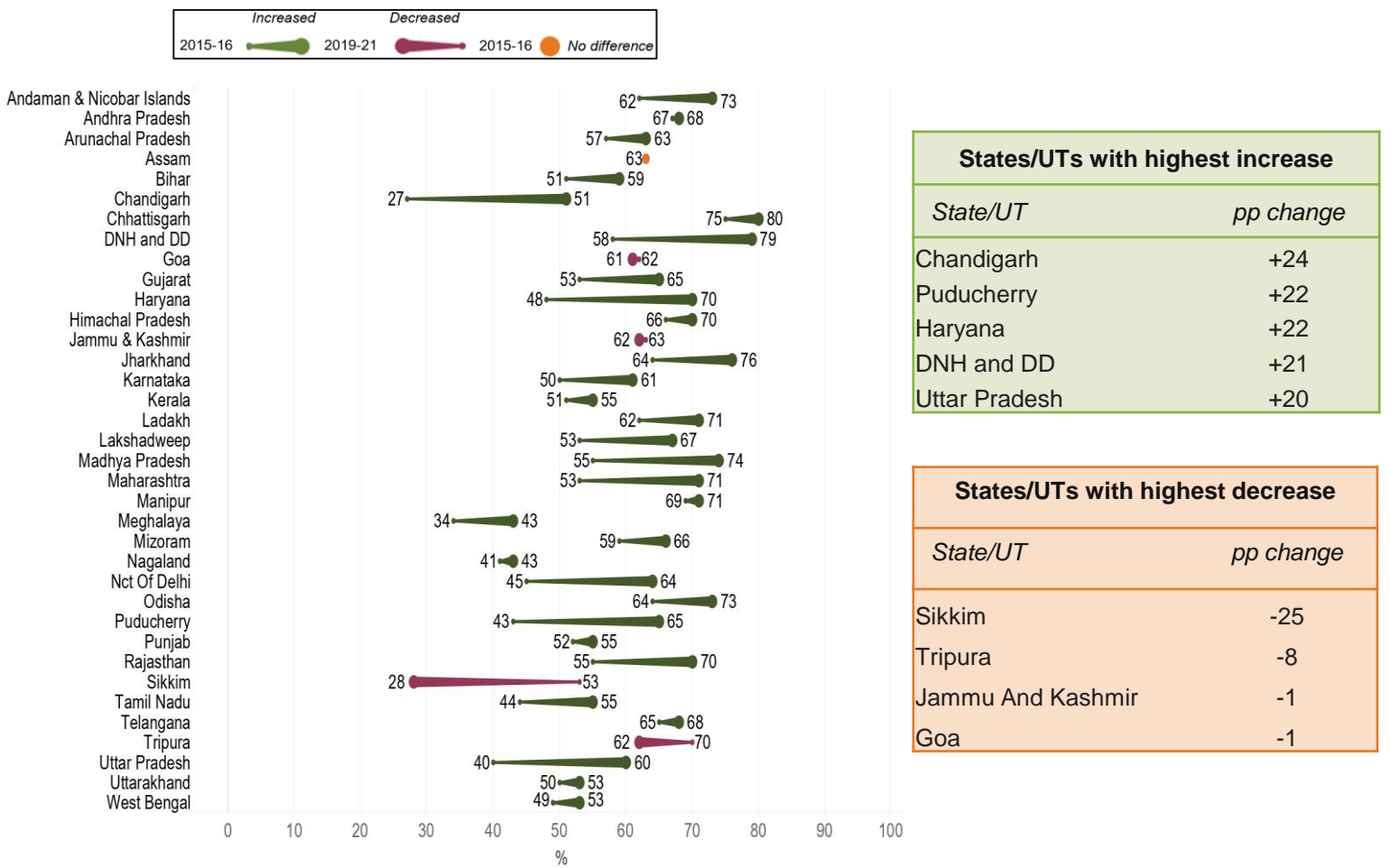


| Districts with highest increase | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| District (state) | pp change |
| Sangrur (PB) | +48 |
| Kollam (KL) | +48 |
| Kurnool (AP) | +45 |
| Prakasam (AP) | +43 |
| Shahid Bhagat Singh Nagar (PB) | +40 |

| Districts with highest decrease | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| District (state) | pp change |
| South District (SK) | -51 |
| Rajnandgaon (CG) | -50 |
| Jind (HR) | -45 |
| Valsad (GJ) | -44 |
| Saiha (MZ) | -41 |

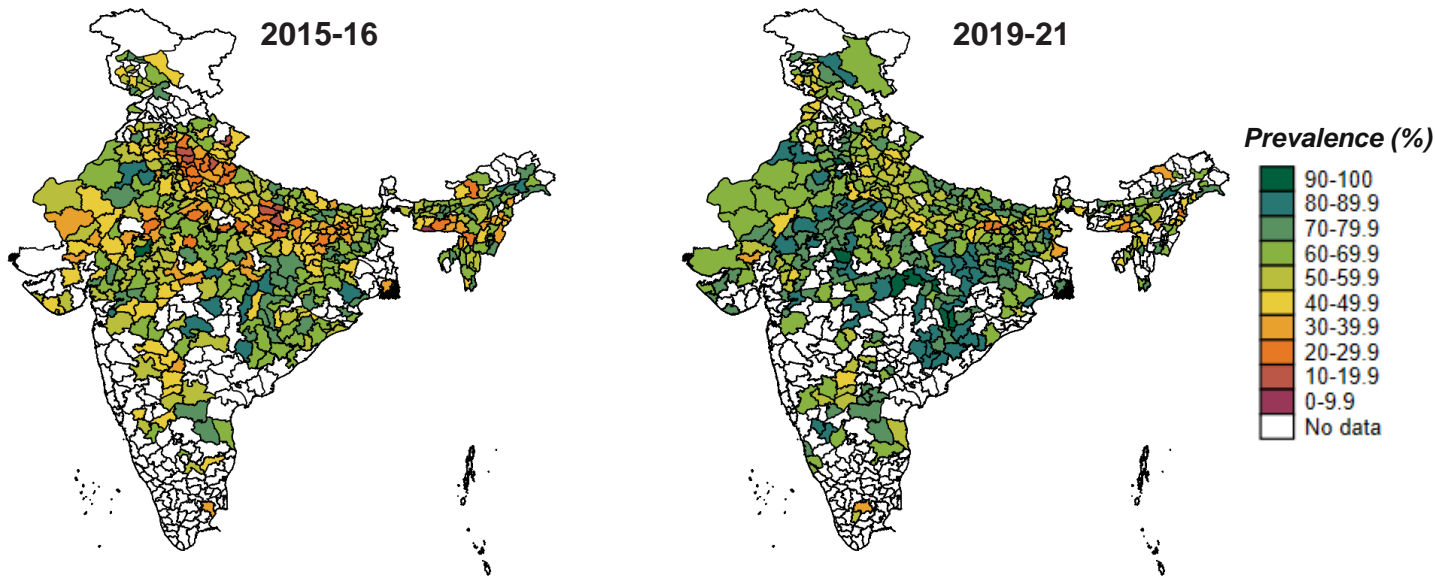
pp: percentage point. Source: NFHS-4 and NFHS-5 unit-level data [IFPRI estimates].
Note: There are 575 comparable districts between NFHS-4 and NFHS-5.

FIGURE 4: Trends in exclusive breastfeeding by state, between 2015-16 and 2019-21



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MAP 2: Exclusive breastfeeding by district, between 2015-16 and 2019-21



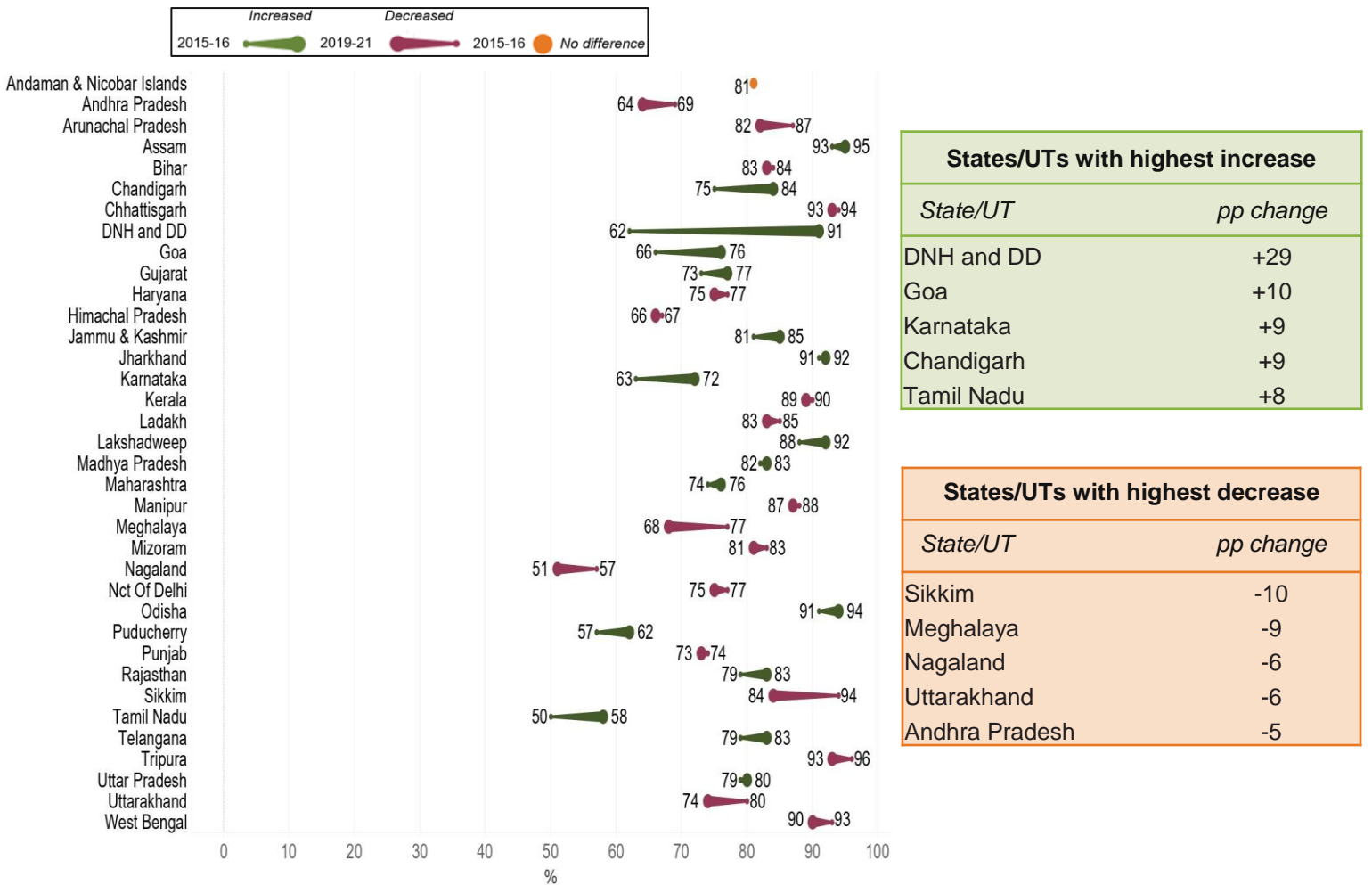
| Districts with highest increase | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| District (state) | pp change |
| Dindori (MP) | +55 |
| Bhind (MP) | +55 |
| Morena (MP) | +52 |
| Ambedkar Nagar (UP) | +51 |
| Gwalior (MP) | +49 |

| Districts with highest decrease | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| District (state) | pp change |
| Tuensang (NL) | -42 |
| Saran (BR) | -27 |
| Katihar (BR) | -27 |
| Bhojpur (BR) | -27 |
| Dohad (GJ) | -23 |

pp: percentage point. Source: NFHS-4 and NFHS-5 unit-level data [IFPRI estimates].

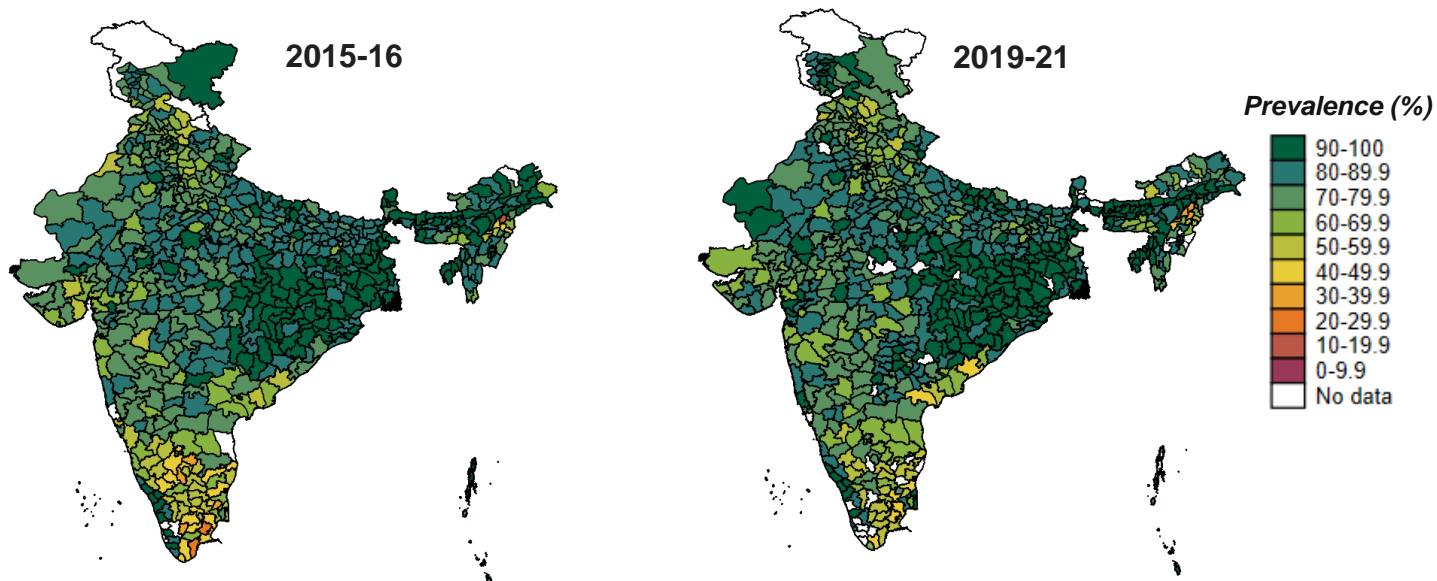
Note: There are 575 comparable districts between NFHS-4 and NFHS-5. Data not shown for districts with fewer than 25 unweighted cases.

FIGURE 5: Trends in continued breastfeeding by state, between 2015-16 and 2019-21



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MAP 3: Continued breastfeeding by district, between 2015-16 and 2019-21



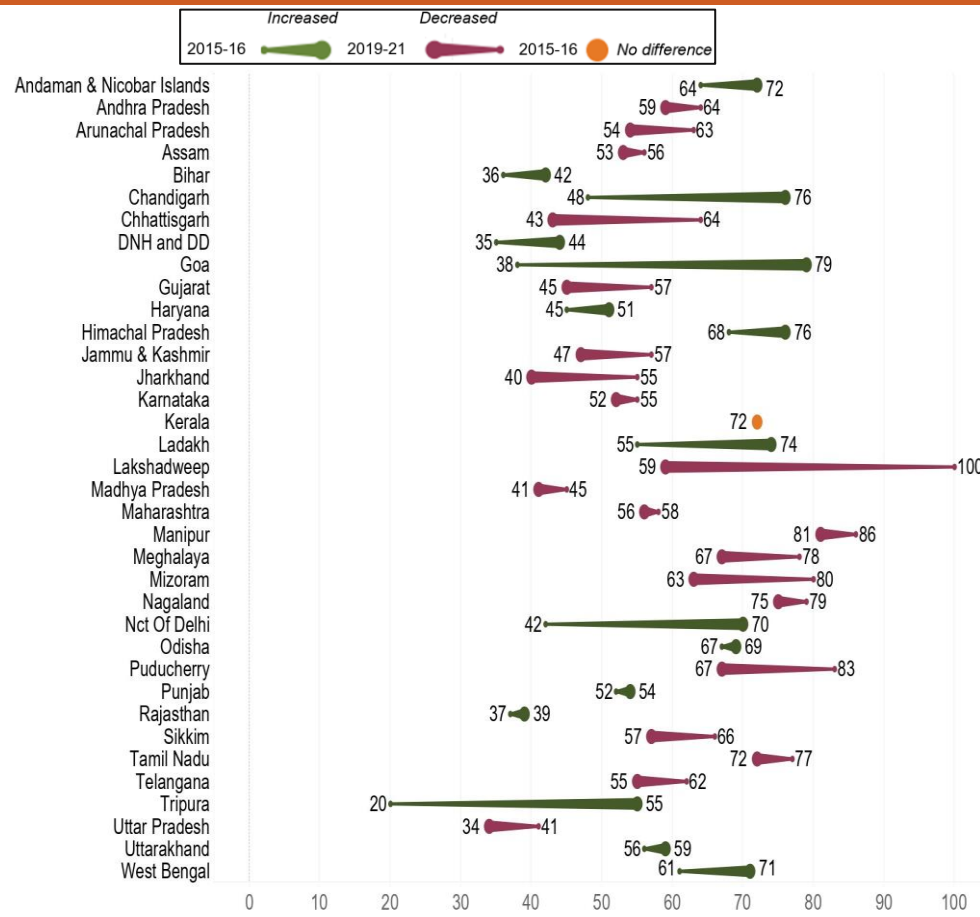
| Districts with highest increase | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| District (state) | pp change |
| Nagapattinam (TN) | +35 |
| Kodagu (KA) | +34 |
| Chamba (HP) | +34 |
| Chennai (TN) | +33 |
| Daman (DNH and DD) | +30 |

| Districts with highest decrease | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| District (state) | pp change |
| Dimapur (NL) | -28 |
| Garhwal (UK) | -24 |
| Phek (NL) | -22 |
| Cuddalore (TN) | -22 |
| Nayagarh (OD) | -21 |

pp: percentage point. Source: NFHS-4 and NFHS-5 unit-level data [IFPRI estimates].

Note: There are 575 comparable districts between NFHS-4 and NFHS-5. Data not shown for districts with fewer than 25 unweighted cases.

FIGURE 6: Trends in timely introduction of solid, semi-solid, or soft foods by state, between 2015-16 and 2019-21



States/UTs with highest increase

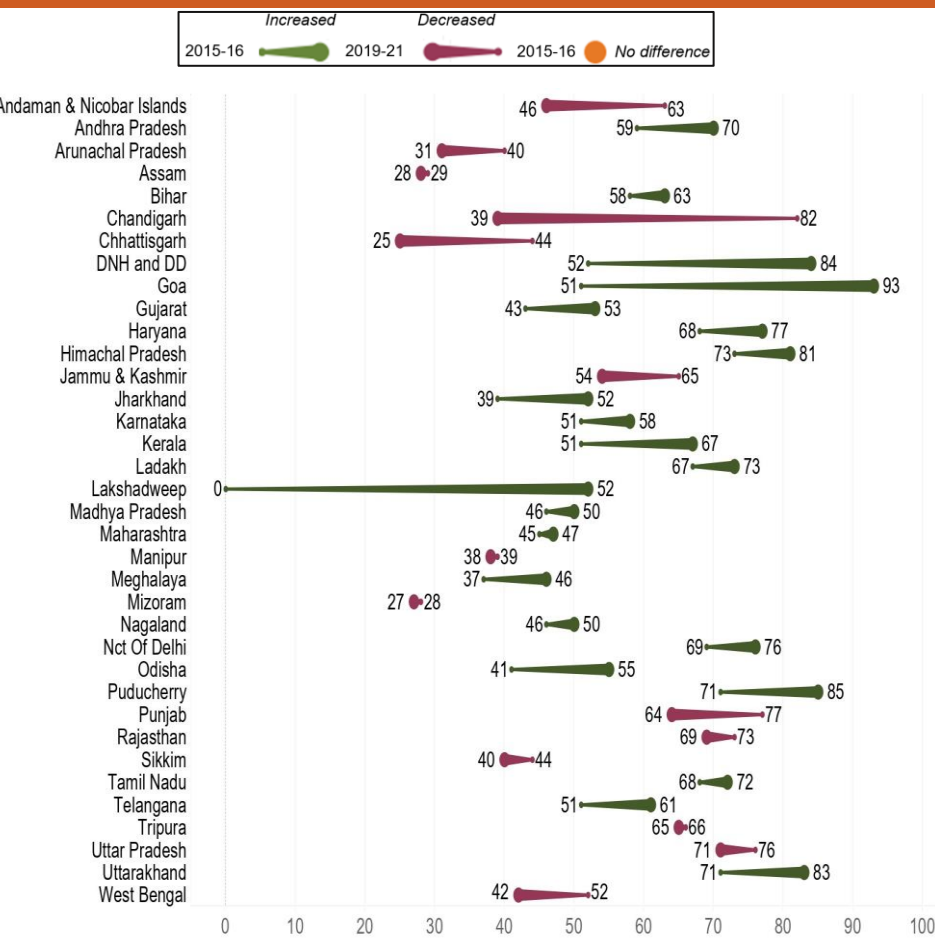
| State/UT | pp change |
|------------|-----------|
| Goa | +41 |
| Tripura | +35 |
| Delhi | +28 |
| Chandigarh | +28 |
| Ladakh | +19 |

States/UTs with highest decrease

| State/UT | pp change |
|--------------|-----------|
| Lakshadweep | -41 |
| Chhattisgarh | -21 |
| Puducherry | -16 |
| Mizoram | -17 |
| Jharkhand | -15 |

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FIGURE 7: Trends in minimum milk feeding frequency for non-breastfed children by state, between 2015-16 and 2019-21



States/UTs with highest increase

| State/UT | pp change |
|-------------|-----------|
| Lakshadweep | +52 |
| Goa | +42 |
| DNH and DD | +32 |
| Kerala | +16 |
| Odisha | +14 |

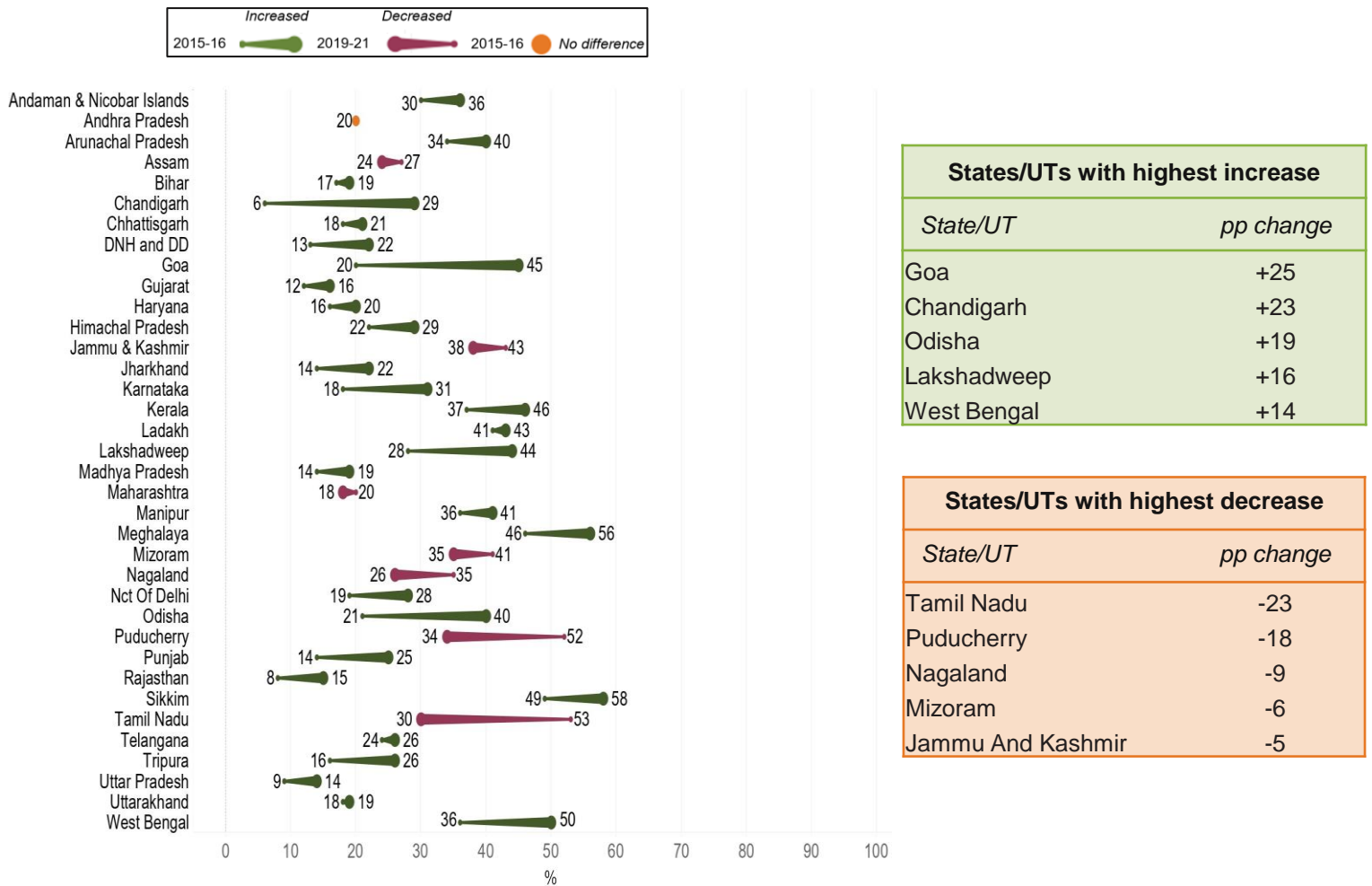
States/UTs with highest decrease

| State/UT | pp change |
|-----------------------------|-----------|
| Chandigarh | -43 |
| Chhattisgarh | -19 |
| Andaman And Nicobar Islands | -17 |
| Punjab | -13 |
| Jammu And Kashmir | -11 |

DNH and DD: Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu %

pp: percentage point. Note: District estimates were not included for the minimum milk feeding frequency for non-breastfed children and the timely introduction of solid, semi solid, or soft food indicators since many districts had fewer than 25 unweighted cases.

FIGURE 8: Trends in minimum dietary diversity by state, between 2015-16 and 2019-21



States/UTs with highest increase

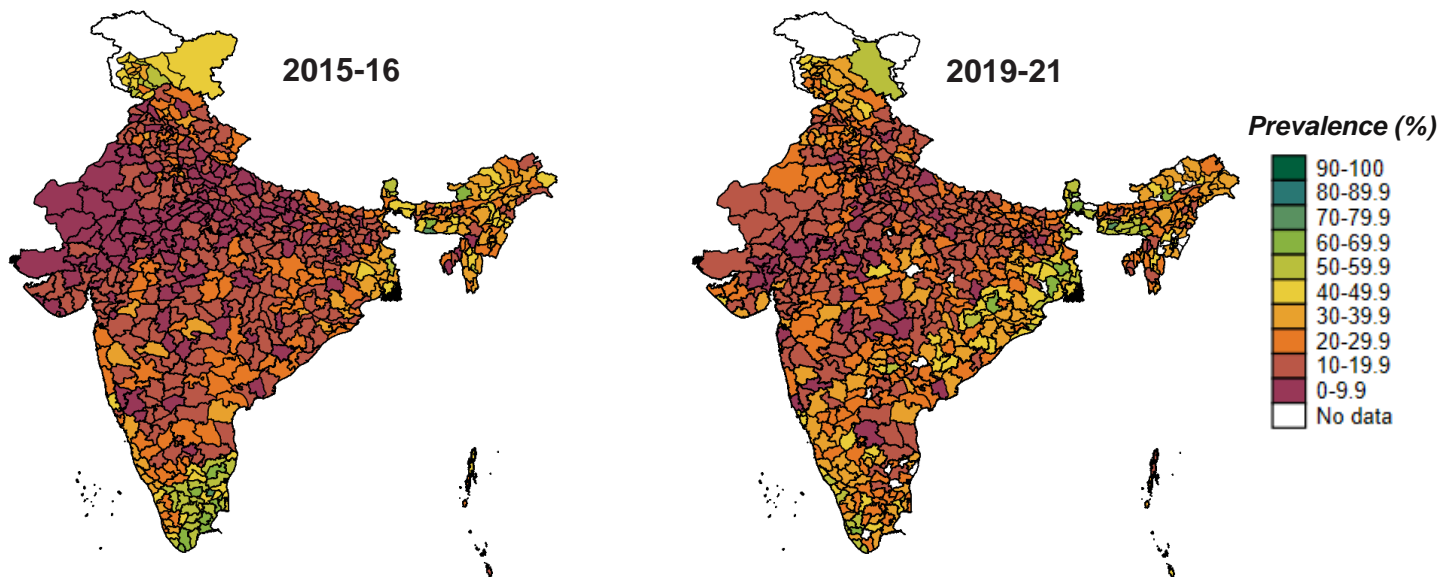
| State/UT | pp change |
|-------------|-----------|
| Goa | +25 |
| Chandigarh | +23 |
| Odisha | +19 |
| Lakshadweep | +16 |
| West Bengal | +14 |

States/UTs with highest decrease

| State/UT | pp change |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Tamil Nadu | -23 |
| Puducherry | -18 |
| Nagaland | -9 |
| Mizoram | -6 |
| Jammu And Kashmir | -5 |

DNH and DD: Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu

MAP 4: Minimum dietary diversity by district, between 2015-16 and 2019-21



Districts with highest increase

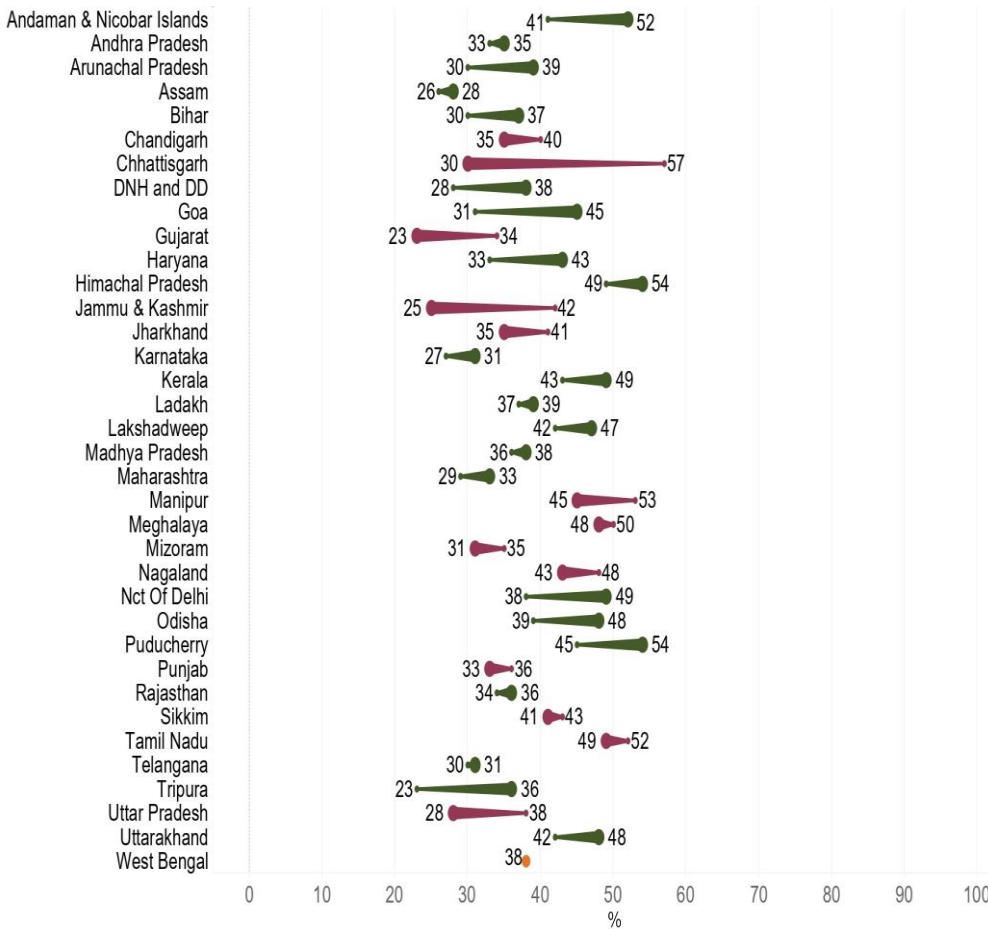
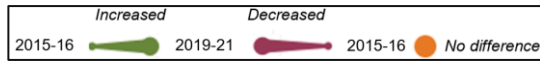
| District (state) | pp change |
|------------------|-----------|
| Kullu (HP) | +43 |
| Sambalpur (OD) | +42 |
| Balangir (OD) | +40 |
| Nuapada (OD) | +37 |
| Raisen (MP) | +37 |

Districts with highest decrease

| District (state) | pp change |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Tirunelveli (TN) | -47 |
| Tiruvannamalai (TN) | -47 |
| Perambalur (TN) | -43 |
| Namakkal (TN) | -40 |
| Yanam (PY) | -38 |

pp: percentage point. Source: NFHS-4 and NFHS-5 unit-level data [IFPRI estimates]. Note: There are 575 comparable districts between NFHS-4 and NFHS-5.

FIGURE 9: Trends in minimum meal frequency by state, between 2015-16 and 2019-21

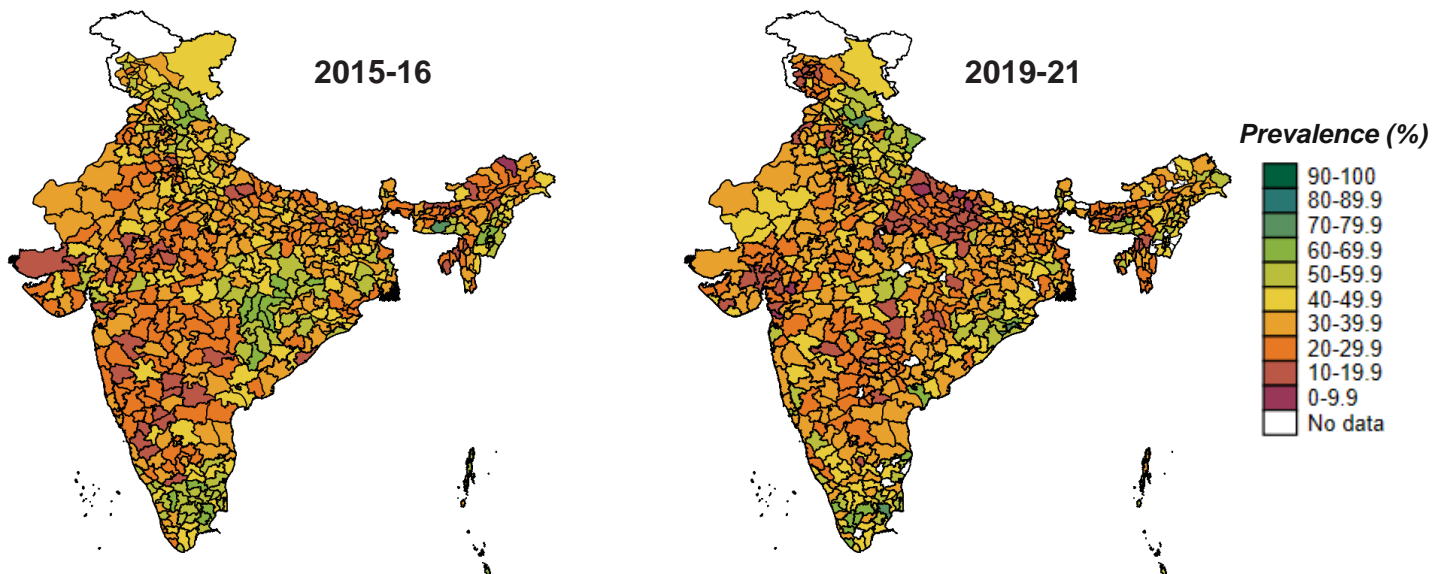


| States/UTs with highest increase | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| State/UT | pp change |
| Goa | +14 |
| Tripura | +13 |
| Delhi | +11 |
| Andaman And Nicobar Islands | +11 |
| DNH and DD | +10 |

| States/UTs with highest decrease | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| State/UT | pp change |
| Chhattisgarh | -27 |
| Jammu And Kashmir | -17 |
| Gujarat | -11 |
| Uttar Pradesh | -10 |
| Manipur | -8 |

DNH and DD: Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu

MAP 5: Minimum meal frequency by district, between 2015-16 and 2019-21

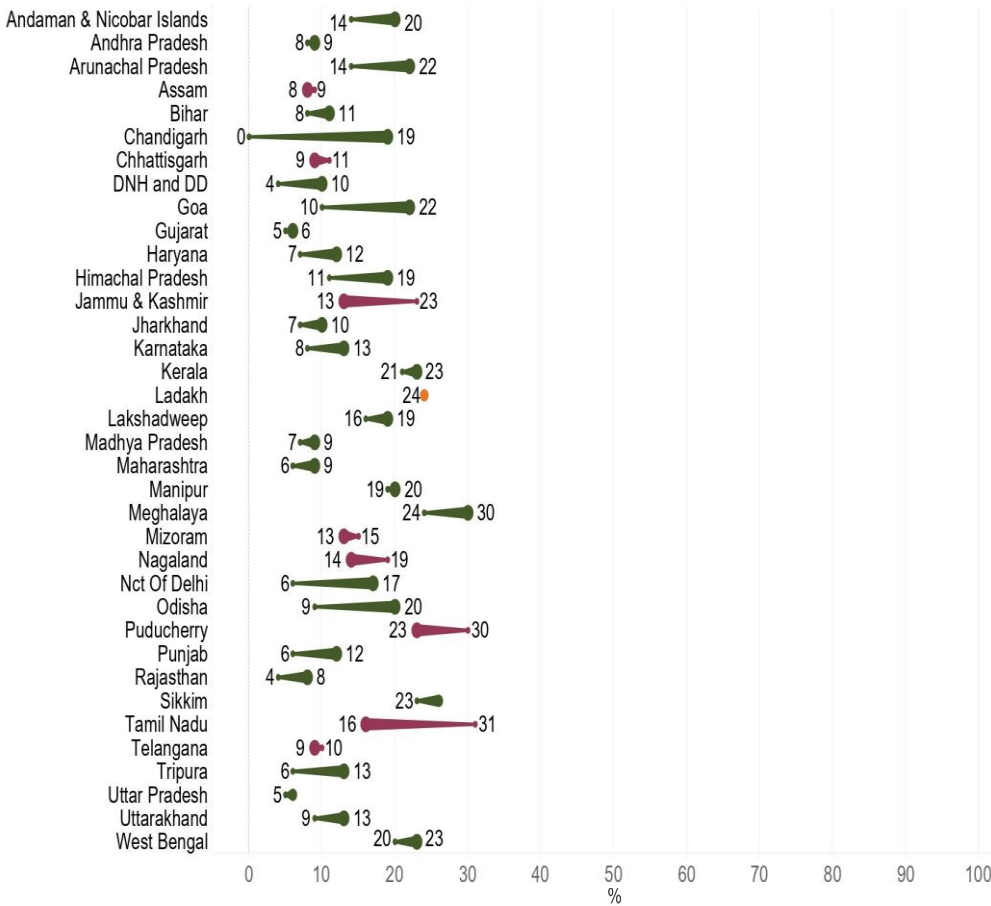
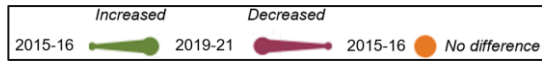


| Districts with highest increase | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| District (state) | pp change |
| Shimoga (KA) | +40 |
| Upper Siang (AR) | +38 |
| Thiruvananthapuram (KL) | +35 |
| Harda (MP) | +35 |
| Thrissur (KL) | +32 |

| Districts with highest decrease | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| District (state) | pp change |
| Korba (CG) | -50 |
| Dhamtari (CG) | -49 |
| Navsari (GJ) | -47 |
| Kulgam (JK) | -37 |
| Sant Kabir Nagar (UP) | -36 |

pp: percentage point. Source: NFHS-4 and NFHS-5 unit-level data [IFPRI estimates].
 Note: There are 575 comparable districts between NFHS-4 and NFHS-5.

FIGURE 10: Trends in minimum acceptable diet by state, between 2015-16 and 2019-21

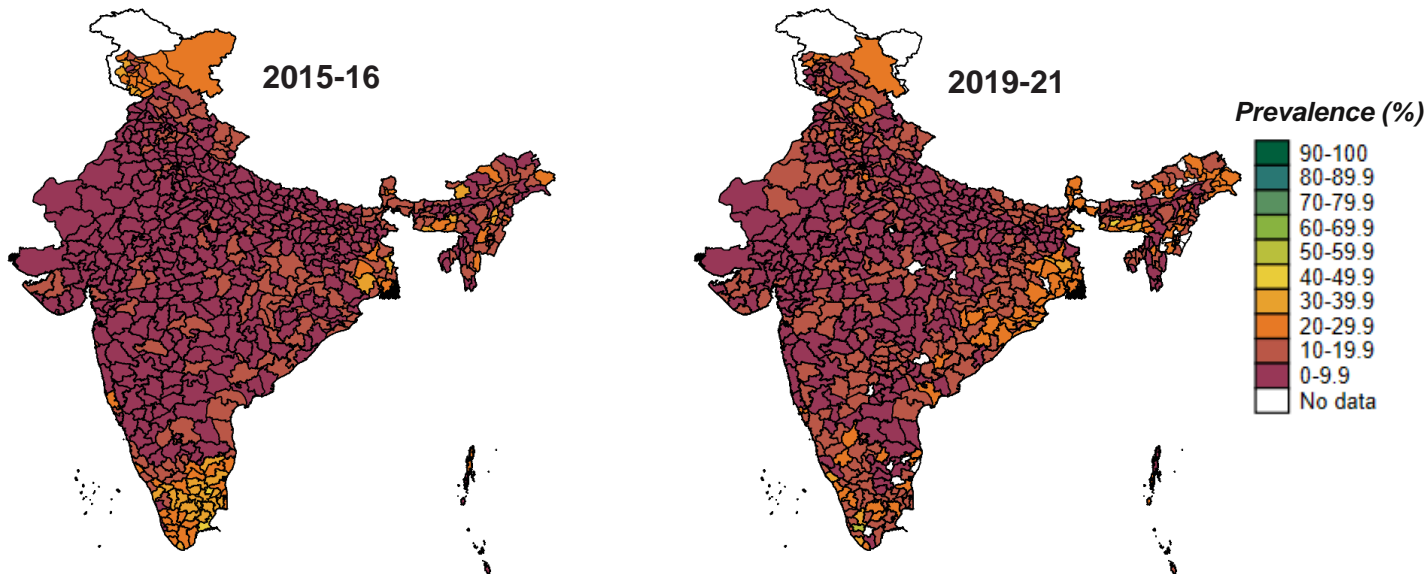


| States/UTs with highest increase | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| State/UT | pp change |
| Chandigarh | +19 |
| Odisha | +11 |
| Goa | +12 |
| Delhi | +11 |
| Arunachal Pradesh | +8 |

| States/UTs with highest decrease | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| State/UT | pp change |
| Tamil Nadu | -15 |
| Jammu And Kashmir | -10 |
| Puducherry | -7 |
| Nagaland | -5 |
| Chhattisgarh | -2 |

DNH and DD: Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu

MAP 6: Minimum acceptable diet by district, between 2015-16 and 2019-21

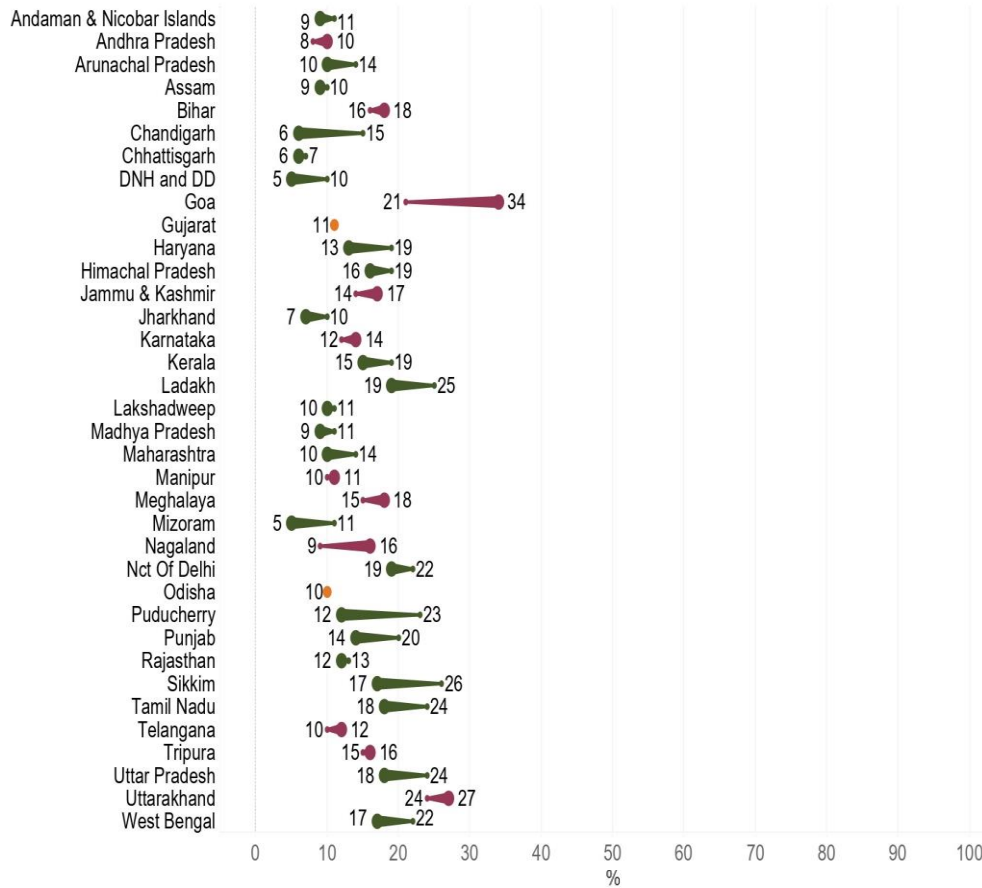
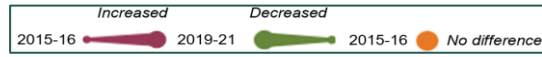


| Districts with highest increase | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| District (state) | pp change |
| Kullu (HP) | +28 |
| Pathanamthitta (KL) | +25 |
| Nuapada (OD) | +22 |
| Balangir (OD) | +23 |
| Changlang (AR) | +22 |

| Districts with highest decrease | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| District (state) | pp change |
| Perambalur (TN) | -35 |
| Namakkal (TN) | -29 |
| Coimbatore (TN) | -27 |
| Vellore (TN) | -27 |
| Ramanathapuram (TN) | -26 |

pp: percentage point. Source: NFHS-4 and NFHS-5 unit-level data [IFPRI estimates]. Note: There are 575 comparable districts between NFHS-4 and NFHS-5.

FIGURE 11: Trends in mixed milk feeding by state, between 2015-16 and 2019-21

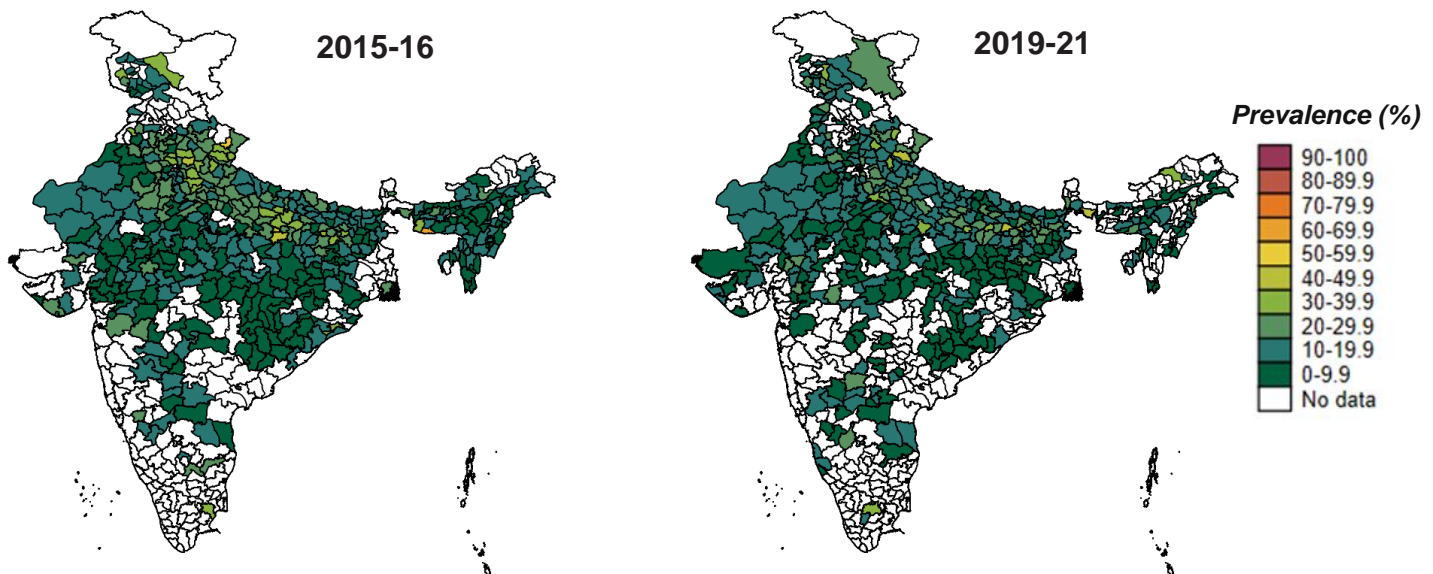


| States/UTs with highest increase | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| State/UT | pp change |
| Puducherry | -11 |
| Chandigarh | -9 |
| Sikkim | -9 |
| Mizoram | -6 |
| Punjab | -6 |

| States/UTs with highest decrease | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| State/UT | pp change |
| Goa | +13 |
| Nagaland | +7 |
| Uttarakhand | +3 |
| Meghalaya | +3 |
| Jammu And Kashmir | +3 |

DNH and DD: Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu

MAP 7: Mixed milk feeding by district, between 2015-16 and 2019-21



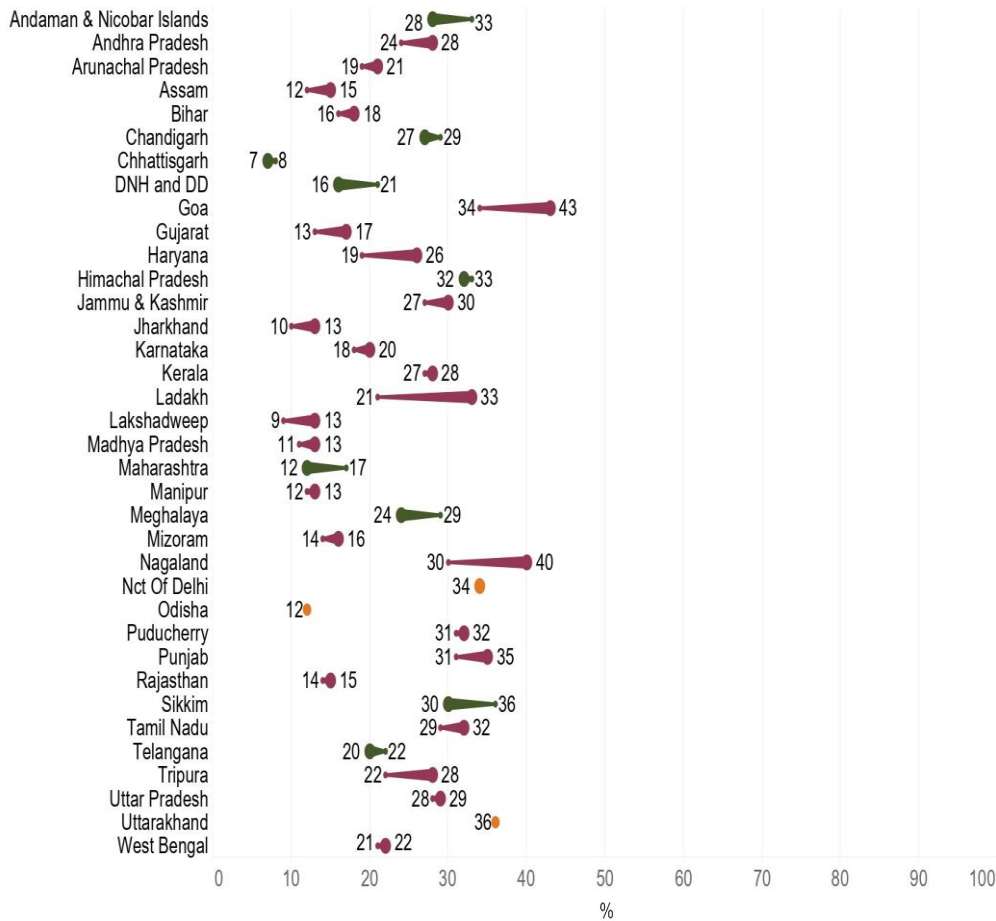
| Districts with highest increase | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| District (state) | pp change |
| Sant Ravidas Nagar (UP) | -33 |
| Mirzapur (UP) | -31 |
| Jind (HR) | -28 |
| Sonapat (HR) | -26 |
| South Twenty-Four Parganas (WB) | -25 |

| Districts with highest decrease | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| District (state) | pp change |
| Banda (UP) | +29 |
| Khargone (West Nimar) (MP) | +26 |
| Mon (NL) | +25 |
| Patna (BR) | +25 |
| Bhojpur (BR) | +21 |

pp: percentage point. Source: NFHS-4 and NFHS-5 unit-level data [IFPRI estimates].

Note: There are 575 comparable districts between NFHS-4 and NFHS-5. Data not shown for districts with fewer than 25 unweighted cases.

FIGURE 12: Trends in bottle feeding by state, between 2015-16 and 2019-21

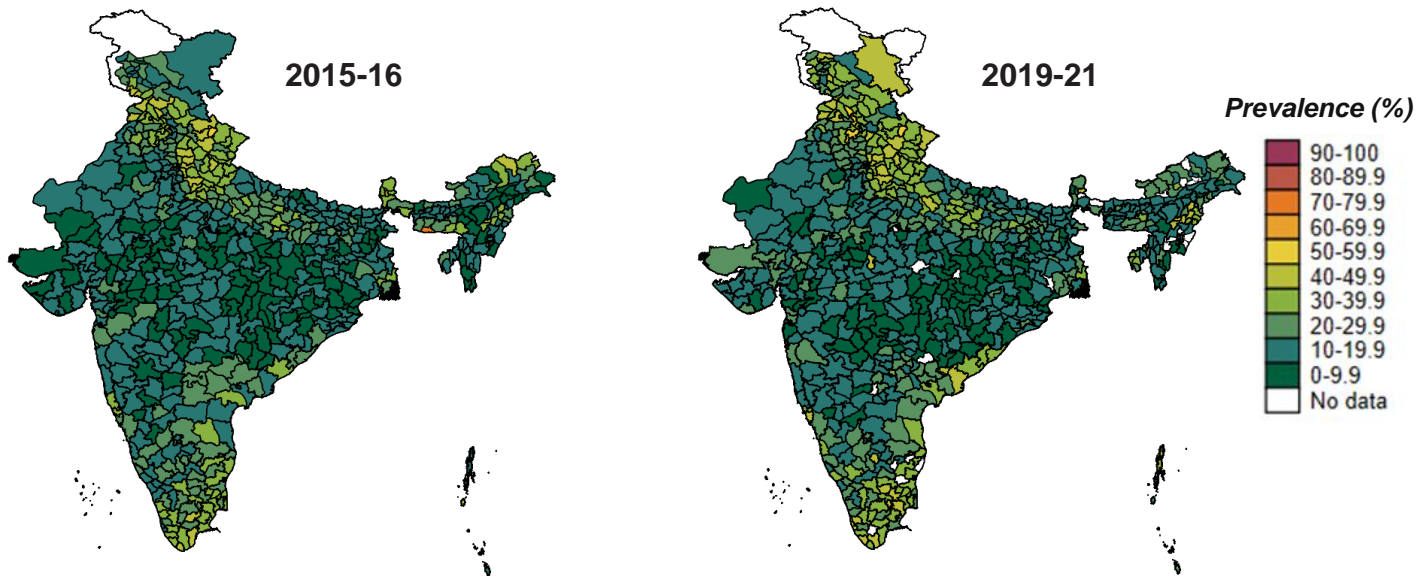


| States/UTs with highest increase | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| State/UT | pp change |
| Sikkim | -6 |
| Andaman And Nicobar Islands | -5 |
| DNH and DD | -5 |
| Meghalaya | -5 |
| Maharashtra | -5 |

| States/UTs with highest decrease | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| State/UT | pp change |
| Ladakh | +12 |
| Nagaland | +10 |
| Goa | +9 |
| Haryana | +7 |
| Tripura | +6 |

DNH and DD: Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu

MAP 8: Bottle feeding by district, between 2015-16 and 2019-21

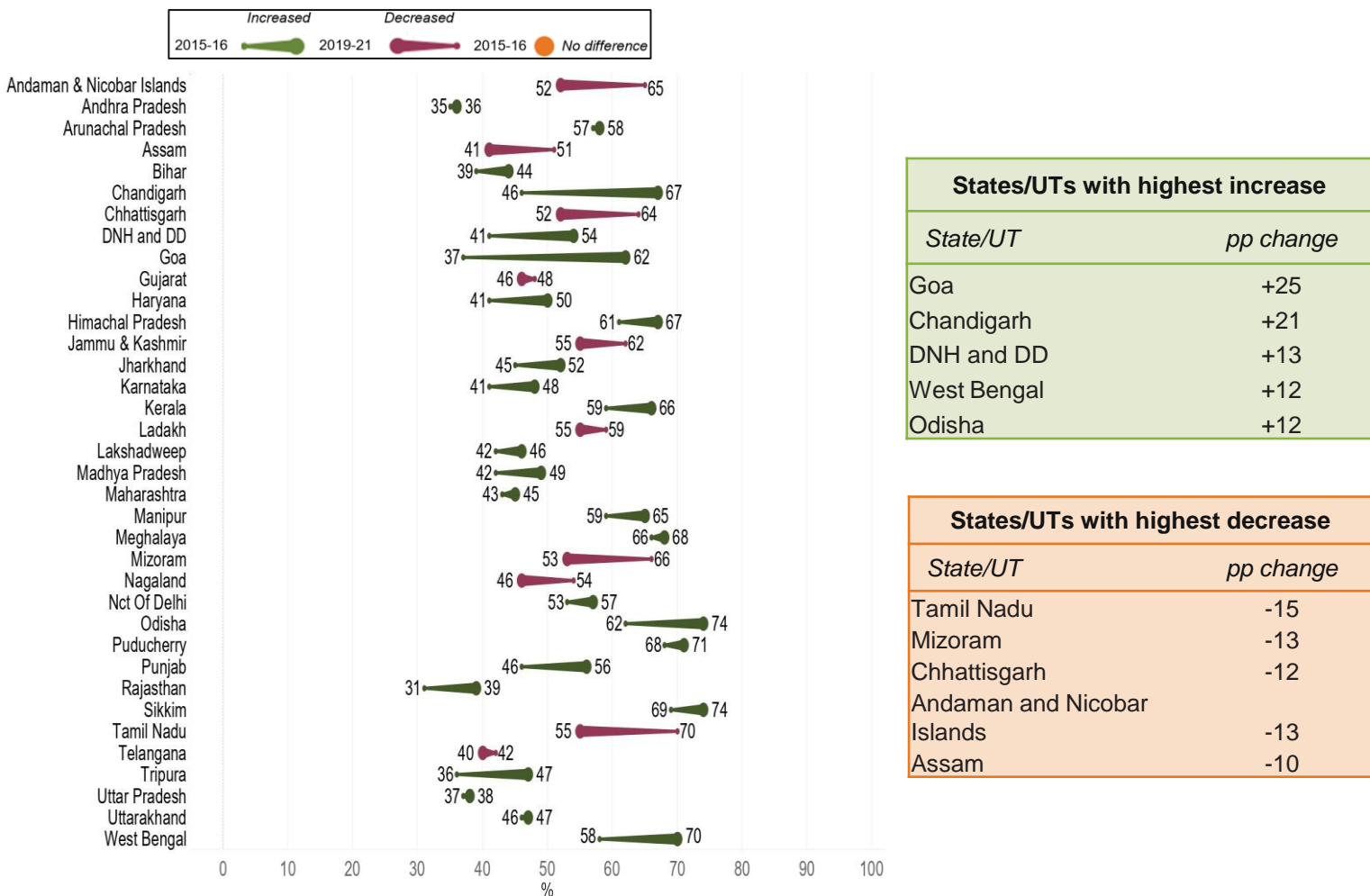


| Districts with highest increase | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| District (state) | pp change |
| South Garo Hills (ML) | -60 |
| West District (SK) | -30 |
| Upper Siang (AR) | -23 |
| Jammu (JK) | -21 |
| Reasi (JK) | -19 |

| Districts with highest decrease | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| District (state) | pp change |
| Leh (Ladakh) (LD) | +31 |
| East Godavari (AP) | +29 |
| Bhopal (MP) | +28 |
| North & Middle Andaman (AN) | +26 |
| Ramban (JK) | +24 |

pp: percentage point. Source: NFHS-4 and NFHS-5 unit-level data [IFPRI estimates]. Note: There are 575 comparable districts between NFHS-4 and NFHS-5.

FIGURE 13: Trends in vegetable and/or fruit consumption* by state, between 2015-16 and 2019-21

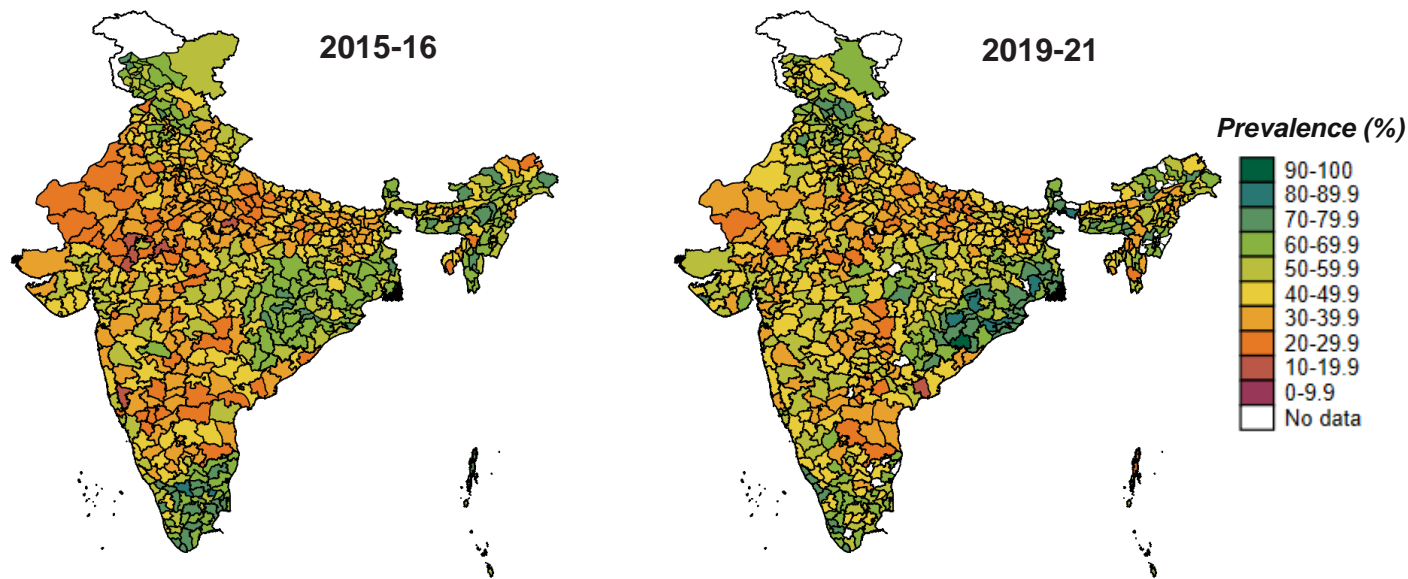


| States/UTs with highest increase | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| State/UT | pp change |
| Goa | +25 |
| Chandigarh | +21 |
| DNH and DD | +13 |
| West Bengal | +12 |
| Odisha | +12 |

| States/UTs with highest decrease | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| State/UT | pp change |
| Tamil Nadu | -15 |
| Mizoram | -13 |
| Chhattisgarh | -12 |
| Andaman and Nicobar Islands | -13 |
| Assam | -10 |

DNH and DD: Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu

MAP 9: Vegetable and/or fruit consumption by district, between 2015-16 and 2019-21

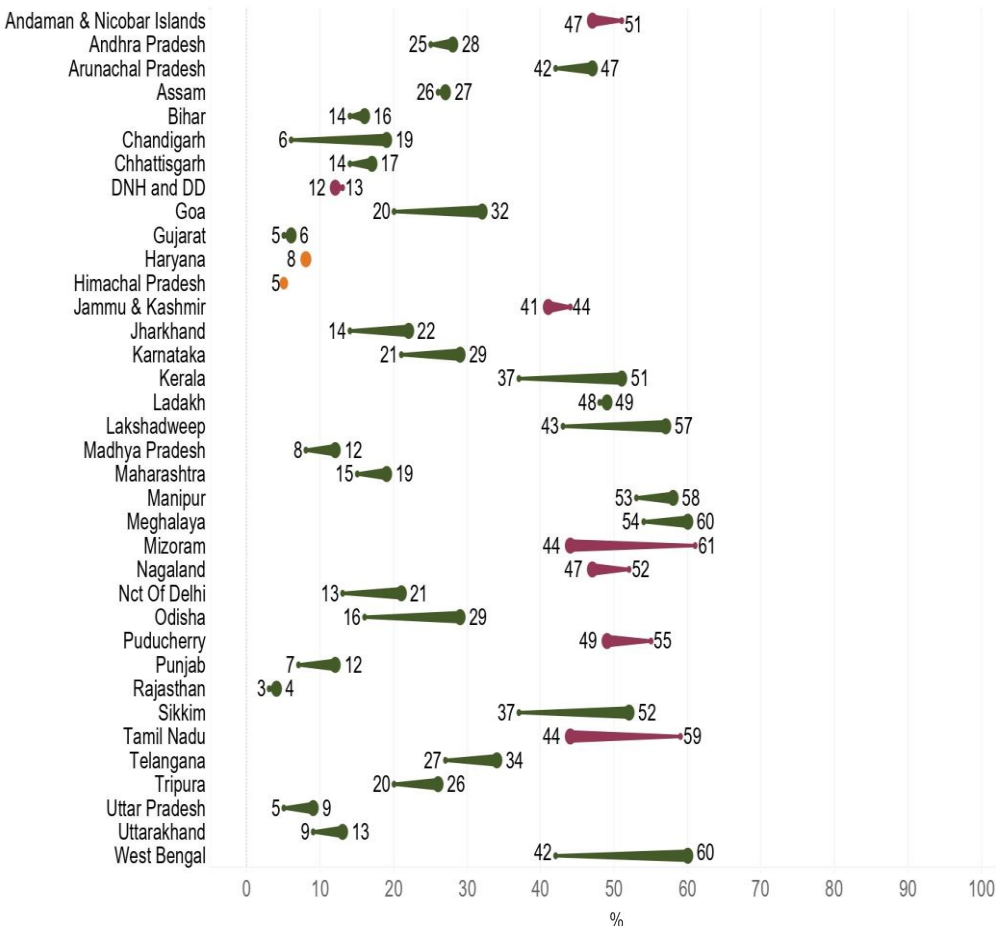
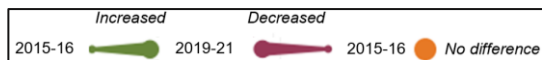


| Districts with highest increase | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| District (state) | pp change |
| Kullu (HP) | +38 |
| North Goa (GA) | +38 |
| Raisen (MP) | +36 |
| Hoshangabad (MP) | +36 |
| Sirsa (HR) | +32 |

| Districts with highest decrease | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| District (state) | pp change |
| North & Middle Andaman (AN) | -49 |
| Yanam (PY) | -36 |
| Tiruvannamalai (TN) | -35 |
| Salem (TN) | -32 |
| Lunglei (MZ) | -32 |

pp: percentage point. Source: NFHS-4 and NFHS-5 unit-level data [IFPRI estimates]. *WHO defines this indicator as % children (6-23 months) who do not consume vegetable or fruits (zero vegetables or fruits consumed). We present the indicator as % children (6-23 months) who consumed vegetable and/or fruits to ensure clarity for the audience. Note: There are 575 comparable districts between NFHS-4 and NFHS-5.

FIGURE 14: Trends in egg and/or flesh food consumption by state, between 2015-16 and 2019-21

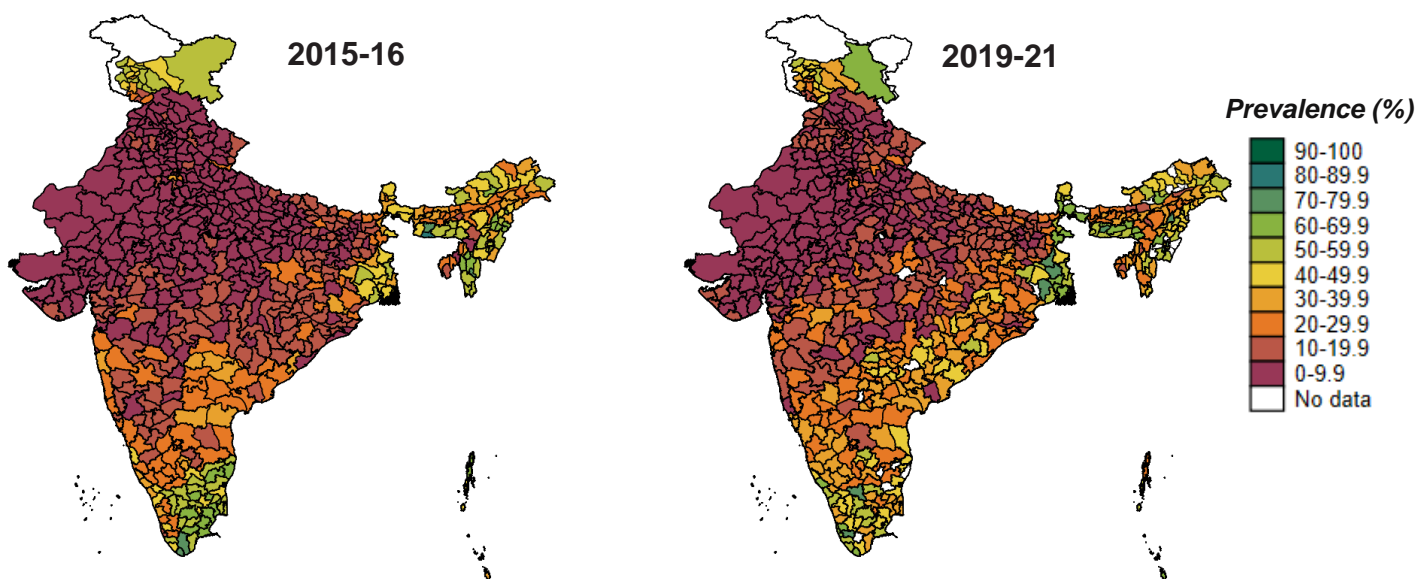


| States/UTs with highest increase | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| State/UT | pp change |
| West Bengal | +18 |
| Sikkim | +15 |
| Kerala | +14 |
| Lakshadweep | +14 |
| Chandigarh | +13 |

| States/UTs with highest decrease | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| State/UT | pp change |
| Mizoram | -17 |
| Tamil Nadu | -15 |
| Puducherry | -6 |
| Nagaland | -5 |
| Andaman and Nicobar Islands | -4 |

DNH and DD: Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu

MAP 10: Egg and/or flesh food consumption by district, between 2015-16 and 2019-21

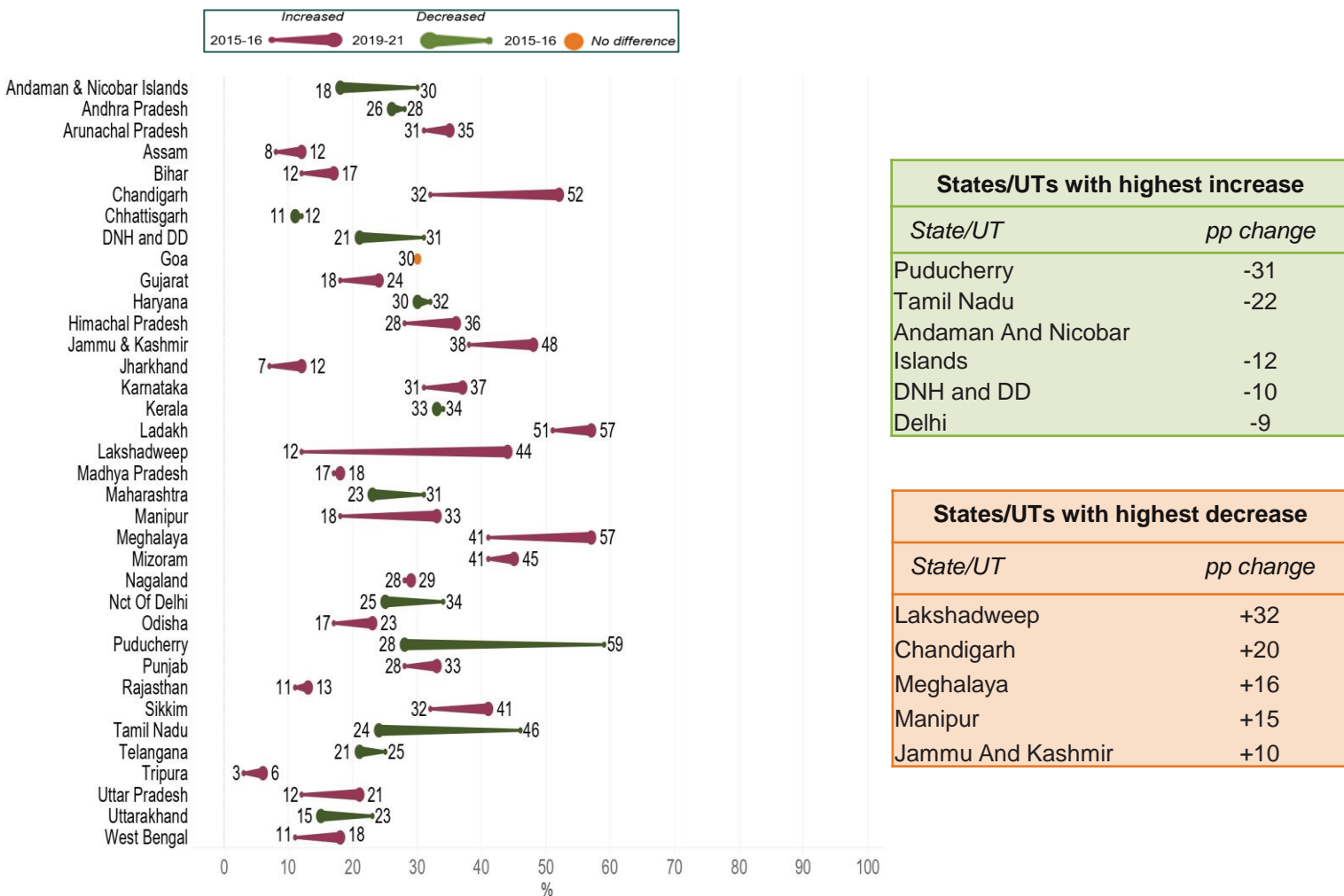


| Districts with highest increase | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| District (state) | pp change |
| Alappuzha (KL) | +45 |
| Maldah (WB) | +42 |
| Pathanamthitta (KL) | +40 |
| Nuapada (OD) | +40 |
| Chikkaballapura (KA) | +36 |

| Districts with highest decrease | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| District (state) | pp change |
| Tiruvannamalai (TN) | -45 |
| North & Middle Andaman (AN) | -35 |
| Yanam (PY) | -33 |
| Lunglei (MZ) | -32 |
| Mamit (MZ) | -31 |

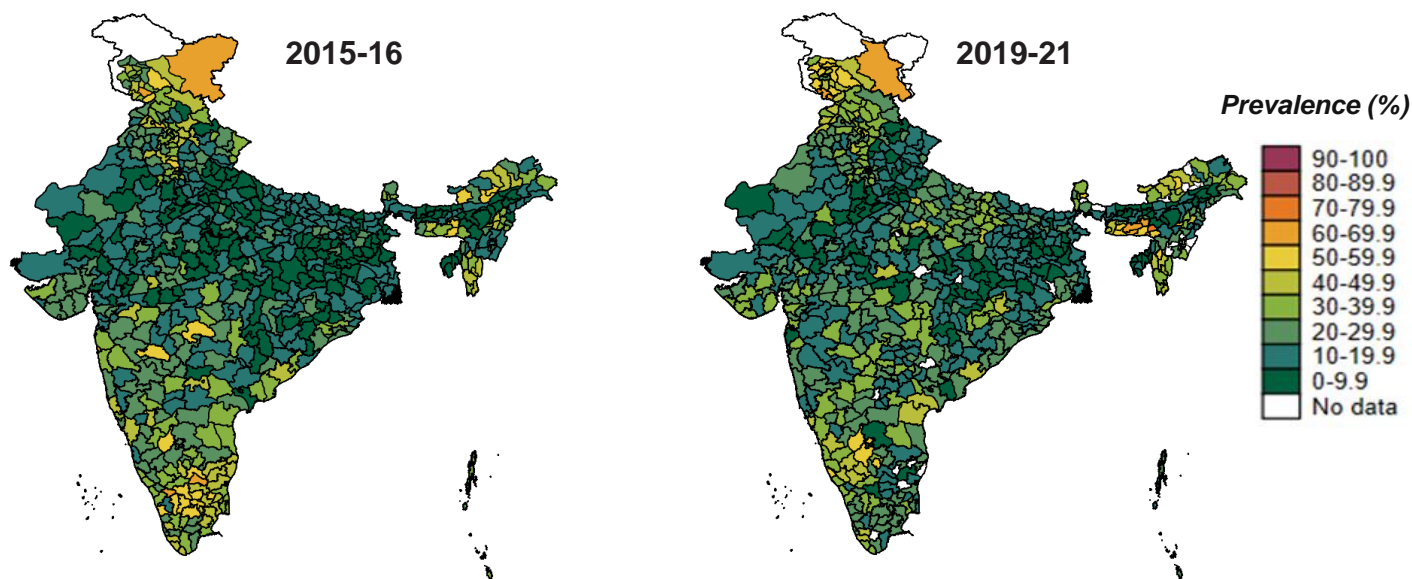
pp: percentage point. Source: NFHS-4 and NFHS-5 unit-level data [IFPRI estimates]. Note: There are 575 comparable districts between NFHS-4 and NFHS-5.

FIGURE 15: Trends in sweet beverage consumption by state, between 2015-16 and 2019-21



DNH and DD: Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu

MAP 11: Sweet beverage consumption by district, between 2015-16 and 2019-21

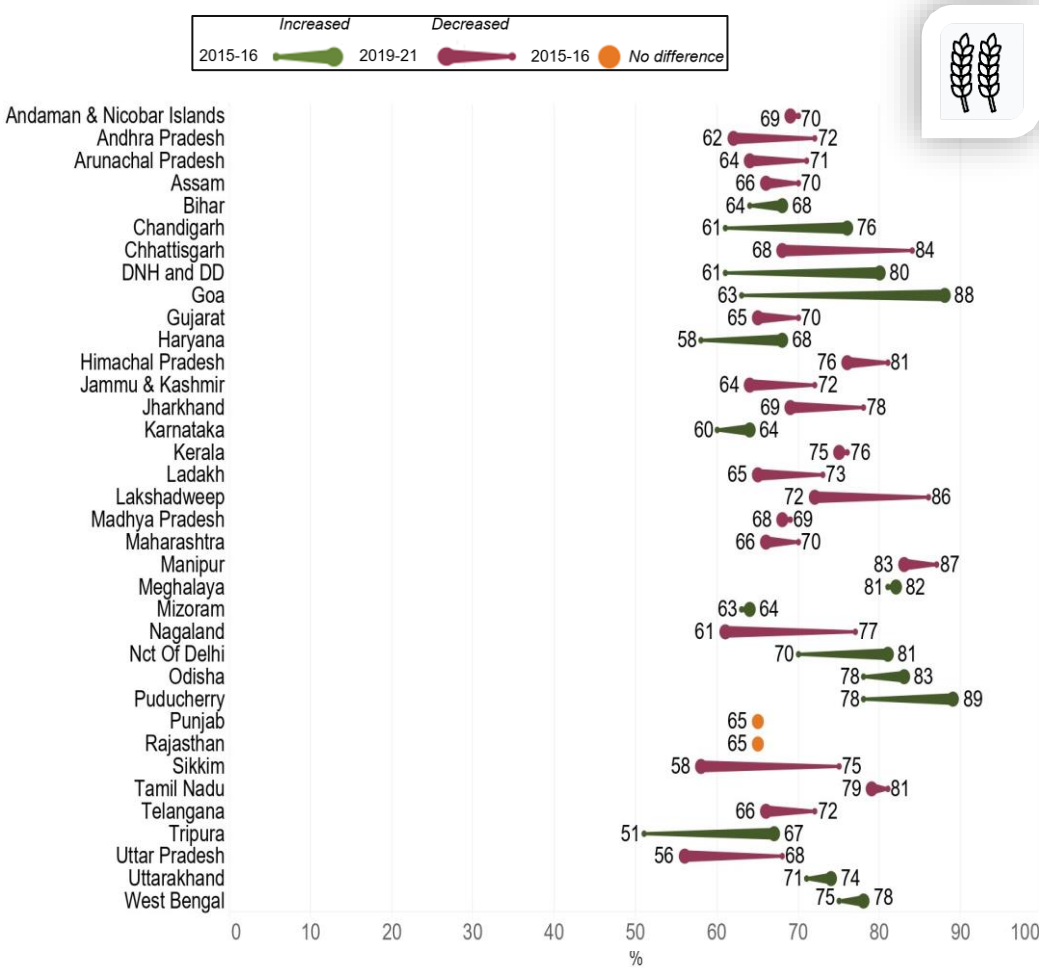


| Districts with highest increase | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| District (state) | pp change |
| Mumbai Suburban (MH) | -48 |
| Dharmapuri (TN) | -47 |
| Erode (TN) | -46 |
| Tiruvannamalai (TN) | -41 |
| The Nilgiris (TN) | -39 |

| Districts with highest decrease | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| District (state) | pp change |
| Diu (DNH and DD) | +40 |
| Raisen (MP) | +39 |
| Kannauj (UP) | +38 |
| Balangir (OD) | +34 |
| Tawang (AR) | +34 |

pp: percentage point. Source: NFHS-4 and NFHS-5 unit-level data [IFPRI estimates].
 Note: There are 575 comparable districts between NFHS-4 and NFHS-5.

FIGURE 16: Trends in consumption of grains, roots, and tubers by state, between 2015-16 and 2019-21



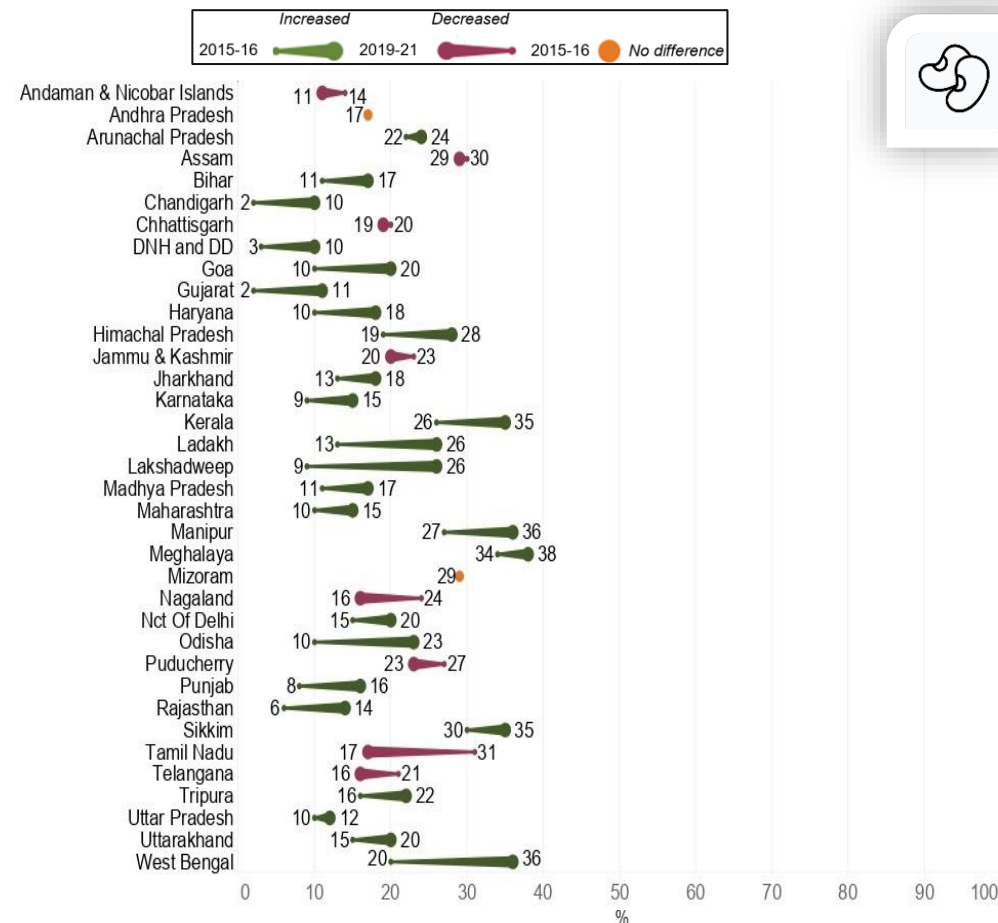
States/UTs with highest increase

| State/UT | pp change |
|------------|-----------|
| Goa | +25 |
| DNH and DD | +19 |
| Tripura | +16 |
| Chandigarh | +15 |
| Puducherry | +11 |

States/UTs with highest decrease

| State/UT | pp change |
|---------------|-----------|
| Sikkim | -17 |
| Chhattisgarh | -16 |
| Nagaland | -16 |
| Lakshadweep | -14 |
| Uttar Pradesh | -12 |

FIGURE 17: Trends in consumption of legumes by state, between 2015-16 and 2019-21



States/UTs with highest increase

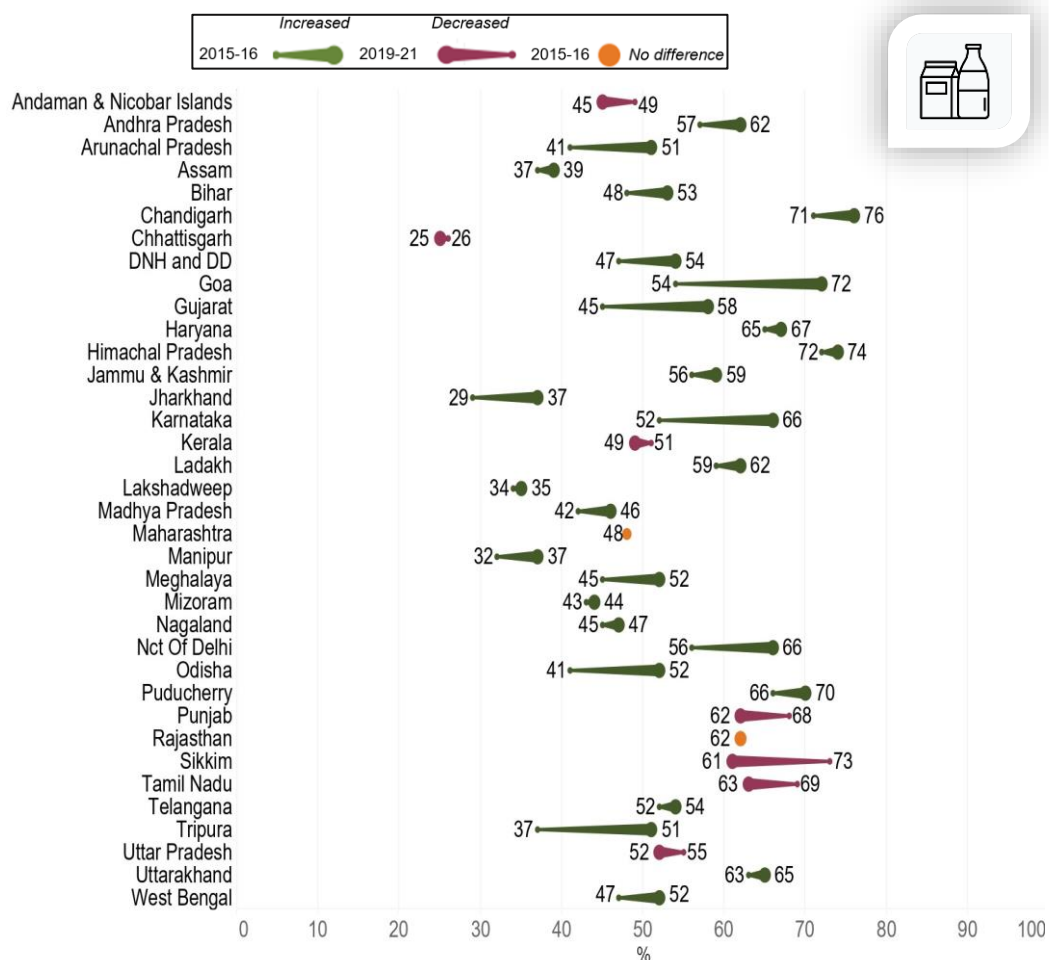
| State/UT | pp change |
|-------------|-----------|
| Lakshadweep | +19 |
| West Bengal | +16 |
| Ladakh | +16 |
| Odisha | +12 |
| Goa | +10 |

States/UTs with highest decrease

| State/UT | pp change |
|-----------------------------|-----------|
| Tamil Nadu | -16 |
| Nagaland | -8 |
| Telangana | -7 |
| Puducherry | -6 |
| Andaman and Nicobar Islands | -5 |

DNH and DD: Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu

FIGURE 18: Trends in consumption of dairy by state, between 2015-16 and 2019-21



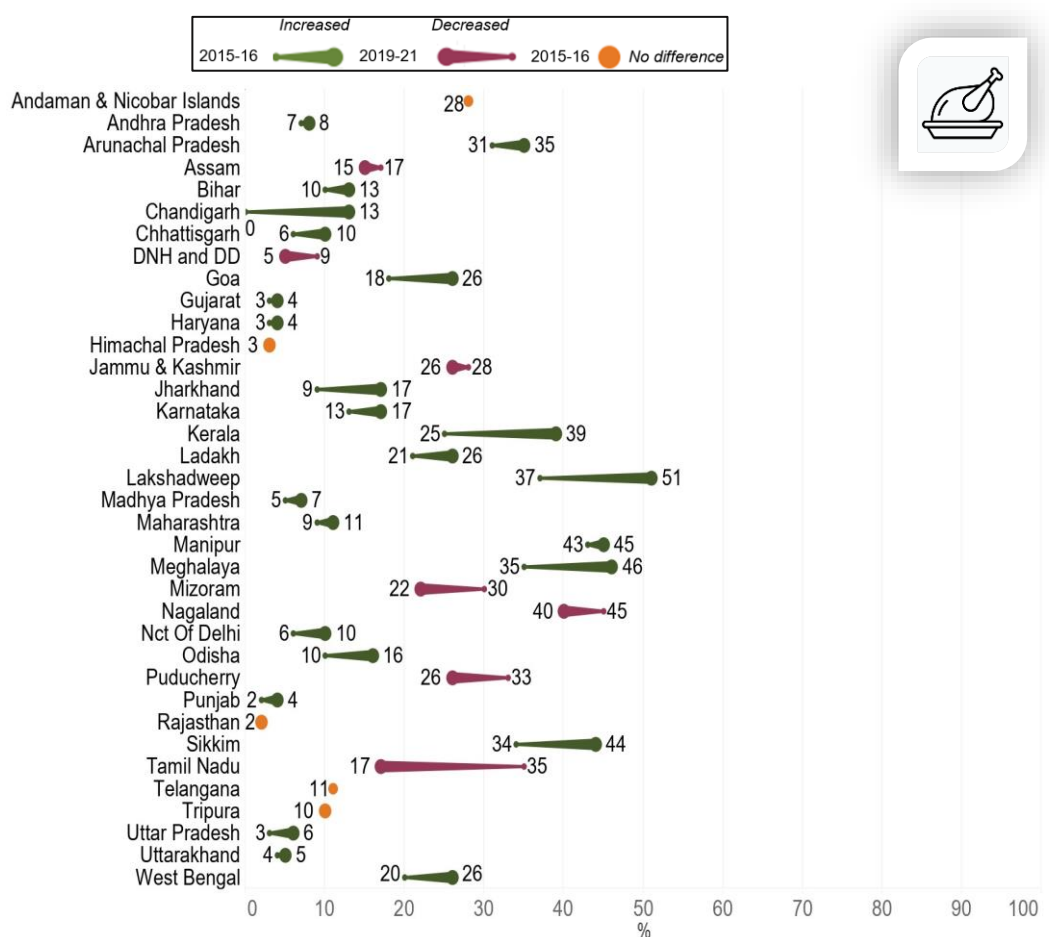
States/UTs with highest increase

| State/UT | pp change |
|-----------|-----------|
| Goa | +18 |
| Tripura | +14 |
| Karnataka | +14 |
| Gujarat | +13 |
| Odisha | +11 |

States/UTs with highest decrease

| State/UT | pp change |
|-----------------------------|-----------|
| Sikkim | -12 |
| Tamil Nadu | -6 |
| Punjab | -6 |
| Andaman And Nicobar Islands | -4 |
| Uttar Pradesh | -3 |

FIGURE 19: Trends in consumption of meat by state, between 2015-16 and 2019-21



States/UTs with highest increase

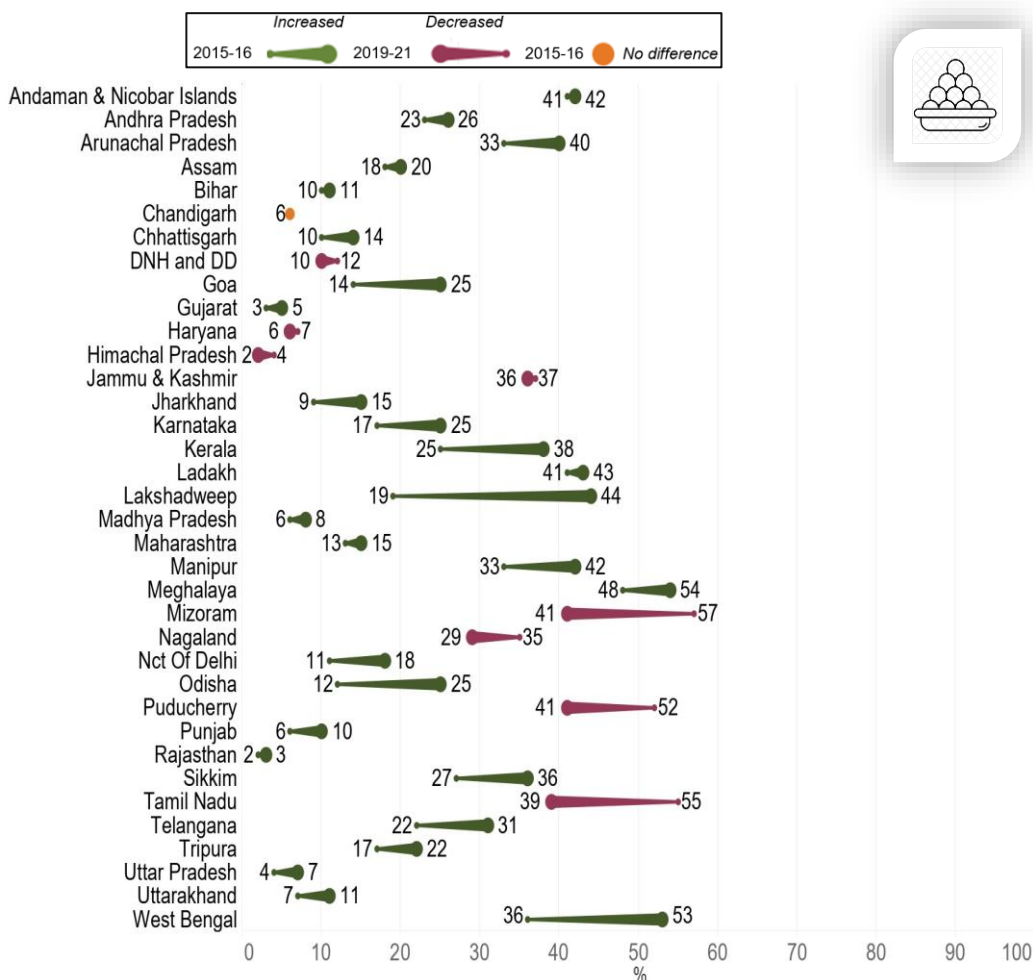
| State/UT | pp change |
|-------------|-----------|
| Lakshadweep | +14 |
| Kerala | +14 |
| Chandigarh | +13 |
| Meghalaya | +11 |
| Sikkim | +10 |

States/UTs with highest decrease

| State/UT | pp change |
|----------------------|-----------|
| Tamil Nadu | -18 |
| Mizoram | -8 |
| Puducherry | -7 |
| Nagaland | -5 |
| Dadra & Nagar Haveli | -4 |
| And Daman & Diu | -4 |

DNH and DD: Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu

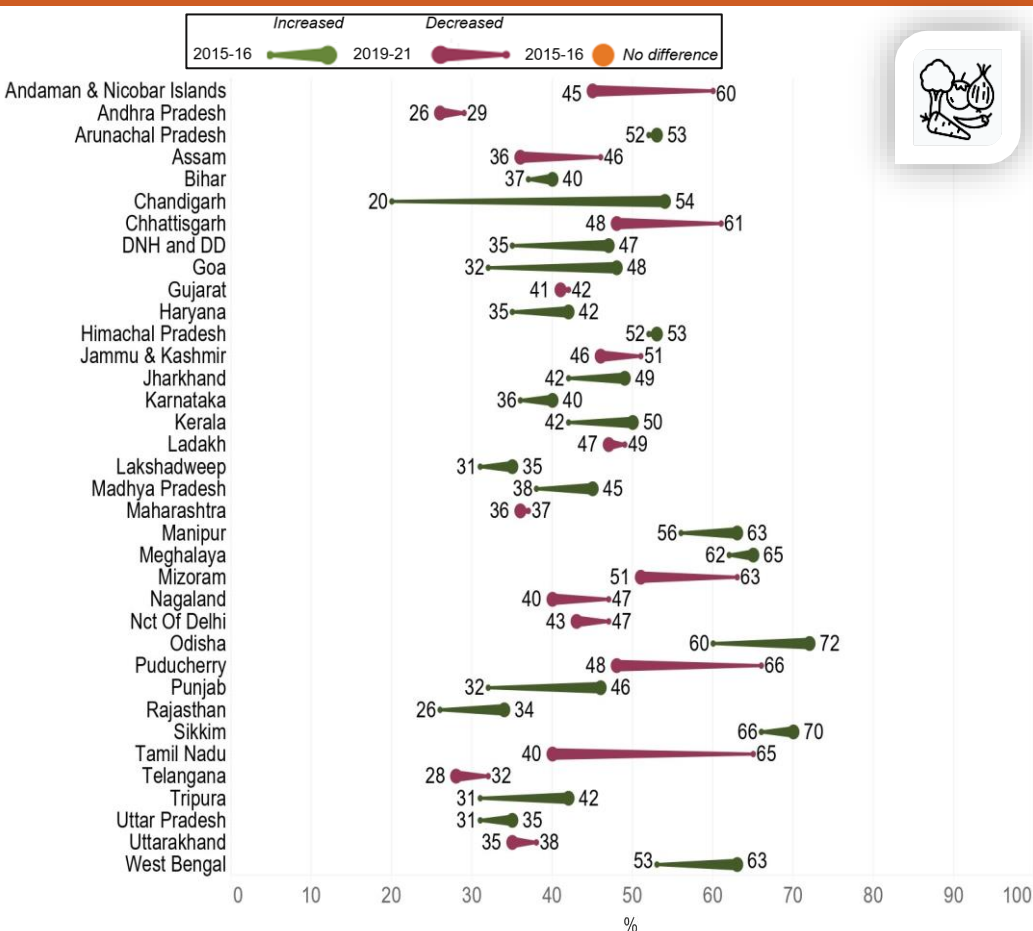
FIGURE 20: Trends in consumption of eggs by state, between 2015-16 and 2019-21



| States/UTs with highest increase | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| State/UT | pp change |
| Lakshadweep | +25 |
| West Bengal | +17 |
| Kerala | +13 |
| Odisha | +13 |
| Goa | +11 |

| States/UTs with highest decrease | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| State/UT | pp change |
| Tamil Nadu | -16 |
| Mizoram | -16 |
| Puducherry | -11 |
| Nagaland | -6 |
| DNH and DD | -2 |

FIGURE 21: Trends in consumption of vitamin A-rich fruits and vegetables by state, between 2015-16 and 2019-21

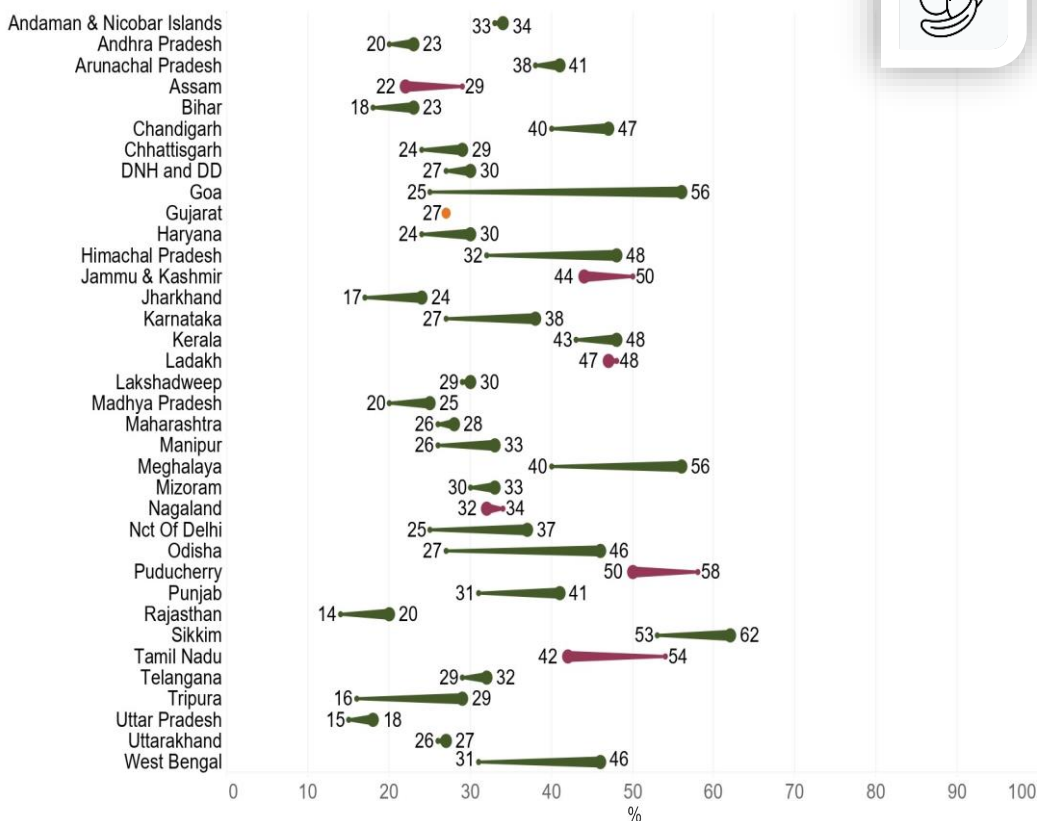
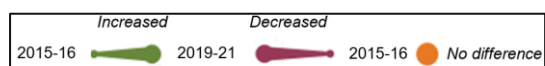


| States/UTs with highest increase | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| State/UT | pp change |
| Chandigarh | +34 |
| Goa | +16 |
| Punjab | +14 |
| Odisha | +12 |
| DNH and DD | +12 |

| States/UTs with highest decrease | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| State/UT | pp change |
| Tamil Nadu | -25 |
| Puducherry | -18 |
| Andaman and Nicobar Islands | -15 |
| Chhattisgarh | -13 |
| Mizoram | -12 |

DNH and DD: Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu

FIGURE 22: Trends in consumption of other fruits and vegetables by state, between 2015-16 and 2019-21



| States/UTs with highest increase | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| State/UT | pp change |
| Goa | +31 |
| Odisha | +19 |
| Himachal Pradesh | +16 |
| Meghalaya | +16 |
| West Bengal | +15 |

| States/UTs with highest decrease | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| State/UT | pp change |
| Tamil Nadu | -12 |
| Puducherry | -8 |
| Assam | -7 |
| Jammu and Kashmir | -6 |
| Nagaland | -2 |

DNH and DD: Dadra & Nagar Haveli And Daman & Diu

TABLE 1 Number of districts in different prevalence categories for IYCF practices in 2021

| IYCF practices | Prevalence category (%) | | | | | Number of districts with no data ¹ |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------|---------|---------|-----|-----------------------------------------------|
| | 0-19.9 | 20-39.9 | 40-49.9 | 50-59.9 | ≥60 | |
| | Number of districts | | | | | |
| Early initiation of breastfeeding | 47 | 228 | 146 | 138 | 147 | 1 |
| Exclusive breastfeeding | 0 | 13 | 38 | 69 | 296 | 291 |
| Continued breastfeeding | 0 | 4 | 8 | 32 | 644 | 19 |
| Timely introduction of complementary foods | 3 | 19 | 10 | 9 | 11 | 655 |
| Minimum milk feeding frequency for non-breastfed children | 1 | 4 | 3 | 11 | 28 | 660 |
| Minimum diet diversity | 279 | 329 | 56 | 31 | 11 | 1 |
| Minimum meal frequency | 60 | 395 | 155 | 75 | 21 | 1 |
| Minimum acceptable diet | 604 | 100 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Mixed milk feeding | 346 | 67 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 291 |
| Bottle feeding | 381 | 284 | 36 | 5 | 0 | 1 |
| Vegetables and/or fruits consumption | 1 | 154 | 228 | 158 | 165 | 1 |
| Egg and/or flesh food consumption | 352 | 214 | 63 | 44 | 33 | 1 |
| Sweet beverage consumption | 318 | 311 | 47 | 23 | 7 | 1 |

¹ Districts with fewer than 25 unweighted cases were not included.

Summary of findings

Overall, at the national level there were mixed improvements in IYCF practices between 2015-16 and 2019-21.

Breastfeeding practices. Early initiation of breastfeeding (EIBF) did not change (42%). Exclusive breastfeeding (EBF) improved remarkably (52% to 64%). Continued breastfeeding at 2y was high at ~80% and improved marginally.

Complementary feeding practices. There were marginal changes in complementary feeding practices. Timely introduction of solid or semi-solid foods declined from 51% to 49%, minimum diet diversity improved from 20% to 24%, and minimum meal frequency declined from 36% to 35%. Minimum acceptable diet improved slightly from 10% to 11%.

Consumption of various food groups. Between 2015-16 and 2019-21, consumption of grains, roots, and tubers declined from 70% to 67%. Consumption of legumes, dairy, eggs, meat, vitamin A-rich fruits and vegetables, and other fruits and vegetables improved by 2-5 percentage points (pp).

Sweet beverages consumption. Consumption of sweet beverages has marginally increased from 20% to 21%.

There is wide variability in IYCF practices at the subnational level. EIBF declined in 18 states, ranging from 1 to 34 pp. Among 707 districts, EIBF was at 60% in only 147 districts. In most states, EBF rates increased, but there was a huge decline in Sikkim (25 pp). Changes in timely introduction of complementary foods across states were mixed. Minimum dietary diversity increased in several states, but there was a substantial decline in Tamil Nadu (23 pp). Changes in minimum meal frequency and acceptable diet varied across states. Minimum dietary diversity and minimum acceptable diet were <20% in 279 and 604 districts, respectively. EBF, mixed milk feeding, minimum milk feeding frequency for non-breastfed children, and timely introduction of complementary foods could not be computed for several districts because of limited data.



ANNEX 1: Definition of indicators

| Indicator | Definition |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Early initiation of breastfeeding | Percentage of children born in the last 24 months who were put to the breast within one hour of birth |
| Exclusive breastfeeding | Percentage of infants 0–5 months of age who were fed exclusively with breast milk during the previous day |
| Mixed milk feeding | Percentage of infants 0–5 months of age who were fed formula and/or animal milk in addition to breast milk during the previous day |
| Continued breastfeeding | Percentage of children 12–23 months of age who were fed breast milk during the previous day |
| Timely introduction of complementary foods | Percentage of infants 6–8 months of age who consumed solid, semi-solid or soft food during the previous day |
| Minimum diet diversity | Percentage of children 6–23 months of age who consumed foods and beverages from at least five out of eight defined food groups during the previous day |
| Minimum meal frequency | Percentage of children 6–23 months of age who consumed solid, semi-solid, or soft foods (but also including milk feeds for non-breastfed children) the minimum number of times or more during the previous day |
| Minimum milk feeding frequency | Percentage of non-breastfed children 6–23 months of age who consumed at least two milk feeds during the previous day |
| Minimum acceptable diet | Percentage of children 6–23 months of age who consumed a minimum acceptable diet during the previous day |
| Vegetable and/or fruit consumption* | Percentage of children 6–23 months of age who consumed any vegetables and/or fruits during the previous day |
| Eggs and/or flesh food consumption | Percentage of youngest children 6–23 months of age who consumed egg and/or flesh food during the previous day |
| Sweet beverage consumption | Percentage of youngest children 6–23 months of age who consumed a sweet beverage during the previous day |
| Bottle feeding | Percentage of children 0–23 months of age who were fed from a bottle with a nipple during the previous day |

*WHO defines this indicator as % children (6-23 months) who *do not consume* vegetables or fruits (zero vegetables or fruits consumed). We present the indicator as % children (6-23 months) who *consumed* vegetables and/or fruits to ensure clarity for the audience.

ANNEX 2: Abbreviation list

| Abbreviations | State/UT Name |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| AP | Andhra Pradesh |
| AN | Andaman & Nicobar Islands |
| AR | Arunachal Pradesh |
| AS | Assam |
| BR | Bihar |
| CH | Chandigarh |
| CG | Chhattisgarh |
| DNH and DD | Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu |
| DL | Delhi |
| GA | Goa |
| GJ | Gujarat |
| HR | Haryana |

| Abbreviations | State/UT Name |
|---------------|------------------|
| HP | Himachal Pradesh |
| JK | Jammu & Kashmir |
| JH | Jharkhand |
| LA | Ladakh |
| LD | Lakshadweep |
| KA | Karnataka |
| KL | Kerala |
| MP | Madhya Pradesh |
| MH | Maharashtra |
| MN | Manipur |
| ML | Meghalaya |
| MZ | Mizoram |

| Abbreviations | State/UT Name |
|---------------|---------------|
| NL | Nagaland |
| OD | Odisha |
| PY | Puducherry |
| PB | Punjab |
| RJ | Rajasthan |
| SK | Sikkim |
| TN | Tamil Nadu |
| TS | Telangana |
| TR | Tripura |
| UP | Uttar Pradesh |
| UK | Uttarakhand |
| WB | West Bengal |

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ABOUT POSHAN

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ABOUT DATA NOTES

POSHAN Data Notes focus on data visualization to highlight geographic and/or thematic issues related to nutrition in India. They draw on multiple sources of publically available data.

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