



The World Food Programme (WFP) Jordan **FOOD SECURITY OUTCOME MONITORING (FSOM)**

Quarter 3 (Q3) 2017: Summary Report



World Food Programme

KEY FINDINGS:

- Food consumption improved amongst Syrian refugee households in quarter 3 (Q3), for both WFP general food assistance (GFA) beneficiaries and WFP non-beneficiaries, although remained below Q1 levels.
- Female headed households were the more prone to have poor or borderline food consumption than their male counterparts.
- Non-assisted refugees continued to report poorer food consumption compared to assisted refugees.
- Refugees in communities increased their reliance on consumption-based coping strategies while refugees residing in camps continued to report a decrease.
- The usage of 'emergency' livelihood coping strategies reduced amongst refugee households. Nevertheless, refugees sustained their usage of certain 'crisis' and 'stress' strategies as a means to meet their food needs.
- WFP beneficiaries in communities increased their preference for the 'choice' modality, resulting in a decreased preference for cash and the e-voucher compared to the previous quarter.

INTRODUCTION:

Every quarter a random selection of refugee families in camps and communities are visited and invited to participate in a food security outcome monitoring quantitative questionnaire. The objective of the exercise is monitor key food security outcomes, for example food consumption and coping strategy usage, in addition to other indicators that might have an influence on household food security such as income sources, expenditure, debt, and access to assistance. These outcomes are tracked amongst both WFP beneficiaries are those that have been removed from assistance as a result of targeting.

For the Jordan Country office, FSOM data is collected amongst four strata, the camp refugees (receiving full assistance), extremely vulnerable (receiving full assistance), the vulnerable (receiving partial assistance) and non-beneficiaries (receiving no assistance).

In Q3 over approximately 500,000 Syrian refugees were assisted with general food assistance (GFA). Approximately 20 percent of refugees assisted in live in the communities, while the other 80 percent live in the camps. The majority of WFP beneficiaries receive their food assistance in the form of an electronic voucher which can be redeemed at a selection of over 200 shops. However, in Q3 the

'choice' modality was rolled out in Madaba governorate, allowing approximately 10,000 refugees to redeem their GFA entitlement at their nearby WFP contracted shop or a Jordan Ali Bank ATM, or both. In Q4 the 'choice' modality is expected to be rolled out in the governorates of Balqa and Zarqa.

DEMOGRAPHICS:

In Q3, almost 1,600 refugee households participated in the FSOM exercise. This was a larger sample than previous quarters in order to facilitate the disaggregation of camp level data between Azraq and Za'atari.

The majority of household level interviews were conducted in the four governorates with the highest concentration of Syrian refugees, Amman, Irbid, Mafraq and Zarqa. Almost one in four of the households visited (24 percent) were headed by a female – consistent with previous quarters.

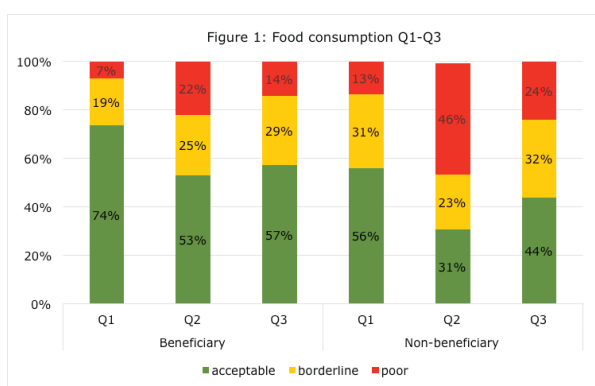
Refugee cases with a higher dependency ratio, meaning those with a greater number of members unable to work (minors and elderly) compared to abled members, were primarily from the strata receiving full WFP assistance. Non-beneficiaries had the highest proportion of single headed cases (12 percent). While the vulnerable continued to represent the group with the highest proportion of widows (11 percent) followed by the extremely vulnerable (9 percent).

The majority of Syrian refugee households have a primary level education (70 percent). While the camp population have the highest proportion of respondents with no formal education (18 percent) and non-beneficiaries have the highest percentage of households with a university degree (7 percent).

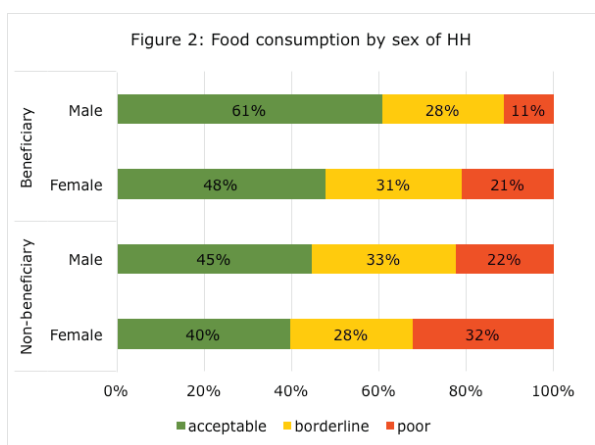
FOOD CONSUMPTION:

To better understand the affected population's access to food, households are asked the frequency in which eight food groups are consumed during the previous seven days from the time of the interview. The frequency of consumption is then multiplied by a numeric value associated to each of the food groups' nutritional value. Based on the total food consumption score, households are then categorised as having either 'poor', 'borderline', or 'acceptable'.

Food consumption slightly improved in Q3 compared to the previous quarter (see figure 1). However, food consumption still remained below the levels reported in Q1. WFP beneficiaries continued to report better food consumption than refugees not receiving assistance, 57 percent acceptable food compared to 43 acceptable food consumption percent. However, the percentage increase in acceptable food consumption between Q2 and Q3 was higher amongst non-beneficiaries – 13 percent – compared to beneficiaries – 4 percent. On a positive note, poor food consumption almost halved amongst both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries since the previous reporting period. Though the decrease in poor consumption permitted an increase borderline food consumption, particularly amongst non-beneficiaries.

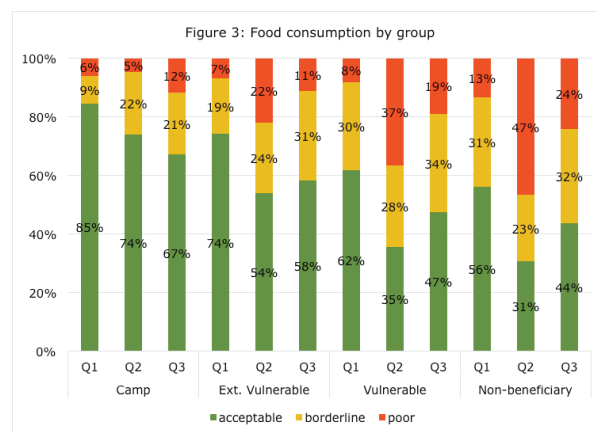


When disaggregated by sex, female headed households, amongst those receiving and those not receiving, reported worse food consumption than their male peers (see figure 2). This finding can be attributed to female headed households not having equitable access to income generating opportunities compared to their male counterparts. Unless these households have sufficient male children that are able to contribute to the household income.



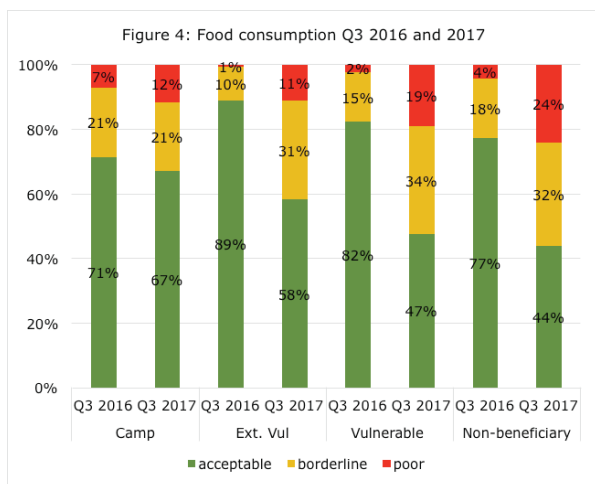
When food consumption data is disaggregated amongst the four strata, the camp population sustained better food consumption in comparison to the other strata (67 percent acceptable). However, this was the only strata that reported a decrease in acceptable food consumption in Q3 compared to Q2.

Consistent with previous quarters, refugees receiving the highest values of WFP assistance - the camp and the extremely vulnerable - reported better access to food (see figure 3). These two groups have approximately the same proportion of households with poor consumption, while the extremely vulnerable has a higher percentage of households with borderline consumption than the camp population. This could be explained by the dynamics of living in communities as opposed to the camps where services are provided, accommodation, health, education, etc. Greater access to free services can enable the camp population to consume more nutrient rich items, such as dairy, meat, fish, eggs, pulses, roots, and tubers than refugees in communities.



While food consumption improved in Q3, access to food amongst the two strata receiving lower levels of WFP assistance or no assistance at all - the vulnerable and non-beneficiaries - remains extremely poor. Amongst both strata the majority have either poor or borderline food consumption.

In comparison to the same time period in the previous year (Q3 2016), acceptable food consumption has declined substantially for all Syrian refugees, the assisted and the non-assisted (see figure 4). The camp population is the only population that maintained relatively consistent food consumption, however their poor food consumption increased. While refugees in communities reported a drastic increase in both poor and borderline food consumption.



The reduction in households' reported food consumption can be associated to several factors, one of which being, the WFP Jordan country office conducted a validation exercise in Q2 2017, which required all beneficiaries to verify their identity. Through focus group discussions conducted subsequently after the validation exercise from August onwards, many refugee families indicated they perceived the exercise to also be a targeting exercise. Misinterpretation of the objectives of the exercise, likely led to households underreporting their food consumption at the time of FSOM interviews in Q2 and Q3, due to fear that their entitlement was contingent upon their responses.

A second reason to explain the decrease in food consumption can be attributed to refugee households are not employing as many 'livelihood' coping strategies to meet their food needs as exercised in previous quarters, causing them to further compromise their food consumption. These are strategies households utilise over a 30-day time period and are ranked upon their severity based on how they impact households' capacity to with stand future shocks. Previously refugee households were able to maintain an adequate level of food consumption but were able to do so because of the coping strategies they were having to employed.

A third cause, which could serve to explain a decrease in food consumption amongst the affected population is that as the crisis becomes more protracted and the aid landscape shifts from humanitarian relief aid to resilience, the proportion of Syrian refugee households receiving such assistance has also drastically reduced in 2017 compared to the previous year. One example can be observed in the decrease of basic needs cash assistance provided by UNHCR.

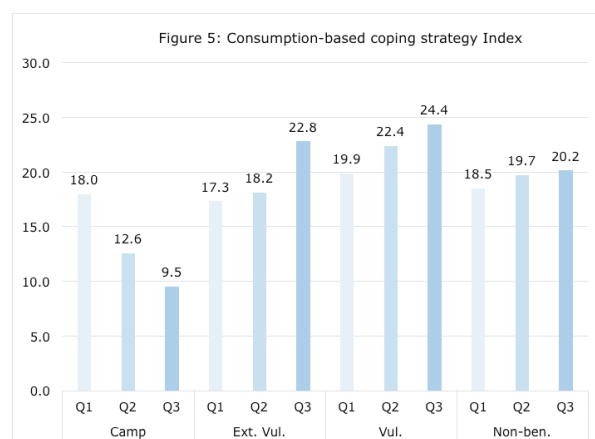
COPING CAPACITY:

Consumption-based coping strategies

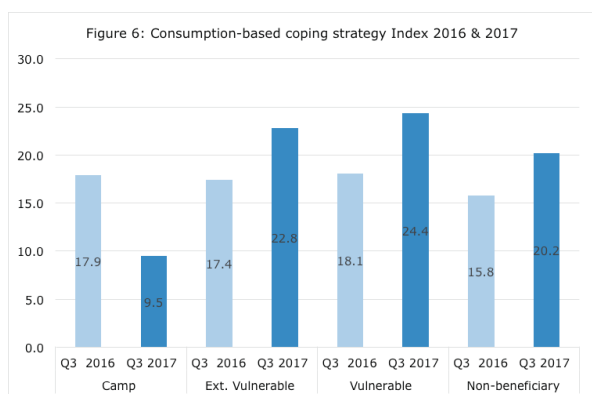
To further explain the food consumption of affected populations, a series of five consumption-based coping strategies are asked at the household level. Households are asked how many times strategies were used in the previous seven days; the frequency of usage is subsequently multiplied by their assigned severity scoring, generating a total coping strategy index (CSI) value.

In Q3 the usage of consumption-based coping strategies amongst beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries remained consistent between the quarters. However, when further disaggregated amongst the four strata, the camp population continued to decrease their usage of these strategies, while amongst refugees in communities the employment of these strategies increased, particularly amongst the extremely vulnerable and vulnerable (see figure 5). For example, in Q3 the extremely vulnerable used all five strategies once more in a seven-day period, compared to Q2, except borrowing food items from family relatives or friends.

During the reporting period (Q3), all refugees in the communities reduced the number of meals they consumed (four times), reduced their portion size (three times), and reduced adult HH members' consumption of food to provide for their child (three times)- in a seven-day time period. While the camp population only used each of the above strategies just once in the same period. In Q3 the camp population's CSI almost halved in comparison to Q1.



In comparison with Q3 data in 2016, all strata in communities increased their usage of consumption-based coping strategies, while they have decreased for the camp population (see figure 6). The heightened usage of such strategies can also further explain the reduction in community refugees' consumption of nutritious foods and thereby their food consumption over the course of the year.

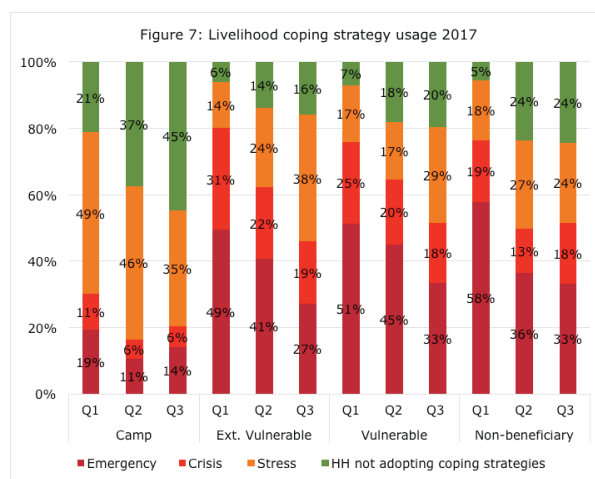


Livelihood coping strategies

While households short-term coping strategies are measured through the CSI, the ability of households to withstand longer-term shocks is monitored through their adoption of livelihood coping strategies. The recall period for these strategies is the previous 30 days from the time of the survey.

In Q3 the use of emergency coping strategies amongst refugees living outside of camps decreased (see figure 7). For example, the percentage of extremely vulnerable households that withdrew their children from school more than halved from Q2 to Q3 from 21 percent to 9 percent. However, the percentage of families that employed this strategy remained consistent amongst the vulnerable and non-beneficiaries – (approximately 10 percent).

In addition, the proportion of households that indicated a male household member is employed in illegal, social degrading, temporary work decreased for refugees in communities, while increased slightly amongst camps refugees (from 6 percent to 10 percent). Non-beneficiaries have the highest percentage of households reporting to have a male member involved in this type of work (30 percent). While the vulnerable represent the group with the greatest proportion of female members involved in this type of work (9 percent). It is essential to note the challenges for extracting this type of information at the household level as it is quite sensitive for refugees to admit to participating in such types of activities.

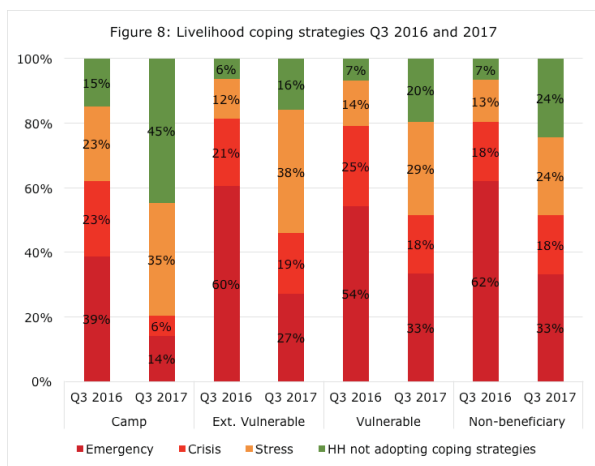


While the use of emergency coping strategies declined in Q3, there are key stress and crisis livelihood coping strategies, which refugee households continue to utilise consistently overtime to better ensure their food needs are met. One of which is to purchase food items on credit. In the community, the majority of refugee households used this strategy (60 percent), while in the camp to a lesser extent (40 percent).

One in three refugees in communities reported to have changed their accommodation to find cheaper rent to better meet their food needs. While the usage of this strategy remains quite high, it is a decrease from the previous quarter where almost half used this strategy. In the communities, almost one in four households reduced essential non-food expenditures, such as expenses on health or education, to better meet their food needs.

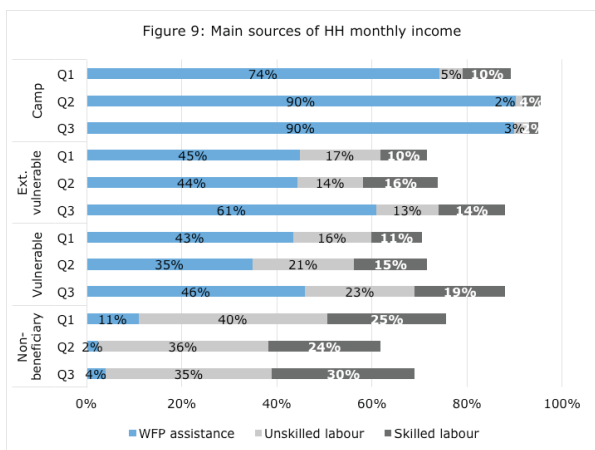
In comparison with Q3 in 2016 the proportion of households not adopting a livelihood strategy has increased across all four strata (see figure 8). Not using livelihood coping strategies can be a positive sign that refugee households are building greater resilience and moving away from adopting longer-term coping strategies, however, provided food consumption has not improved rather it has decreased suggests that these strategies played a role in permitting refugee households to maintained better food consumption than currently observed.

To better understand other factors impacting affected populations' food consumption additional indicators such as income, expenditure and debt are monitored to help further explain any potential changes.

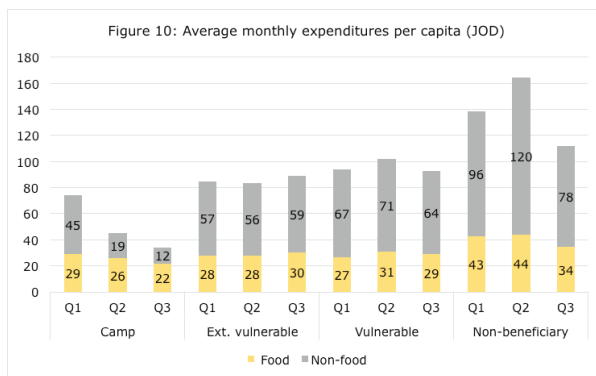


Income and expenditure and debt:

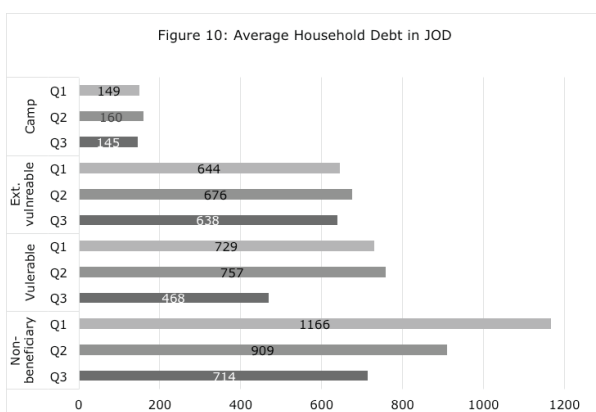
To better understand fluctuations in access to food, households are asked about their main income sources within the previous 30 days. For refugees receiving the highest amount of WFP assistance, the camp population and the extremely vulnerable, their WFP food entitlement is cited as their main source of income – at 90 percent and 61 percent respectively (see figure 9). However, a higher proportion of extremely vulnerable households reported a main source of their income also comes from informal and formal labour compared the to the camp population. This is understandable provided the context of refugees living in communities and the need to diversify their income streams, whereas for the camp population basic services and accommodation are provided. For refugees receiving less, the vulnerable, WFP assistance is main income source (46 percent), followed by informal and formal labour. The majority of non-beneficiaries (65 percent) receive their income from both informal and formal labour sources.



In addition, to income sources, expenditure is also monitored, as it can be a contributing factor in determining household food security status. In Q3 all strata reduced their average per capita monthly expenditures during the reporting period, except for the extremely vulnerable (see figure 10). For these three groups, the reduction was observed in both their non-food and food expenditures. Average food expenditures per capita remained consistent for beneficiary groups in communities (extremely vulnerable and vulnerable) while it decreased for the camp and non-beneficiary groups.

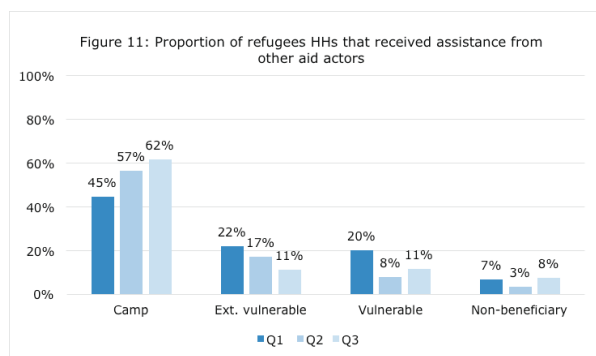


Debt is also used to further understand how households are meeting their current food needs when their expenditures are greater than their income. The majority of Syrian refugee households in Jordan have some form of debt, which can be from formal or informal sources. In Q3 debt levels remained consistent with previous quarters for the camp and the extremely vulnerable groups (see figure 10). However, debt amongst those strata receiving lower levels of assistance significantly reduced. Decrease in debt levels amongst the vulnerable and non-beneficiaries can be seen as a positive sign of households not having to use as many coping strategies to meet their food needs. However, amongst these strata while their debt levels have reported to decrease their access to food has not improved, meaning that debt potentially played a role in allowing households to further meet their food needs.



ACCESS TO ASSISTANCE:

To better understand household dynamics, affected populations are asked if in the previous 30 days from the time of the survey they received assistance from other aid actors. In Q3 the proportion of households that received assistance from other actors increased slightly for all strata except the extremely vulnerable (see figure 11). Provided a majority of camp residents received assistance from other actors could potentially serve to explain why their expenditures decreased by one-fourth during the reporting period.

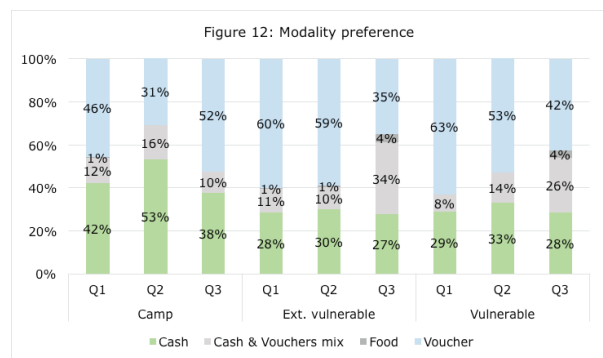


While there was a slight increase amongst refugee households that received assistance in Q3 compared to Q2, only one in ten refugee households in communities reported to receive assistance from another aid actor at the time of the FSOM exercise. Limited provision of aid can mean that these households have been deemed to not be in need of assistance from other aid providers and are capable to meet their non-food needs. However, provided that the majority of Syrian refugees live in the community and the obstacles that surround refugees in accessing reliable means of dignified income are limited, humanitarian relief aid is essential for refugee families in need until resilience projects provided by humanitarian or development agencies are expanded and/or greater access to legalised work opportunities are rolled out at a large scale.

MODALITY PREFERENCE:

To ensure that WFP monitors beneficiaries' feedback in terms of modality preference, every quarter households are asked about their preferred modality, cash, cash and vouchers mix (choice), e-voucher, or in-kind food. In Q3 WFP rolled out the 'choice' modality, in Madaba governorate reaching approximately 10,000 refugees, following the results from the BCG cash-comparative study. The modality allows beneficiaries to choose where they redeem their GFA entitlement, at a WFP contracted shop or a Jordan Ali Bank ATM, or both.

Q3 data indicates that over one in five refugee families preferred the choice modality (22 percent). During the reporting period there was a significant increase in the percentage of assisted refugees in communities that favoured choice as a modality to receive their GFA entitlement. The extremely vulnerable group observed the greatest increase in their preference for this modality, from 10 percent to 34 percent (see figure 12). While an increase in 12 percent for choice was reported by vulnerable households.



The rise in preference for the newly implemented modality, amongst urban refugees, led to a decrease in the preference for cash and voucher. The choice modality will expand to the governorates of Balqa and Zarqa in Q4, therefore, it will be important to monitor beneficiaries' preference particularly during this expansion.

ACCOUNTABILITY:

To gauge WFP's accountability to affected populations a standard set of questions are asked to beneficiaries regarding knowledge of the following: what they are entitled to, selection criteria for the programme and who to contact for questions. Q3 results reveal that camp beneficiaries are more informed about their entitlement (96 percent) compared to beneficiaries in the communities (39 percent). This is likely due to the greater field presence with camp beneficiaries compared to refugees in communities.

The majority of camp residents knew why they were selected for the GFA programme (87 percent) while only a minority of community beneficiaries knew why they were selected for assistance (40 percent). This is due to the targeting implemented in communities, which has presented challenges in trying to explain clearly target criteria used for the programme.

The majority of camp and community beneficiaries (63 percent) reported they know who to contact if

they need assistance from WFP. This is a positive indication that beneficiaries do know who to contact should they have an inquiry.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Conduct targeted qualitative data collection exercises focus group discussions and key informant interviews to further understand the decrease in food consumption in 2017 compared to the previous year, along with the reasons for the increase in consumption-based coping strategies amongst refugees in communities.
- Monitor refugees' modality preference to see whether choice continues to gain interest, particularly after the expansion of the modality to the governorates of Zarqa and Balqa in December.
- Review food security outcomes for the first set of choice beneficiaries, Madaba residents.
- Work with the country office's existing complaints feedback mechanism (the hotline), current partners and WFP sub-offices to see how to better inform community beneficiaries on what exactly they are entitled to via their GFA assistance.
- Share FSOM findings with relevant stakeholders, government, UN agencies, international non-governmental organisations (NGOS), national NGOs, including pertinent sectoral working groups.

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