



LIBYA MSNA 2018 **FOOD SECURITY**

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WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

LIBYA

WFP/Taha Jawashi



LIBYA
WFP/Taha Jawashi

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INTRODUCTION

Despite severe challenges, including financial crisis, currency devaluation, high food inflation and rising fuel prices, most households reported that food is generally available, however the limited disposal of cash and rising prices have affected households' access to food. The assessment findings reveal that 12 percent of the households in Libya are food insecure, leaving the majority of 70 percent vulnerable to food insecurity and 18 percent food secure.

Changes in the parallel-market exchange rates for the Libyan dinar and disruptions to the national subsidy system led to a significant increase in the food prices.

Although prices decreased slightly in February 2018, they continued to rise steadily until October 2018. Rising prices pose significant challenges to households that are spending a large share—53 percentage on average—of their total expenditures on food.

In order to cope with these challenges, 52 percentage of households reported spending their savings, 35 percentage borrowing money and 35 percent purchasing food on credit. In addition, 22 percent of the Libyan households reduced spending in education and health and 19 percentage reported having sold household assets.

This situation is mainly related to the fact that households reported increased challenges to obtaining resources and income. 87 percent of the households have at least an adult working in the public sector and government salaries are paid with irregularities and often delivered on bank accounts which are difficult to access due to a liquidity crisis. In fact, more than half of the households reported receiving less than 50 percent of their salary in cash while being unable to withdraw the rest of their salaries from their bank account, which is the primary reported source of household income. In addition, 58 percent reported facing issues in obtaining enough money to meet their needs over the past 30 days.

This is especially problematic in the southern part of the country where on average 36 percent of the households in Wadi Ashshati, Ubari and Sebha reported that banks or financial institutions were not functioning and households were not able to access their bank accounts.



FOOD MARKET SITUATION

Food is reportedly mostly available in markets, especially staple food commodities such as wheat bread, wheat flour, pasta, and oil. However, **12%** of households in **Benghazi**, **9%** in **Alkufra** and **6%** in **Azzawya** report that some food items are not available in markets. The most common products reported unavailable are: bread, flour milk, baby milk and sugar. Although food commodities are available, market prices are highly volatile and especially imported food items, which include most processed commodities, were more affected by the **increase of prices in early 2018**.

According to the Joint Market Monitoring Initiative, the food basket price, apart from a punctual drop in February or August 2018, has been steadily increasing since **October 2017**.

COST OF FOOD BASKET IN DIFFERENT CITIES

The level of food prices is very different across the country. In October 2018, the cheapest food basket was in Gharyan (644 LYD) while the most expensive one in Murzuq (1203 LYD). Generally, food prices in all southern mantikas are much higher than in the northern mantikas. As imports mainly come through the north (by boat or road imports from Tunisia and Egypt), logistics and delivery related costs might be the main reason for south-north price difference in the country. However, security and border constraints (check points etc.) in some cases could also contribute to higher prices in the South. Security constraints can also explain the variability of prices between the North-Western cities. For instance, in Zliten, the food basket cost in October 2018 is 843 LYD and in Gharyan 644 LYD whereas both cities are only 150km apart. **Fig. 1**

According to key informants in Libya, subsidized food is not widely available in markets. Sporadic distribution of subsidized flour to bakers by the government in the east region led to volatility in bread prices in July. Bread is the main commodity of Libyan diet – an assessment conducted in December 2017 showed that a household of 6 consumes 57 kilos of bread per month in Tripoli and 90 kilos in Benghazi.

In normal time, bread is heavily subsidized by the authority and bakeries sell a bag (5 pieces – 1kg) of bread at the fixed price of 1 LYD. However, disruptions in wheat flour subsidies led to strong increase in the bread price mostly since March 2018. It reached

2.5 LYD in September 2018 in Ubari, Sirt, Nalut and Al-Jufrah and 3 LYD in Benghazi for 5 pieces. Recent information indicate that the price is going down in October and November for the Northern cities, the volatility of bread price affects the economic stability of the most vulnerable.

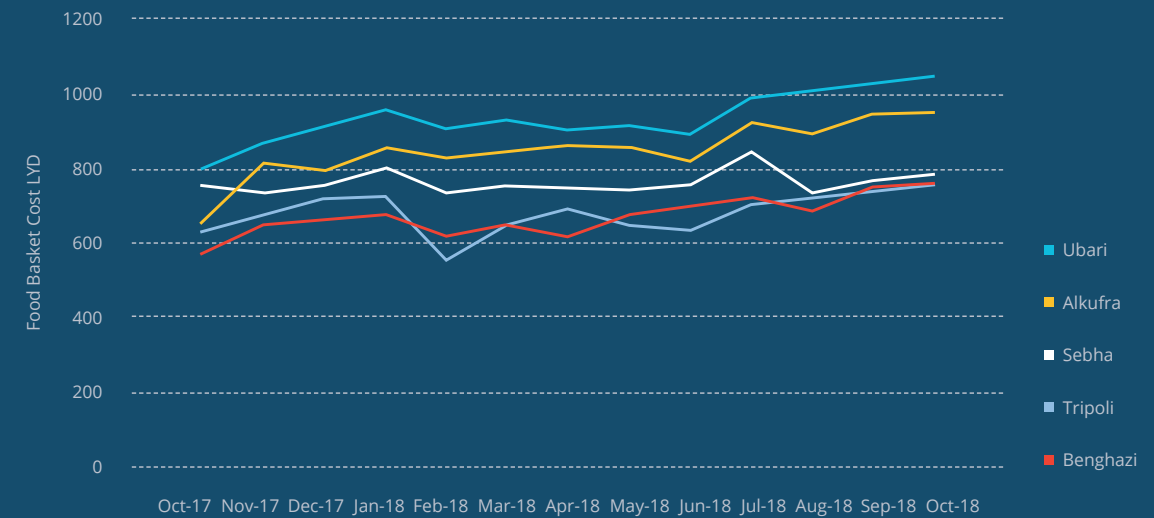
ACCESS TO FOOD AND MARKETS

Assessment results showed that households enjoy good physical access to markets; only 8 percent of the households reported facing barriers to consistently access the marketplace. The primary barrier reported was the distance of the market and lack of means of transportation, especially in Derna. Beginning on 15 May 2018 conflict in and around Derna escalated, leaving most mahallas without a functional market and leading to fuel shortages, which disrupted Derna's already weak public transit network and made it difficult to operate private cars.

In terms of economic access to food, almost all the households who reported facing barrier to regularly purchasing specific items at the market said that the primary reason was the prices were too expensive and specifically food prices.

Despite rising food prices, the major food source is market purchase with cash, followed by cheque and debt. Bartering was not commonly reported, although more frequently in Zwara and Al Jfara. Own production was more commonly reported in Wadi Ashshati in the South and in Jabal Alakhdar in the East.

Fig. 1 - Cost of food basket in different cities



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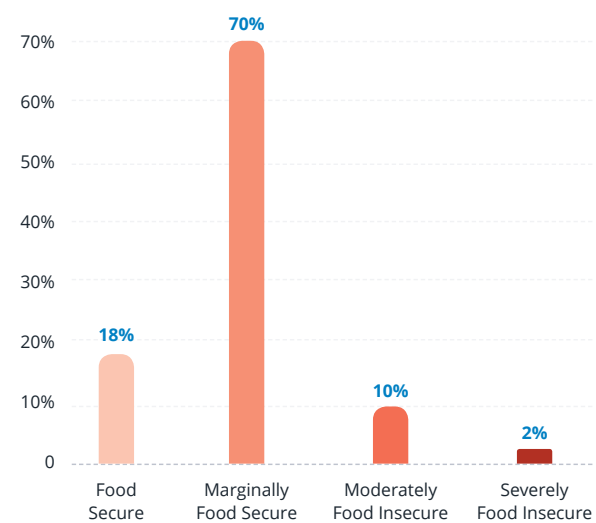
HOUSEHOLD CONSUMPTION

The status of household food security is analysed applying the WFP's standard methodology "Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators of Food Security" (CARI). CARI looks at two domains, namely current status and coping capacity. For each domain, relevant indicators are employed: food consumption for current status; and economic vulnerability as well as livelihood coping indicator for coping capacity. For each indicator, households are classified into different levels of food insecurity to derive a food security index.

The table below presents the result of the analysis. The interviewed households are characterized by an acceptable level of food consumption with poor coping capacity: i.e. households' minimum level of food consumption is mostly met but their coping capacity is stretched with a high level of share of expenditure on food and a large proportion of households adopting severe or moderate coping strategies. Overall, 12 percent of the households are food insecure, leaving the majority of 70 percent vulnerable to food insecurity (marginally food secure). **Fig. 2**

Fig. 2 - Food Security Index Groups

Domain	Indicator	Indicator	Food Secure (1)	Marginally Food Secure (2)	Food Insecure	
					Moderately Food Insecure (3)	Severely Food Insecure (4)
Current Status	Food Consumption	Food Consumption Group	87%	-	9%	3%
			Acceptable consumption	-	Borderline consumption	Poor consumption
Coping Capacity	Economic Vulnerability	Share of expenditure on food	48%	22%	11%	20%
	Asset Depletion	Livelihood coping strategy	24%	18%	51%	7%
			No coping	Stress coping	Crisis coping	Emergency coping
Food Security Index Shares			18%	70%	10%	2%
					12%	



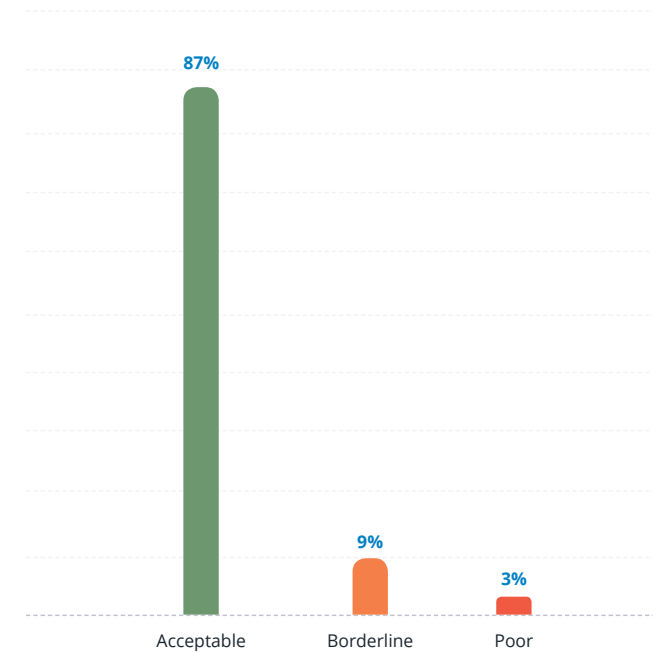
Food security classifications	Description	
Food insecure	Severely food insecure	Extreme food consumption gaps, OR extreme loss of livelihood assets
	Moderately food insecure	Significant food consumption gaps, OR marginally able to meet minimum food needs only with irreversible coping strategies
Marginally food secure	Minimally adequate food consumption without engaging in irreversible coping strategies	
Food secure	Adequate food consumption without engaging in typical coping strategies	

In six out of the seven mantikas assessed both in 2017 and 2018, an overall deterioration of the food security situation of Libyans was noted. Specifically, in Tripoli, the proportion of households with poor and borderline food consumption jumped from 11 to 22 per cent in a year and the severity of negative food coping mechanisms also heavily increased (+47 per cent).

FOOD CONSUMPTION

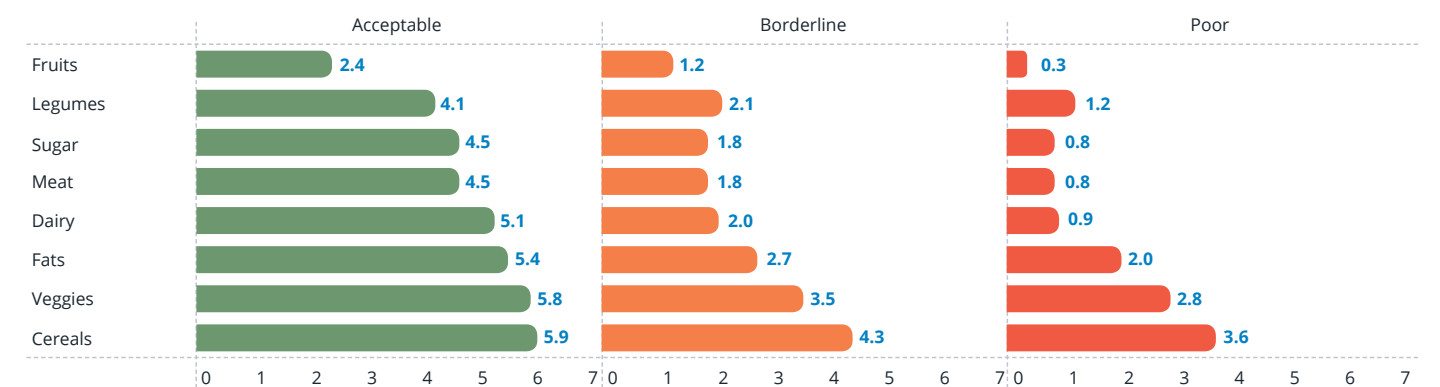
Measured by the frequency and diversity of foods consumed over the past 7 days, food consumption among the majority of the interviewed households is mostly acceptable. Around 12 percent of the households have borderline or poor consumption with significant food consumption gap, and those households under these categories typically consume cereals four times a week, oil and vegetables every other day, sugar, dairy products, legumes, meat once or twice a week, while fruits are rarely consumed.

Fig. 3 - Food Consumption Groups



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Fig. 4 - Food consumption patterns (number of days per week)



At mantika level, Murzuq (38 percent) and Aljufra (28 percent) in the South, Al Kufra (60 percent) in the East and Zwara (32 percent) and Tripoli (24 percent) in the West have the highest proportion of households with unacceptable food consumption. Al Kufra has the highest proportion of households with poor food consumption, with almost a quarter of the households having poor food consumption. Looking at the population groups, IDPs showed a higher proportion of households with poor food consumption in comparison with non-displaced and returnee households. Looking at the population groups, IDPs showed a higher proportion of households with poor food consumption in comparison with non-displaced and returnee households. Looking at the population groups, IDPs showed a higher proportion of households with poor food consumption in comparison with non-displaced and returnee households.

Fig. 5 - Food Consumption Groups by Mantika

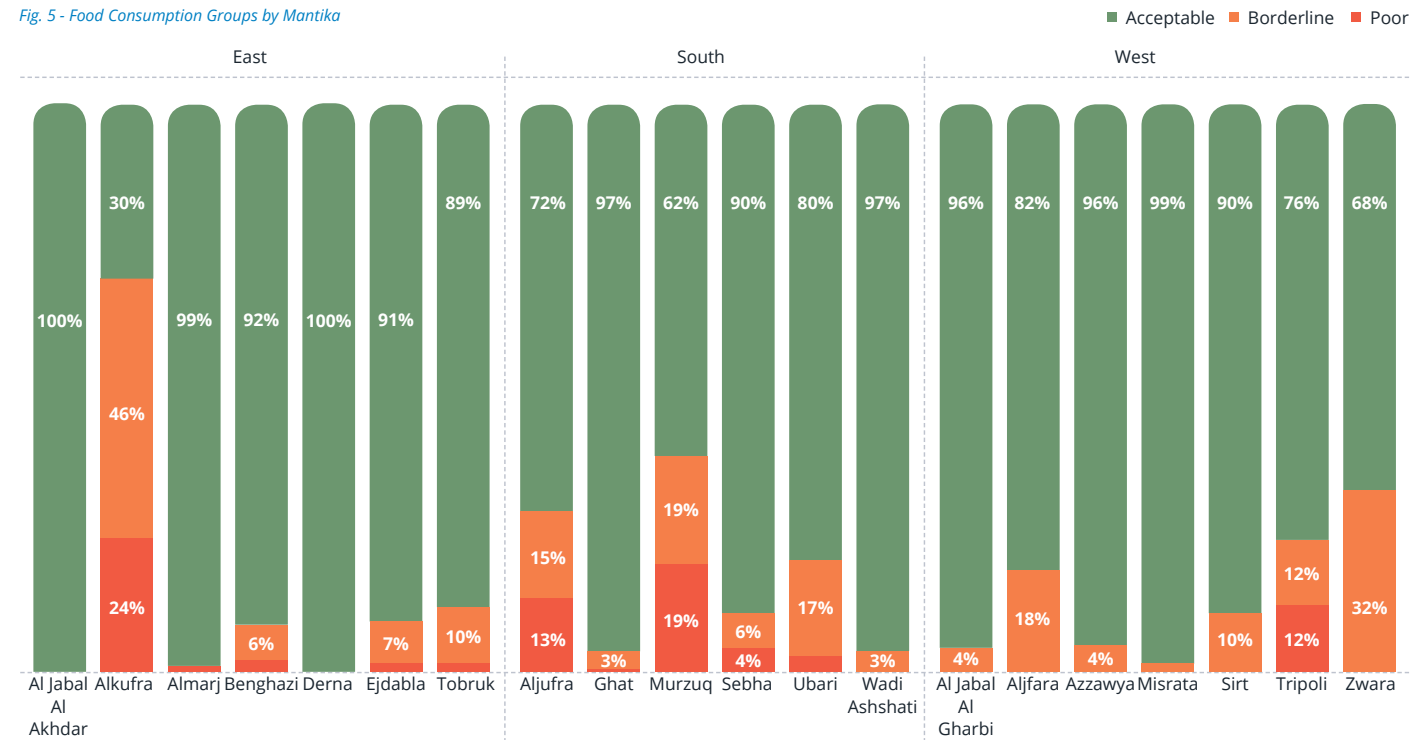
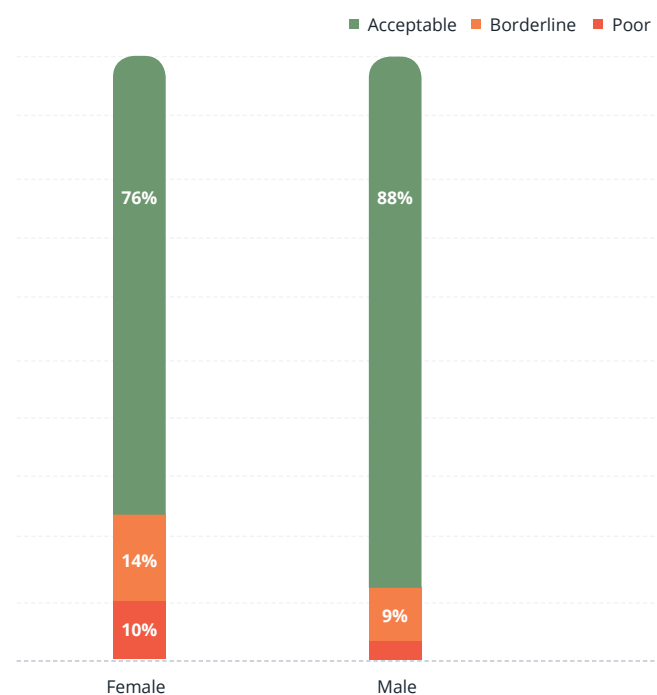


Fig. 6 - Food Consumption Groups by Displacement Status



Fig. 7 - Food Consumption Groups by head of household gender



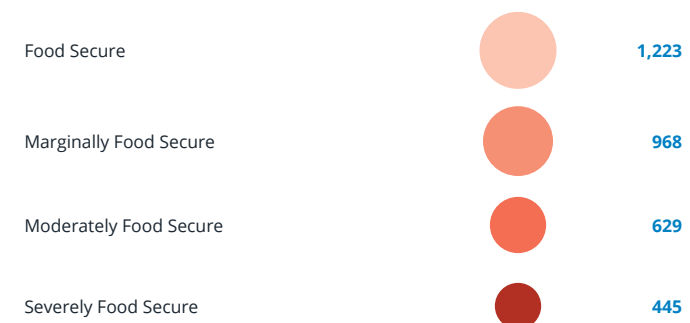
ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY

EXPENDITURE

Household spend on average 956 LYD per month (median=710 LYD). The households' expenditure is significantly lower among the severely food insecure households with 445 LYB on average (median=500 TL), followed by the moderately food insecure households with the average of 629 LYB (median=474 LYB), whereas the food secure spend 1233 LYB (median=800 LYB).

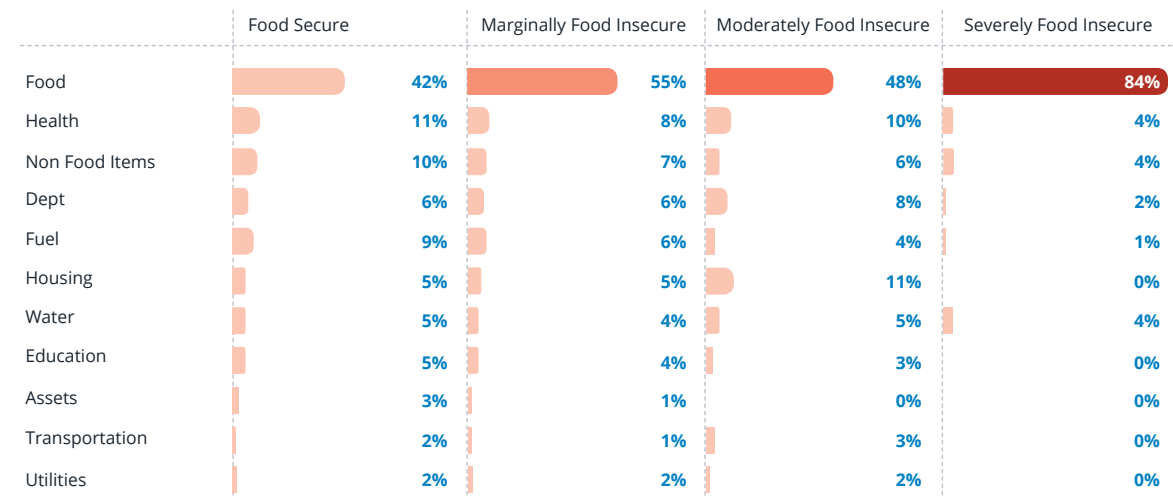
Fig. 8 - Expenditure pattern

Average Household Monthly Expenditure (LYB)



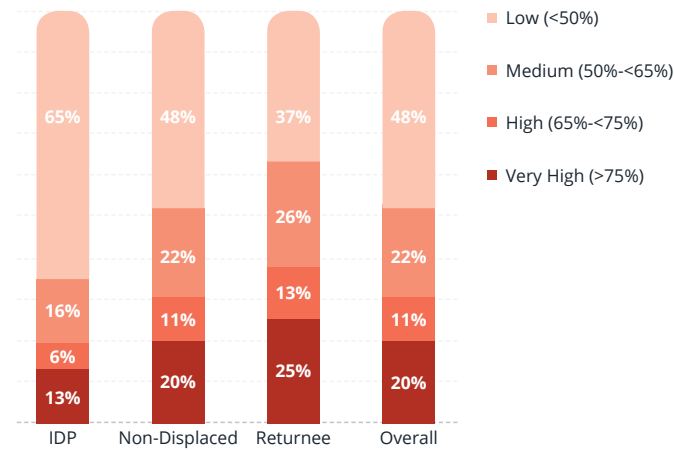
Overall, the major household expenditure is spent on food (53 percent), followed by health (9 percent) and non-food items (7 percent). The severely food insecure households spend a considerably higher percentage on food (84 percent), compared to moderately food insecure households (48 percent) and the food secure ones (42 percent).

Fig. 9 - Expenditure pattern



The proportion spent on food is higher among returnees at 56 percent, compared to residents (53 percent) and displaced households (46 percent). Around a quarter of the returnee households spend more than 75 percent of their total monthly expenditures on food which is considered very high.

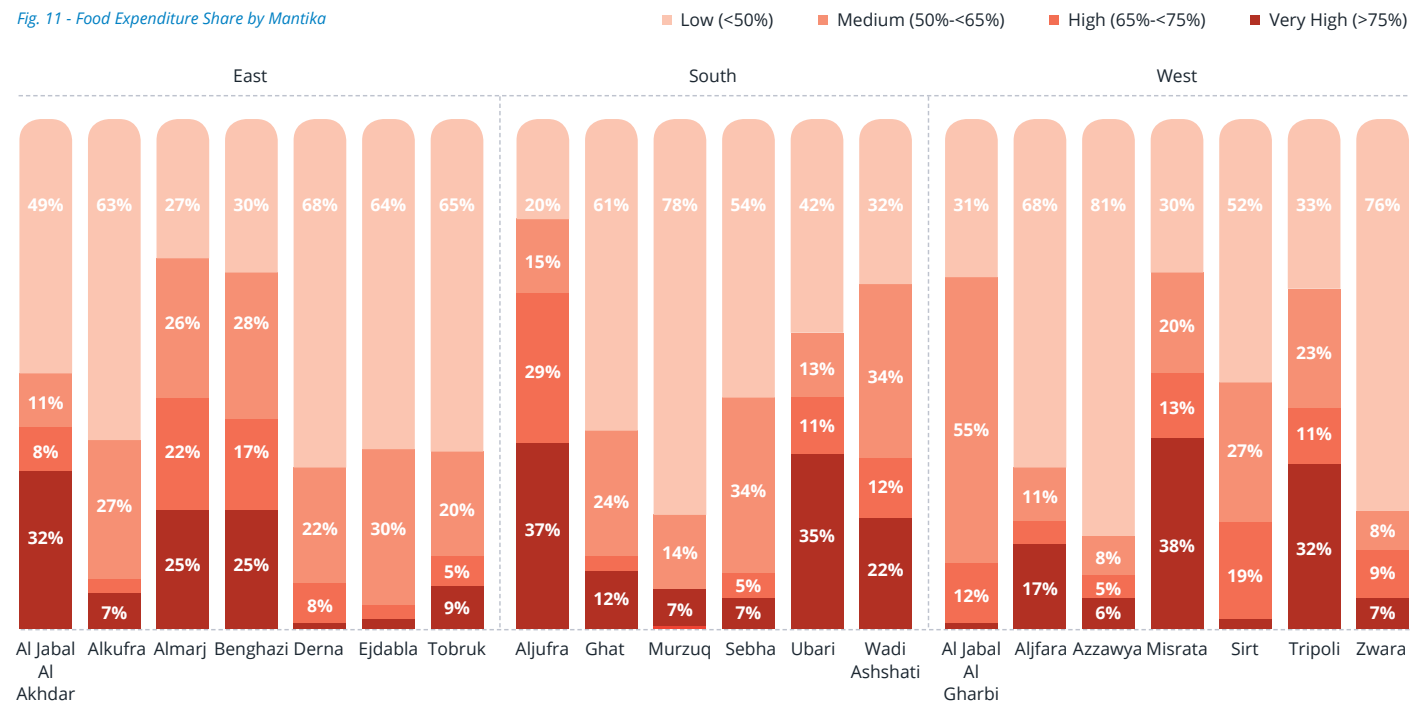
Fig. 10 - Food Expenditure Share by Displacement Status



The expenditure trends vary considerably across Libya. Households in Aljufra (65 percent), Misrata (63 percent) and Benghazi (61 percent) reported spending higher proportion of their monthly expenditure on food than in other mantikas. In Misrata, Al Jufra, Ubari, Tripoli and Jabal Al Akhdar a third of the population spends more than 75 percent of expenditures on food. These households are likely to be vulnerable to economic shocks as there is little additional budget available for any other expenses except the most basic requirements. The food expenditure situation is more positive in Murzuq (37%), Azzawya (40%), Zwara (40%), where the vast majority is spending less than 50 percent of their total expenditures on food.



Fig. 11 - Food Expenditure Share by Mantika

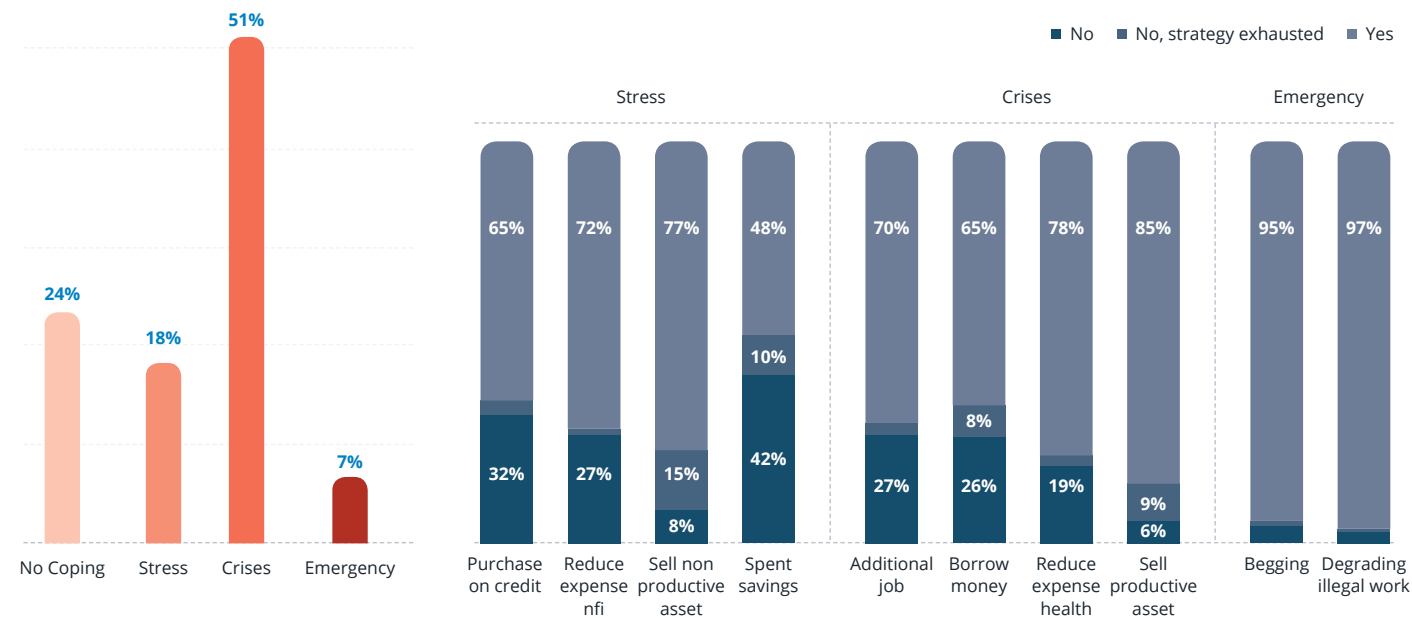


COPING STRATEGIES

LIVELIHOOD COPING STRATEGIES

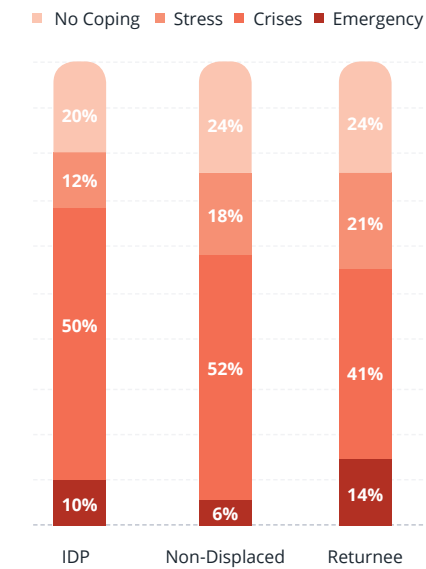
Assessment findings show that multiple coping mechanisms were employed to a worrying degree by households. Due to the rising price of food items, households in Libya have had to employ a number of different coping strategies in order to obtain food. More than two-thirds of the interviewed households reportedly used livelihood coping strategies during the 30 days prior to the survey due to lack of money to buy food or other basic needs. Almost 60 percent of the households resorted to emergency or crisis livelihood coping, such as selling productive assets, accepting food or money from strangers or accepting degrading or illegal works, undermining future productivity and capacity to cope. A large share of households spent savings, or sold household assets. The excessive use of coping strategies is an indication of a high level of risk to food insecurity among households.

Fig. 12 - Livelihood coping strategies used by households



IDP households are resorting to crisis and emergency coping strategies slightly more than non-displaced and returnees. In specific, more IDP households are selling productive (22 percent) and non-productive assets (32 percent), borrowing money (43 percent) and taking additional jobs (44 percent) compared to residents and returnees in order to cope. Returnees were found to employ emergency coping strategies to a greater extent than IDPs and host communities, with 5 percentage having to accept degrading work and 12 percentage accepting food or money from strangers.

Fig. 13 - Livelihood Coping Strategies index by Displacement Status

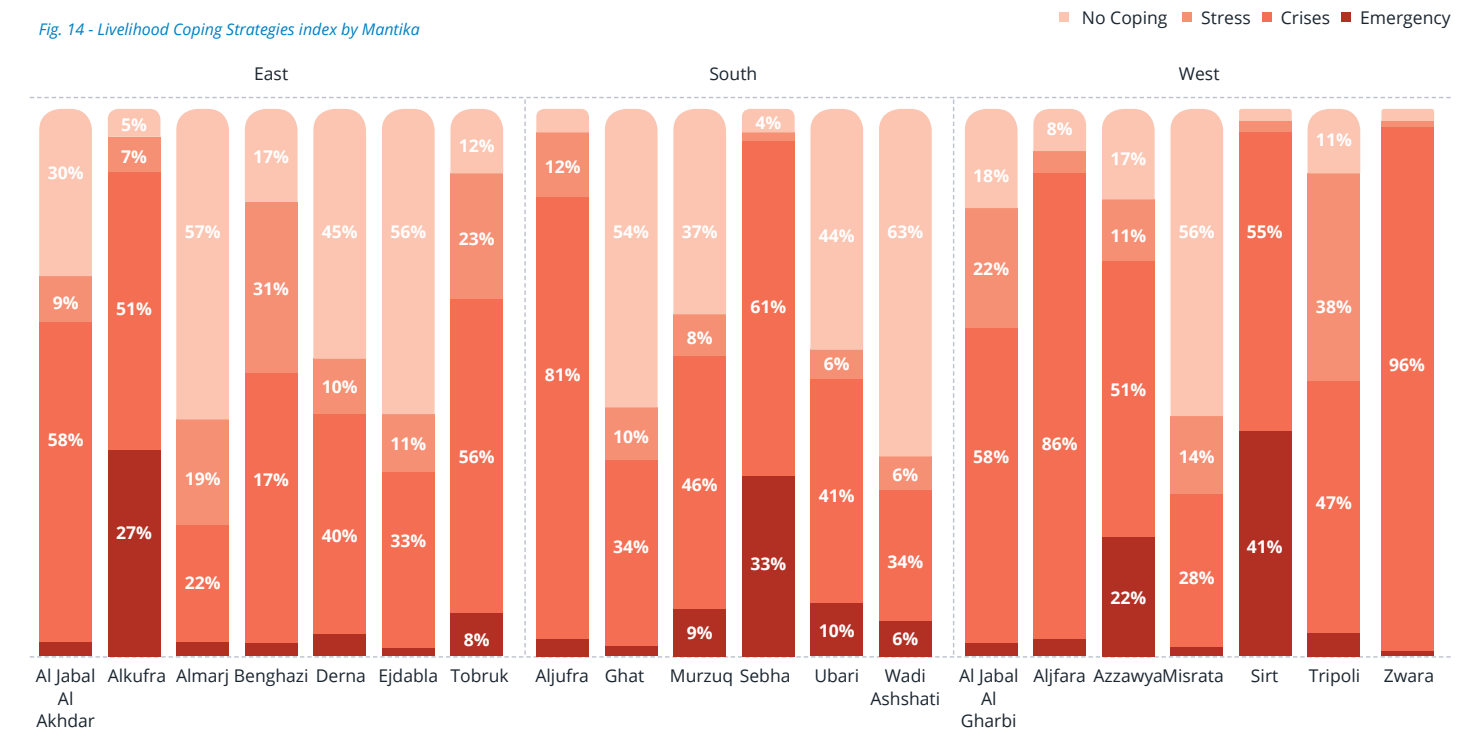


Across mantikas, the use of emergency and crisis coping strategies is particularly worrisome in Alkufra, Sebha and Sirt. Here households more frequently reported the use of more extreme coping strategies, 30 percent of households resorted to accepting food or money from strangers, and an average of 20 percent accepted degrading or illegal work. Specific crisis coping strategies are also highly used in these three mantikas like selling productive assets (22 percent in Al Kufra, 65 percent in Sebha and 30 percent in Sirt) and reduce expenses in health and education (70 percent in Al Kufra, 44 percent in Sebha and 80 percent in Sirt).

In Zwara and Al Jfara the use of crisis coping strategies was also very high and households were relying mainly on spending savings (94 percent in Zwara and 87 percent in Aljfara), borrowing money (96 percent in Zwara and 91 percent in Aljfara) and purchasing on credit (95 percent in Zwara and 77 percent in Aljfara). In Al Jufra mantika, where the share of food expenditure was found to be highest (65 percent on average), households were more likely to have resorted to coping strategies, with 84 percent of households reported borrowing money, 76 percent purchasing food on credit and 3 percent asking strangers for money or food in order to cope with a lack of money to buy food.



Fig. 14 - Livelihood Coping Strategies index by Mantika



PROFILE OF THE FOOD INSECURE

GEOGRAPHY

Mantikas in the south or that have been directly affected by conflict and displacement are likely to show larger proportions of food insecure households

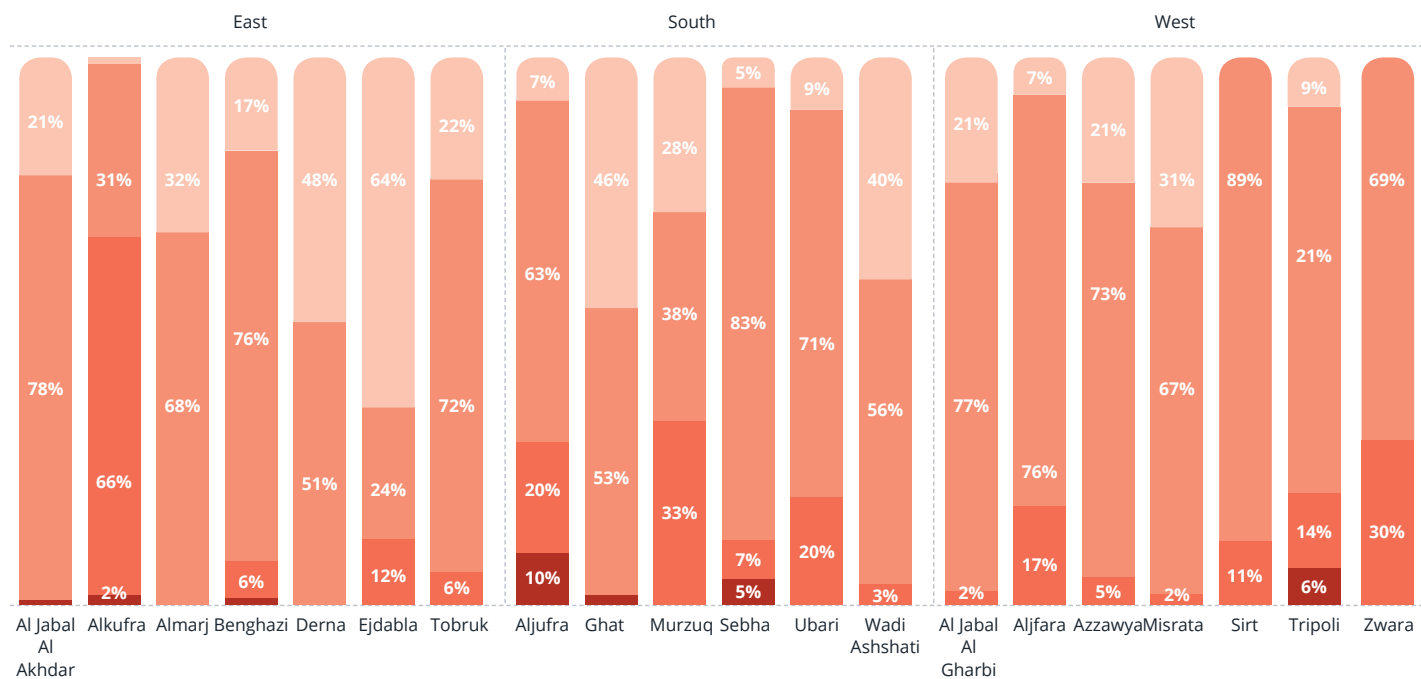
The distribution of the food insecure households varies by location. Despite the fact that are less populated, southern mantikas, are showing larger proportions of food insecure households. Al Kufra stands out as the most food insecure, with more than two third of the population being food insecure. High rates of food insecure households were also observed in the neighboring mantikas of Murzuq (33 percent) and Al jufra (30 percent). In this last mantika, around 10 percent of the households are categorized as severely food insecure, the highest percentage recorded.

In the West, mantikas that were directly affected by the conflict or are hosting large number of IDPs emerged to be the most vulnerable in terms of food security. In Zwara and Tripoli, 30 percent and 20 percent of the households were found to be food insecure.

In the East, the food security situation seems to be better compared to the other areas of the country. However, in Benghazi which host the highest number of IDPS and returnees, around 7 percent of the households were found to be food insecure. In May and June, Benghazi received new IDPs, many displaced from Derna where heavy clashes were reported in the same period.

Fig. 15 - Food security by mantika

Food secure Margianally food secure Moderately food insecure Severely food insecure



In the West, mantikas that were directly affected by the conflict or are hosting large number of IDPs emerged to be the most vulnerable in terms of food security.

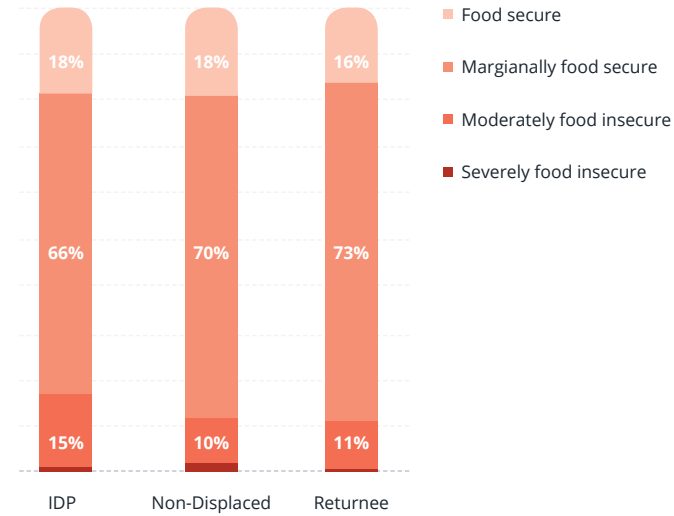
DEMOGRAPHY

Displaced households and women-headed households exhibit a higher rate of food insecurity

Assessment findings showed that the current situation in Libya affects the food security of non-displaced households and returnees in a similar way. Returnee and resident households reported the same level of food insecurity (11 percent and 12 percent respectively) while displaced households reported a higher level of food insecurity, with 17 percent being classified as food insecure.

The majority of the resident food insecure households are located in Tripoli, Zwara and Aljfra. The highest number of food insecure IDPs are living in Tripoli, Alkufra, Benghazi and Murzuk and most of the food insecure returnees are in Sirte, Benghazi, Zwara and Tripoli.

Fig. 16 - Food security by displacement status



A difference in the percentage of severely food insecure households has been observed among women and male-headed households, although not significant. Eighteen percent of women-headed households are food insecure while the rate is lower among the male-headed households at 11 percent.

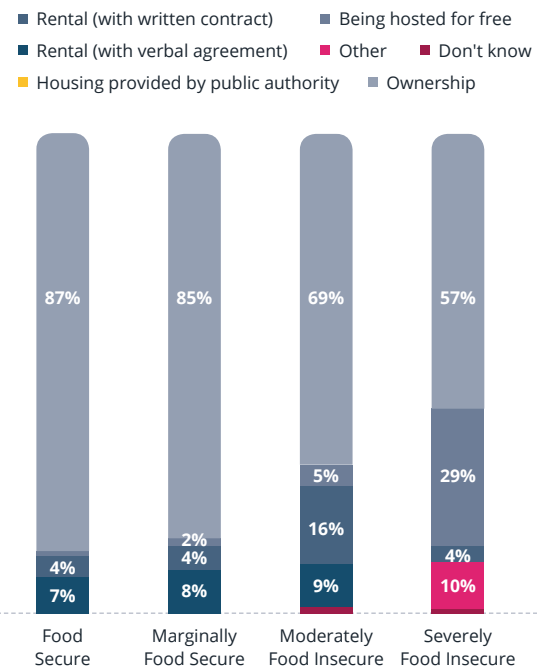
HOUSING AND ACCESS TO ENOUGH DRINKING WATER

Food insecure households live in rented houses or are being hosted by friend or relatives and they have irregular access to enough drinking water.

Households who own their home are likely to be less food insecure compared to those who rent their home or are being hosted for free by friends and relatives or are living in temporary accommodations. Almost 40 percent of the households that are renting a home or are being hosted for free have been found to be food insecure while the percentage of food insecurity among the households who own their home is much lower, 10 percent. While the vast majority of non-displaced and returnee households (80 percent) are owning a home, most of the IDPs are either renting (55 percent) or being hosted for free (17 percent). Similarly, among female heads of households, around 22 percent rent apartments or they are hosted by friend or relatives while the percentage of male heads of households living in this kind of accommodation stands at 16 percent.

In addition, uninterrupted access to safe water seems to be correlated with the food security situation of the households. As such, households who reported having access to drinking water are less likely to be food insecure (10 percent) compared to those households who reported issues in accessing it (22 percent). Overall, more than 17 percent of the households reported that there were times during the month before the survey when they did not have access to enough quantity of drinking water. This issue was mainly reported by households in the southern mantikas of Alkufra (46 percent), Sebha (41 percent), Aljufra (38 percent), Murzuq (37 percent) and Ghat (30 percent). Also in Derna and Sirte, both affected directly by the conflict and have suffered damage to the infrastructure, 39 percent and 31 percent of the households reported having issues in accessing drinking water regularly.

Fig. 17 - Food security by housing type



SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION

Food insecure and vulnerable households cope through rationalizing the consumption as well as adopting severe and often irreversible coping strategies.

Across mantikas and population groups the most common sources of income are government or public sector (85 percent) followed by own business (5 percent) and family support (2 percent). The major issues to access income cited by respondents are “unable to withdraw money from the bank account” (78 percentage of the assessed population), followed by “salary and wages not regularly paid” (47 percentage), and “banking system non-functioning” (13 percentage). The general high reliance on government salaries by households makes them vulnerable to any interruption or delay to these payments. Lack of work opportunities was mainly cited by IDPs (17 percent) compared to non-displaced (12 percent) and returnees (10 percent). At mantika level lack of work was an issue recorded mostly in Sebha and Tripoli (27 percent) and Murzuq (23 percent).

Both IDP (68 percent) and returnee (75 percent) households reported more challenges in obtaining their source of income compared to resident respondents (57 percent). According to key informants, loss or theft of identity documents—a prerequisite for receiving government pensions or salaries—would leave households unable to access these sources of income, with little else to fall back on.

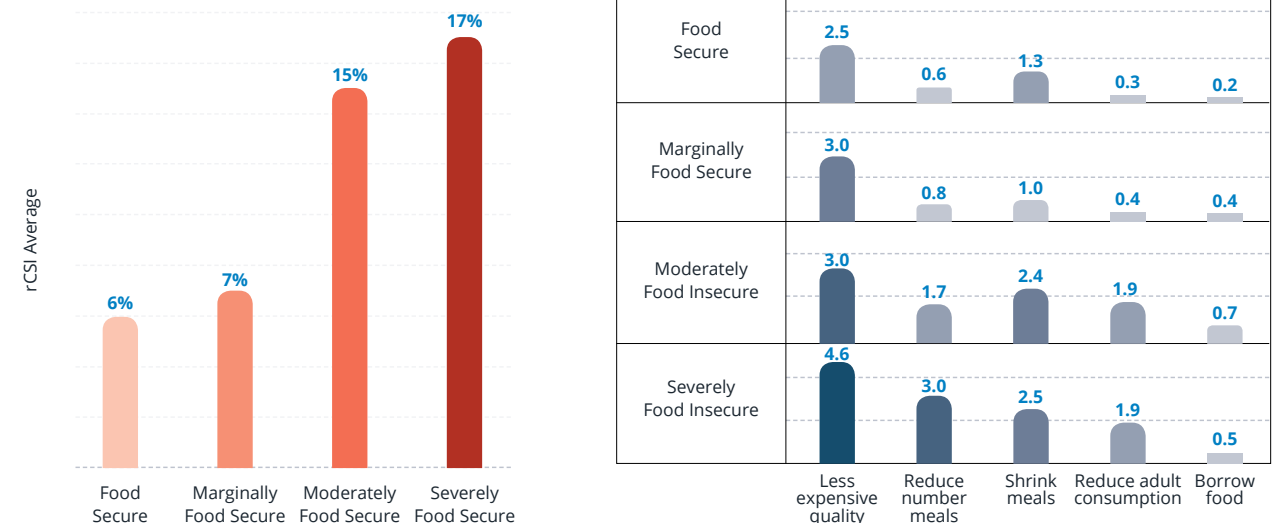
While most of the households have access to income generation opportunities, severely food insecure households are likely to rely more on family support (14 percent) and humanitarian assistance (4 percent) as source of income.

Fig. 18 - Household main income source by food security status

Food Security Status	Gov Salary	Own Business Income	Family Support	Non Gov Salary	Gov Social Benefits	Remittances	Humanitarian Assistance	Casual Labour	Zakat
Food Secure	83%	7%	0%	3%	1%	4%	0%	1%	0%
Marginally Food Secure	86%	5%	2%	3%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%
Moderately Food Secure	84%	3%	4%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Moderately Food Insecure	73%	2%	14%	2%	2%	0%	4%	0%	2%

The use of higher frequencies of severer consumption based coping was observed among the food insecure households. The mean average reduced coping strategy index is significantly higher among the food insecure households at 15 and 17 compared to the food secure households at 6. Below figure illustrates the summary of consumption-based coping strategies employed by households with different food security status.

Fig. 19 - Consumption-based coping strategies adopted by households

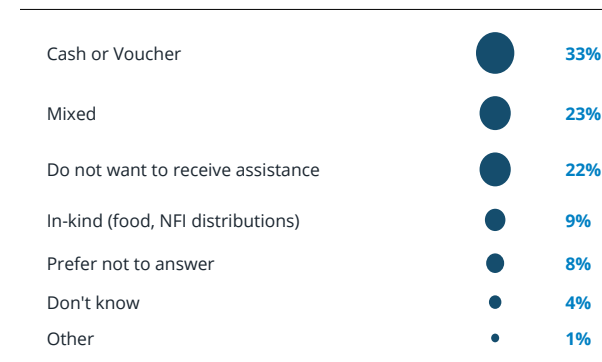


FOOD ASSISTANCE

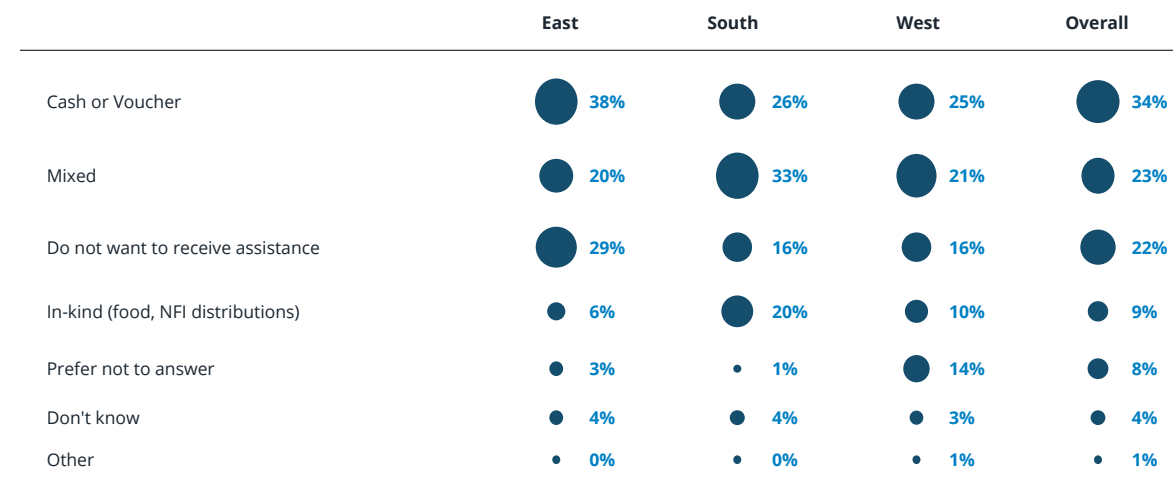
Around 8 percent of households reported that they had received support in the form of food assistance in the previous 6 months, mainly in the form of in-kind in Sirt and Derna, indicating that significant gaps remain in the delivery of assistance, despite efforts made to date. The two main sources of food assistance are reportedly international and local organizations.

Looking ahead, a third of the households reported that they would like to receive assistance in cash or voucher and another 23 percent stated that they would like to receive assistance in mixed modality in-kind and cash. Around nine percent of households preferred to receive assistance in-kind.

Fig. 20 - Future Assistance Preferences



Here by region:



LIMITATIONS

The MSNA 2018 did not cover Nalut and Almagreb mantikas. In Derna mantika, due to access constraint, data was only collected in the city of Derna. In Sirte, the results are only indicative because of difficulties in data collection.

This assessment only covers the situation of Libyans (Non-Displaced, Returnees and IDPs) and the situation of migrants and refugees is not considered in this report.

CONCLUSION

As the current economic crisis and the political and security instability continue to deepen in Libya, it is likely that armed confrontations will continue in the near future increasing the possibility of a spur for further conflict. Libyan households have been directly affected by the crisis: many households have been displaced, the Libyan dinar has plummeted, inflation is spiking leading to increasing food prices and regular subsidies have been suspended or reduced by the government. The effect of decreased disposable and the persistent cash liquidity crisis are affecting households' ability to buy basic goods including food, pushing many of them to direct more than half of the monthly household expenditures towards food and to rely on spending savings, borrowing money and purchasing on credit. The spread use of these coping strategies is reducing households' ability to deal with future shocks due to a current reduction in resources or increase in debts.

The MSNA findings reveal that overall, 12 percent of the households in Libya are food insecure, with the majority of 70 percent marginally food secure and at risk of food insecurity. There is a sharp variation in food security among mantikas. More than 30 percent of people are food insecure in the southern mantikas of Murzuq and Al jufra and in the western mantikas of Zwara and Tripoli. Al kufra reported the highest percentage of food insecure households. In six out of the seven mantikas assessed both in 2017 and 2018, an overall deterioration of the food security situation of Libyans was noted. Specifically, in Tripoli, the proportion of households with poor and borderline food consumption doubled and in a year and the severity of negative food coping mechanisms have also increased. Food insecurity is affecting displaced, returnees and non-displaced Libyans in a similar way.



ANNEX ONE

NUMBER OF FOOD INSECURE PEOPLE BY MANTIKA

As showed in the table below, the number of food insecure people based on the prevalence of food insecurity and at the exception of Nalut and Almagreb mantikas is 645,642 non-displaced people, 31,936 IDP people and 40,522 returnee people.

Mantika	Non-Displaced				IDPs				Returnees			
	Total Population	#Moderately Food Insecure	#Severely Food Insecure	# Total Non-IDPs Food Insecure	Total IDPs population	#Moderately Food Insecure	#Severely Food Insecure	# Total IDPs Food Insecure	Total returnee population	#Moderately Food Insecure	#Severely Food Insecure	# Total Returnees Food Insecure
Al Jabal Al Akhdar	236,930	1,755	0	1,755	4,326	149	0	149	0			
Al Jabal Al Gharbi	346,034	7,805	0	7,805	3,869	0	0	0	11,871	831	0	831
Aljfara	512,765	84,511	3,798	88,309	10,085	2,302	219	2,521	6,765	1,883	70	1,953
Aljufra	57,771	11,102	6,036	17,137	949	269	0	269	0		0	0
Alkufra	44,958	29,077	559	29,636	6,855	4,617	140	4,757	1,735	1,142	22	1,164
Almarj	218,709	0	0	0	970	0	0	0	0		0	0
Azawya	330,563	14,913	2,485	17,398	7,931	501	0	501	501	0	0	0
Benghazi	562,179	37,553	4,418	41,971	27,380	2,913	291	3,204	189,401	7,427	1,857	9,284
Derna	187,656	0	0	0	3,739	453	0	453	3,175	141	0	141
Ejdabia	190,354	24,080	0	24,080	15,882	744	0	744	0		0	0
Ghat	17,642	147	0	147	8,134	223	0	223	930	119	0	119
Misrata	607,240	11,193	0	11,193	21,603	436	0	436	11,740	0	0	0
Murzuq	78,103	26,617	0	26,617	12,321	2,950	0	2,950	365	0	0	0
Sebha	123,897	9,662	6,270	15,932	23,599	715	238	953	1,546	0	0	0
Sirt	82,796	6,292	0	6,292	6,221	829	0	829	75,985	14,411	0	14,411
Tobruk	186,780	10,961	0	10,961	1,470	89	0	89	0		0	0
Tripoli	1,189,359	159,972	74,190	234,162	24,855	11,756	1,344	13,099	34,162	5,164	0	5,164
Ubari	56,769	13,433	0	13,433	4,080	227	91	317	27,685	1,846	0	1,846
Wadi Ashshati	90,589	2,876	0	2,876	1,190	198	18	216	175	27	5	33
Zwara	323,778	95,934	0	95,934	536	222	0	222	13,181	5,577	0	5,577
Total	5,444,872	547,885	97,757	645,642	185,995	29,595	2,341	31,936	379,217	38,568	1,954	40,522





**World Food
Programme**

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