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Food Security Outcome Monitoring

WFP Lebanon | July 2018

Highlights

- This report covers the outcome results for July 2018.

- The World Food Programme (WFP) is implementing three modalities of food and basic needs assistance through an e-card: 1) food e-card assistance redeemable at WFP-contracted shops; 2) cash for food e-card assistance, redeemable either at WFP-contracted shops or withdrawn from ATMs; and 3) multipurpose cash for essential needs e-card assistance, redeemable only from ATMs.

- All WFP-assisted households showed improved food security results, better food diversity, and the multipurpose cash assistance group in particular adopted fewer food and livelihood coping strategies.

- Food remains the biggest expenditure for households, followed by rent and medical expenses.

- Communication to beneficiaries showed remarkable results compared to previous quarters due to better communication guidelines developed by the Accountability to Affected Population (AAP) unit. More beneficiaries reported being aware of their entitlements, who to contact, and how they

were selected to receive WFP assistance.

- Food security levels for non-assisted households remained stable.

- The overall satisfaction among those assisted remained stable with a score approximately equal to eight over ten. Among the multipurpose cash households, their satisfaction was higher compared to April (increased from 8.2 to 8.37).

Introduction

WFP is the world's largest humanitarian agency fighting hunger worldwide. In Lebanon, it provides life-saving food and basic needs assistance to vulnerable UNHCR-registered displaced Syrians through an electronic card system. In October 2017, two new cash modalities were introduced in addition to the food e-card, the cash for food e-card and the multipurpose cash for essential needs e-card.

WFP continues to incorporate resilience into its interventions to ensure sustainability and strengthen its programme portfolio. As such, WFP shifted from the regional Protracted Relief and

Recovery Plan (PRRO) 200987 to the Country Strategic Plan (CSP) in January 2018. This CSP introduces capacity-strengthening support to enhance Lebanon's ability to manage the Syrian crisis and future shocks.




Since 2016, WFP's Food Security Outcome Monitoring (FSOM) measures the outcomes of WFP's food and programming among beneficiary and non-beneficiary households on a quarterly basis.

Since November 2017, monitoring is conducted on four different households groups:

- **Food e-card:** households receive US\$ 27 per family member. That can be redeemed on food at any of 500 WFP-contracted shops across Lebanon.
- **Cash for food e-card:** households receive US\$ 27 per family member. They have the choice to redeem that either at a WFP-contracted shop or to withdraw it as cash from any ATM.
- **Multipurpose cash for essential needs e-card (MPC):** households receive US\$ 27 per family member for their food needs and US\$ 175 per household for their essential needs). That can only be withdrawn from any ATM.
- **Non-Assisted households:** registered Syrian refugees not receiving WFP assistance.

Households receiving multipurpose cash are validated and registered with UNHCR. They were selected based on a bottom-up approach with a list of those living below the survival minimum expenditure basket (SMEB¹). WFP targets households ranked below the SMEB threshold but also takes into account factors such as those living in security red zones, those receiving cash assistance from other agencies and non-profit organisations, and who do not live in proximity to ATMs.

Table 1: Figures per modality, July 2018.

	Food e-card	Cash for food e-card	MPC e-card	Total
	59,030	29,779	22,752	111,561
	344,086	166,701	133,758	644,545
	9,290,322	4,500,927	7,588,938	21,380,187

Methodology

A random sampling approach was used to select a representative sample of the four different population modalities referenced above. This report covers an analysis of data collected from a sample of 1,000 households in July 2018:

- 250 non-assisted households,
- 250 food e-card households,
- 250 cash for food e-card households, and
- 250 multipurpose cash for essential needs e-card households.

FSOM surveys are coupled with qualitative focus group discussions (FGDs) to triangulate quantitative findings.

Outcome Results for Assisted Syrian

WFP analyses basic needs and food security outcome indicators to monitor outcome results of WFP assistance. The below sections detail the main findings on the livelihood sources, livelihoods coping strategies, debts, expenditures, food consumption scores (FCS), reduced coping strategy index (rCSI) and other cross-cutting results (such as decision making in the households, satisfaction, etc.). Results are reported per assistance modality and are only comparable over time.

Livelihoods



The majority of Syrian refugees have to prioritise their limited income across a number of essential needs to survive, often at the expense of their wellbeing. Results show that across all assistance modalities, households continued to rely primarily on WFP assistance as their main source of income followed by unskilled labour. Alongside that assistance, households also employ a range of coping strategies to address their needs.

The livelihoods coping strategy index (LCSI) measures the strategies used by households to access food and cover their basic needs in times of stress. Between April and July 2018, the livelihood coping strategy index dropped for the multipurpose cash e-card from 4.7 to 3.9 and for the cash for food e-card from 5.2 to 5.0. The food e-card households instead increased their use of livelihoods coping strategies specifically increasing on emergency coping strategies. All assisted households borrowed less money and resorted less to selling productive assets.



Livelihood Coping Strategy Index (LCSI)

	JAN 2018	APR 2018	JUL 2018
Food e-card	5.0	4.9	5.5
Cash for food e-card	4.9	5.2	5.0
MPC e-card	5.3	4.7	3.9

Table 2: LCSI among different modalities.

¹Detailed explanation of the SMEB in the next section.

Debt remains a burden among all Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Almost all of those surveyed have accumulated debts over time (93 percent of the food e-card households, 90 percent of the cash for food households and 91 percent of the MPC households). The average amount of accumulated debt have increased for all the modalities compared to April 2018.

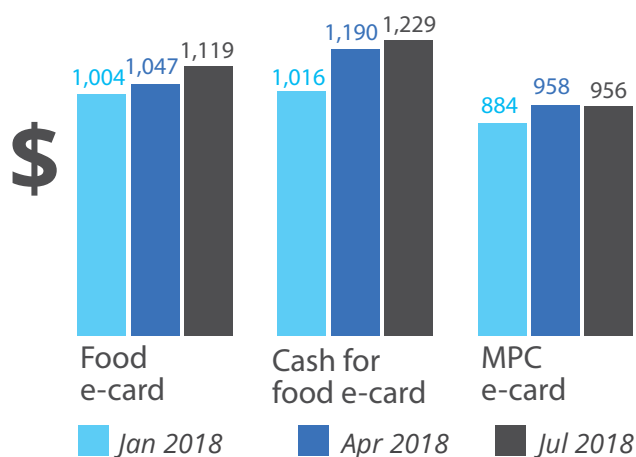


Figure 1: Average household debt in USD among different households.

Around half of the households reported accumulating debts on rent with an average amount of USD 484, with MPC households recording lowest debts on rent (food e-card USD 491, cash for food e-card USD 516 MPC USD 446).

Further results show that households continue to accumulate new debts (figure 2). On average households borrowed around USD 235 in the last 30 days.

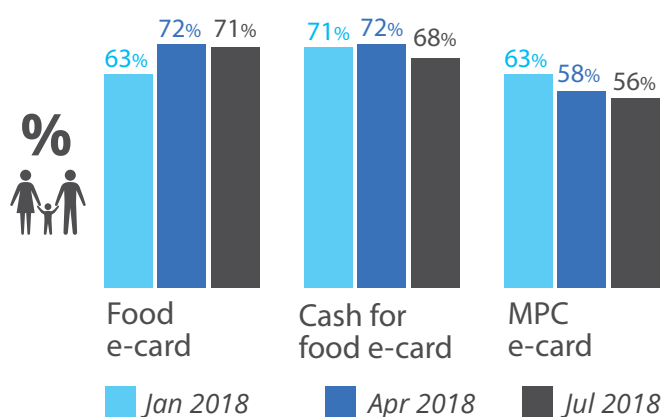


Figure 2: Percentage of households incurring new debts in the last 30 days per modality.

When households were asked to categorise what they are in debt for, results indicate that the debt categories reported by households are similar to the main expenditures of the households: food, rent and health related expenses.

While the debt categories are the same for the three modalities, the ranking in value differs per modality.

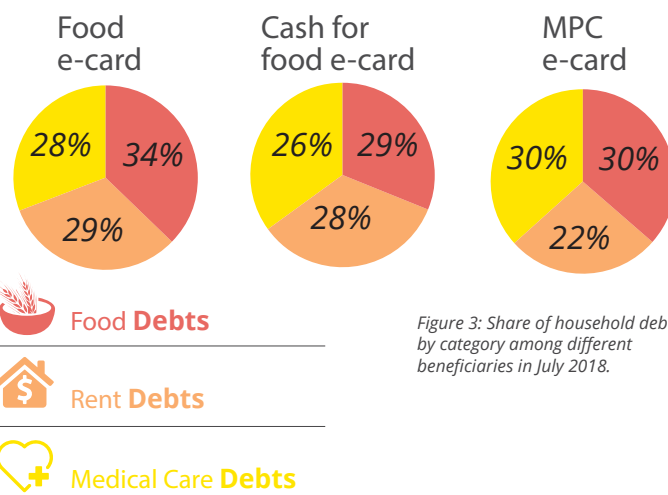


Figure 3: Share of household debt by category among different beneficiaries in July 2018.

Survival minimum expenditures

The SMEB is an indicator on the cost of food and non-food items needed by a refugee household of five members over a period of one month. It assumes a minimum caloric intake of the minimum expenditure basket (MEB) of 2,100 Kcal but with fewer nutrients, the same non-food items, rent expenses for an informal tented settlement, less consumption of water, and an element of debt repayment. The SMEB also does not include the cost of health and education. The value of the SMEB calculated for Syrian refugees in Lebanon is USD 87 per person per month to cover the cost of survival needs.

All households with expenditures below the SMEB are targeted by WFP to receive assistance through the three different modalities. Results in July show that 44 percent of food e-card beneficiaries, 57 percent of the cash for food e-card beneficiaries and 47 percent of the MPC e-card beneficiaries have expenditures above the SMEB.

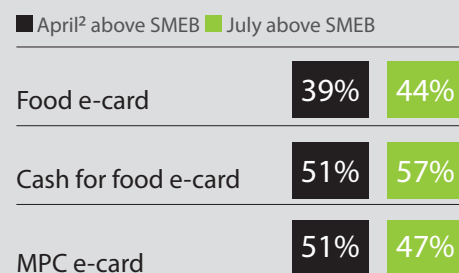


Figure 4: Percentage of beneficiaries with expenditures above the SMEB in April and July 2018 (per capita expenditures).

² The SMEB figures that appeared in April report are on the household level. The SMEB calculation was revised in July and is reported per capita.

Expenditure

Food was the largest expenditure across all modalities followed by rental fees and medical expenses. In July, food e-card and MPC households spent less of their total expenditures on food compared to April. The average total expenditures for July are: US\$ 610 for food e-card households, US\$ 699 for cash for food e-card households and US\$ 617 for MPC e-card households.

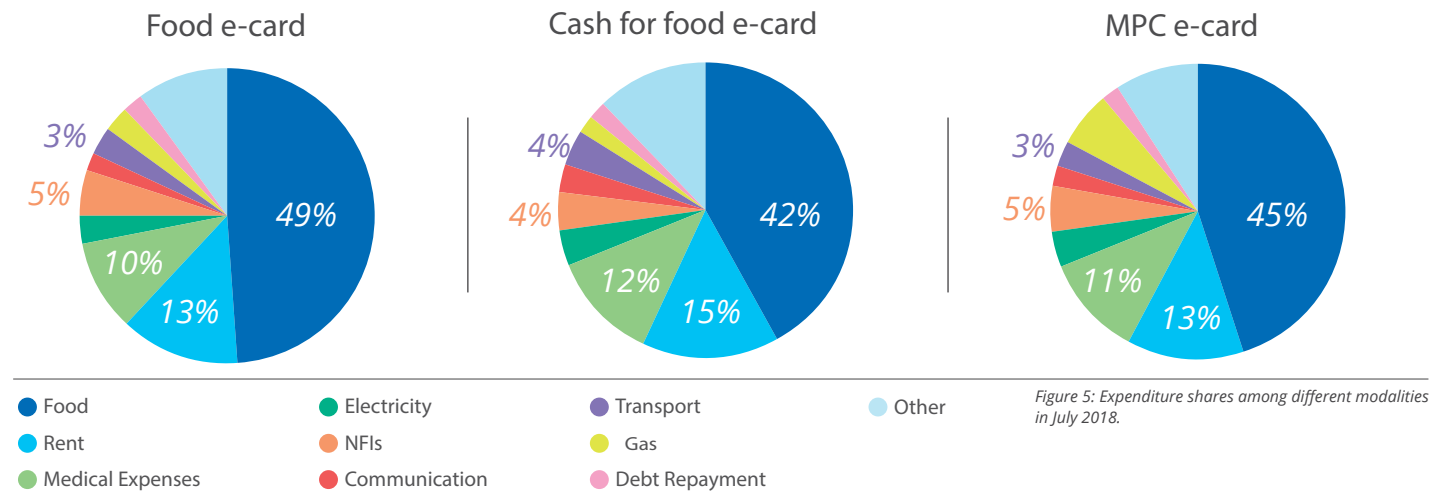


Figure 5: Expenditure shares among different modalities in July 2018.

Food Consumption Score

The percentage of assisted households with acceptable food consumption continues to increase across all the modalities. The prevalence of households with acceptable scores reached its highest for the food and MPC e-card households since the first FSOM in January 2016.

People receiving multipurpose cash with acceptable food consumption increased by 17 points (from 74 percent in April to 91 percent in July). Female headed households recorded a higher acceptable food consumption score as percentage compared to male headed households.

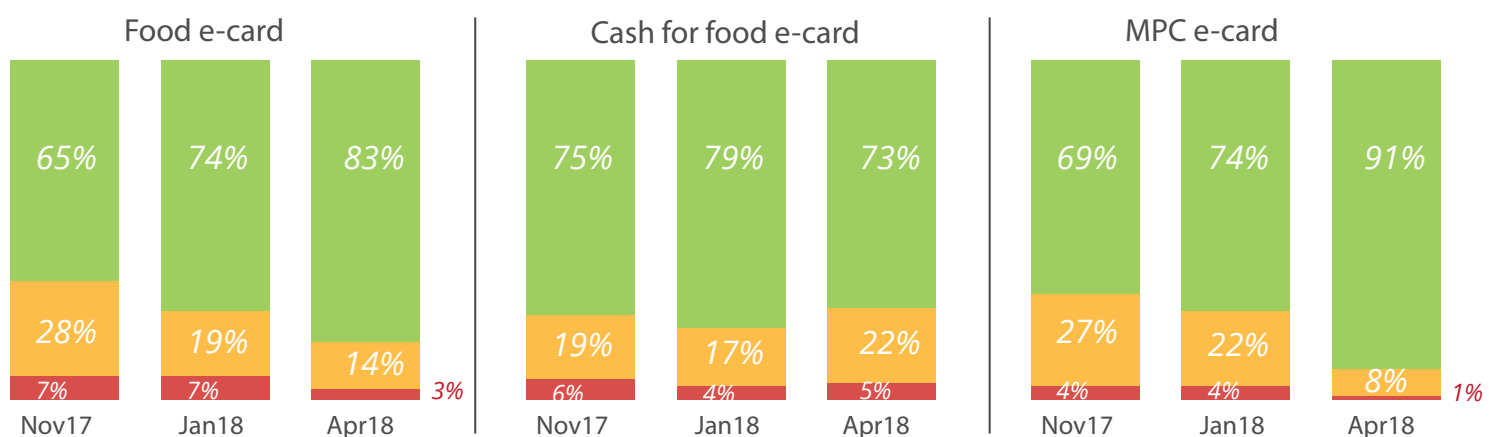
This increase was also complimented by an increase in household diet diversity from 5.8 to 6.1 for the food e-card households and from 6 to 6.3 for multipurpose cash e-card households. Dietary diversity score remained almost the same for the cash for food households at 5.9. Household consumed more vegetables, fruits and pulses.

Consequently, the percentage of assisted households with poor food consumption dropped to 3 percent for the food e-card modality and to 1 percent for the MPC e-card households, as for the cash for food e-card households it remained almost the same at 5 percent.

Food Consumption Groups

■ Poor ■ Borderline ■ Acceptable

Figure 6: Food Consumption Groups among different modalities.



Reduced Coping Strategy Index

The reduced coping strategy Index (rCSI) is a relative score to measure the frequency and severity of food-related negative coping mechanisms adopted by households to cover their needs; an increase in score suggests a deterioration. Results indicate a decrease on the rCSI across all modalities meaning that households adopted fewer coping strategies to cover food and other basic needs.

Multipurpose cash households showed a decreased rCSI in July while remaining stable for the cash for food households. This could be due to the fact that these households are able to prioitize some basic needs with cash to increase their food consumption.

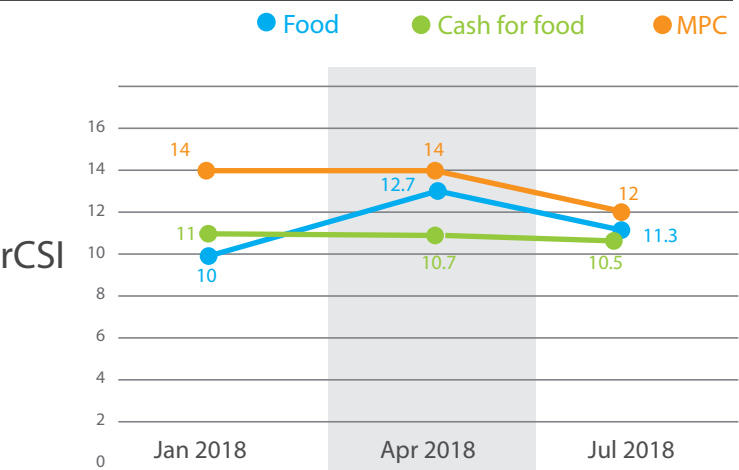


Figure 7: rCSI trends among different modalities.

Other Assistance Received

Seasonal educational, winterisation and multipurpose cash assistance were distributed by several agencies to vulnerable Syrian households between April and July. 35 percent of food e-card households, 6 percent of cash for food e-card households and 14 percent of MPC e-card households received other kind of assistance³ in July 2018.

Cross-cutting Theme & Satisfaction

Beneficiaries provided feedback rating their satisfaction with WFP assistance on a scale of 1-10. Overall satisfaction stayed almost the same and is stable around 8.0. Those receiving multipurpose cash assistance noted a higher satisfaction (8.37) compared to April.

Beneficiaries receiving food assistance did not report any safety issues in July for all modalities.

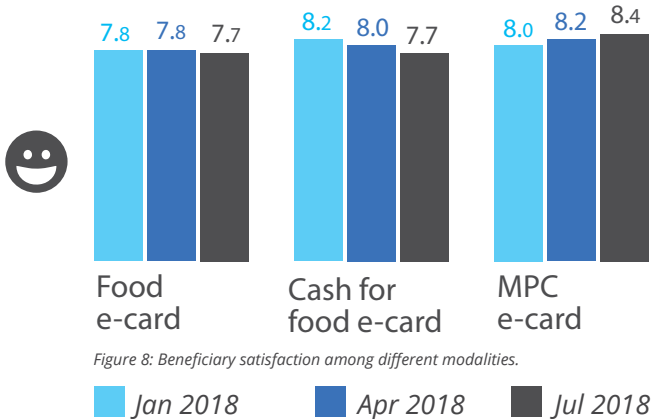





Figure 8: Beneficiary satisfaction among different modalities.

Decision Making




Households were asked about the person in charge of taking decisions regarding the use of cash assistance received. The majority of the households agreed that men and women decide together on how the assistance should be spent.

Food e-card

	Jan 2018	Apr 2018	Jul 2018
	16%	16%	7%
	42%	45%	40%
	41%	39%	53%

³ The household sampling for the cash for food group didn't include the UNHCR MCAP.

Cash for food e-card⁴

	Jan 2018	Apr 2018	Jul 2018
	19%	24%	14%
	28%	24%	25%
	51%	52%	61%

MPC e-card⁵




	Jan 2018	Apr 2018	Jul 2018
	17%	18%	17%
	31%	32%	31%
	43%	48%	52%

Figure 9: Decision making on use of assistance among different modalities.

Communication

WFP regularly communicates with beneficiaries and explains food and basic needs programming at distributions, validations, by SMS and through the hotline. Monthly text messages are sent to explain when and with how much e-cards are loaded. In July, 97 percent of food e-card households, 98 percent of cash for food households and 95 percent of multipurpose cash households were aware of their assistance type; a remarkable increase compared to April.

There was an increase in beneficiaries that are aware of how households are selected for WFP assistance (38 percent of food modality and 32 percent of cash for food modality and 34 percent of multipurpose cash modality). Around 86 percent of all households know how to contact WFP through the hotline. WFP programme is actively working on increasing capacity and having clear guidance on accountability to affected population. However, targeting criteria remains unclear to beneficiaries due to its complexity.

Outcome Results For Non-Assisted Displayed Syrians

The main source of income for the non-assisted Syrians is unskilled labour (47 percent) followed by credit or borrowing (35 percent).

In July, 92 percent of non-assisted households reported having accumulated debts (a decrease of 2 percent compared to April). Debts are still increasing as compared to previous months and reached US\$ 1,319 in July 2018. Non-assisted Syrian households have accumulated their debts mainly on food (48 percent) followed by rent (29 percent).

The percentage of households with acceptable food consumption remained stable compared to April, however the percentage of households with poor food consumption dropped to 4 percent in July. Non-assisted households have a better diet diversity score at 5.8 compared to April.

Only 4 percent on the non-assisted Syrians households received assistance from other institutions in July.

Food Consumption Groups

Non-assisted Syrians

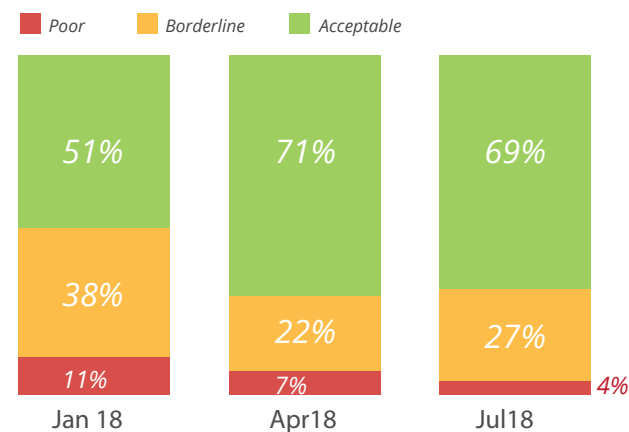


Figure 10: Food consumption groups of non-assisted Syrians.

⁴Some percentages do not add up to a 100 percent due to some households not responding to the decision making question.

⁵Some percentages do not add up to a 100 percent as the question addressed is regarding cash utilisation and some households redeemed full entitlement from shops.