



World Food Programme

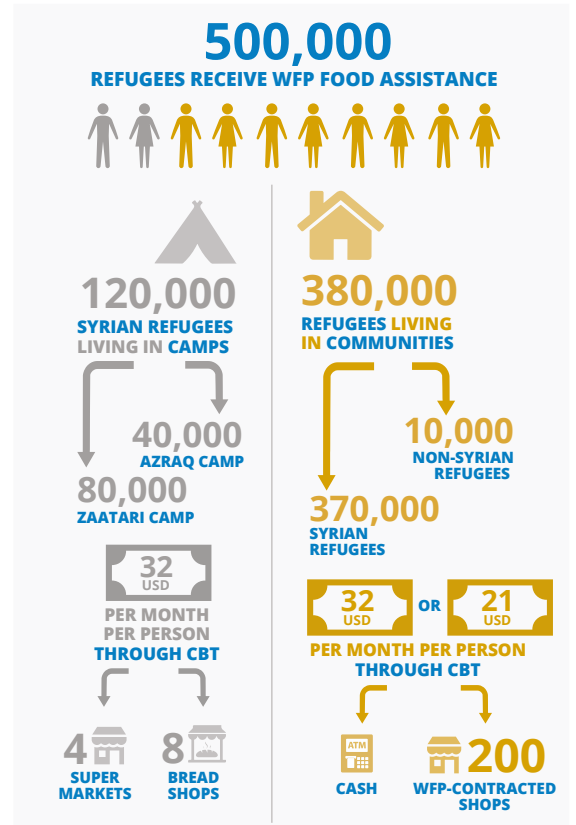
Overview of Refugee Food Security in Jordan COVID-19 Update

September 2020

In Jordan, WFP provides close to 500,000 refugees living in camps and communities with monthly food assistance in the form of cash-based transfers. The majority of refugees are from Syria, while the rest are from Iraq, Sudan, Yemen, Somalia, and 27 other countries.

This factsheet provides a snapshot of food security in Jordan based on routine data collection by WFP. The findings presented below draw from two recent studies including;

1. Food Security Outcome Monitoring (FSOM), conducted in September 2020 among a sample of 500 Syrian refugee households in Azraq and Zaatari camps following a longitudinal approach (i.e. same households interviewed in September 2019) to strengthen the robustness of results and comparability across time.
2. Remote food security monitoring (mVAM), conducted in July/August 2020 among a sample of 2,000 Syrian and Non-Syrian refugee households among the general refugee population in host communities. The mVAM followed a "rolling panel" approach where a percentage of respondents from the previous month are retained each month to strengthen the robustness of results.



Food Security of Refugees in Camps



Food insecurity disproportionately affects:

- Female-head households
- Households in Azraq camp

Food insecurity in numbers



State of food security

Increase in insufficient food consumption²



Refugees in camps no longer have better food consumption than refugees living in communities

Increase in adoption of emergency livelihood coping strategies



8% Of households send children, mostly boys, under the age of 18 to work

2% Of households marry off their children, mostly girls, under the age of 18

¹ As indicated by a poor and borderline Food Consumption Score (FCS) and/or harmful livelihood coping.
² As indicated by a poor and borderline Food Consumption Score (FCS).

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

Increase in adoption of consumption-based coping strategies

Adults limit their food intake for children to eat

3% in 2019

52% in 2020

Increase in debt accumulation to meet household needs

Households take on debt primarily to address food needs on top of WFP assistance³

2019

85% Of households have debt

368 JOD Average household debt

2020

82% Of households have debt

470 JOD Average household debt

Drivers of food insecurity

Compared to September 2019



Decreased income due to loss of informal labour opportunities



Limited household budget to address competing essential needs (food, secondary healthcare, debt repayment, personal hygiene items)



Increased food expenditure due to moderate price increases for some staple foods (such as bulgur and lentils)



Loss of supplemental assistance, including suspension of WFP school-feeding

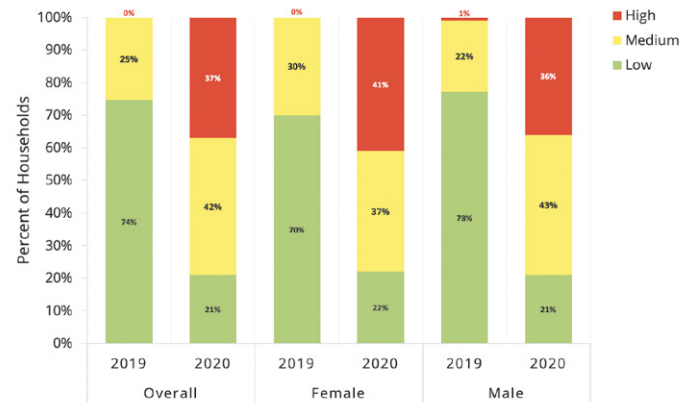
WFP

78% of households reported WFP assistance as their primary source of income

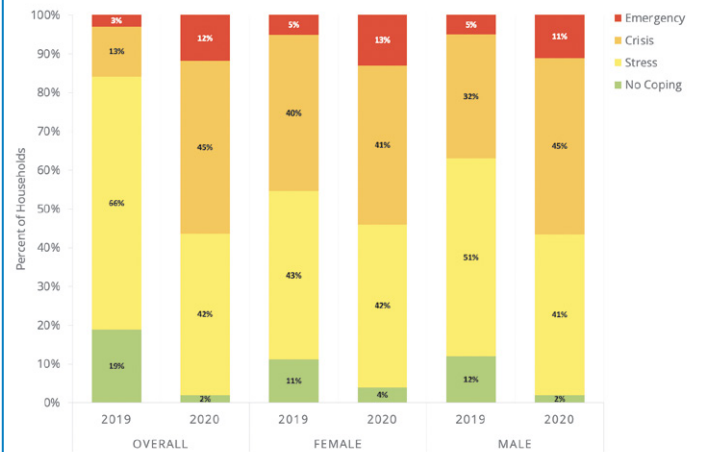


Decreased market access associated with movement restrictions (lock-down, curfew, and quarantine)

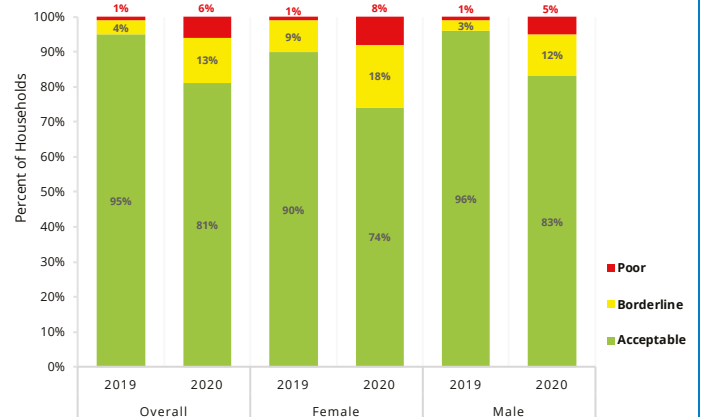
Consumption-Based Coping Strategy (rCSI) by Head of Household Gender and Year



Livelihoods-Based Coping Strategy (LCSI) by Head of Household Gender and Year



Food Consumption Score (FCS) by Head of Household Gender and Year



Conclusion

In the wake of the pandemic, refugee households residing in camps experienced a **deterioration in their food security**. Refugees living in Azraq camp have been particularly affected.

In both camps, **female-headed households showed disproportionately high losses in food consumption** as they have less access to informal labour opportunities and loans than their male counterparts.

Widespread **loss of income and assistance** as a result of COVID-19 has increased the financial burden of households. For instance, school closure resulted in the suspension of school meals, thus forcing households to **adopt harmful coping strategies to meet basic needs**.

Qualitative data suggests that households are **forced to monetise part of their WFP entitlement to meet essential needs other than food** and this comes at the expense of household food security.

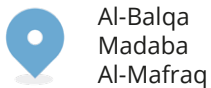
Continued movement restrictions and quarantine / isolation measures in the camps and communities will likely **push more refugee households into debt and food insecurity**.

³ In September 2020, household food expenditure was on average JOD 9 higher per person than the assistance they received from WFP, financed primarily through debt.



Food Security of Refugees in Host Communities

Food insecurity disproportionately affects:



Al-Balqa
Madaba
Al-Mafraq



Female-headed households
Small households (1-3 members)

Food insecurity in numbers

21%

of households are food insecure⁴

131,613 individuals

67%

of households are vulnerable to food insecurity

417,293 individuals

State of food security

Gradual deterioration in food consumption

Households show insufficient food consumption⁵

14% Apr 2018⁶

19% Apr 2020⁷

20% Aug 2020

Increase in adoption of harmful livelihood coping strategies

Households resort to at least one emergency livelihood coping strategy to meet essential needs

21% Apr 2020

34% Aug 2020

14% of households send children, mostly boys, under the age of 18 to work

3% of households marry off children, mostly girls, under the age of 18

Increase in adoption of consumption-based coping strategies

59% Aug 2020

of household adults limit their food intake for children to eat compared to **30%** in 2018

41% Aug 2020

of households borrow food or rely on help or friends

55% Aug 2020

of households limit the number of meals which now averages 2 per day

Drivers of food insecurity



Decreased income due to loss of informal labour opportunities



Limited household budget to address competing pressing needs (food, healthcare, rent, utilities⁸)



Increased food expenditure due to moderate price increases for some food items, particularly in the early stages of COVID-19 with food inflation skyrocketing to 5.2% in March 2020



Increased expenditure on some non-food items (e.g. hygiene items)



Suspension of WFP school-feeding



Decreased market access associated with forced movement restrictions and lack of financial resources (for transportation and purchase of groceries)

Conclusion

While the impact of COVID-19 on food security was most pronounced in the camps, **refugees in host communities remain more food insecure**, as shown by more frequent adoption of livelihood coping strategies to address essential needs that are partially provided free of charge in the camps such as shelter, utilities, basic healthcare and education.

WFP's Food Security Index in July/ August 2020 indicates that **only 12% of households are food secure**.

As before the pandemic, **female-headed households are more prone to food insecurity** as they have limited access to informal labour opportunities and loans, and thus apply more severe coping strategies and show lower food consumption.

Loss of income in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic is the main driver behind deteriorating food security among refugee households in host communities⁹.

WFP food assistance serves as a lifeline for many households. However, on average households assisted by WFP still face a food expenditure gap of JOD 4 to 12 per person; depending on the value of the WFP

⁴As indicated by WFP's Consolidated Approach to Reporting Indicators of Food Security (CARI)/Food Security Index (FSI).

⁵As indicated by a poor and borderline Food Consumption Score (FCS). Differences in sampling approaches for the three assessments (CFSVA, RNA, mVAM) do not allow for rigorous trend analysis.

⁶WFP Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment (CFSVA), 2018.

⁷Multi-sectoral Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA), conducted with UNHCR and UNICEF.

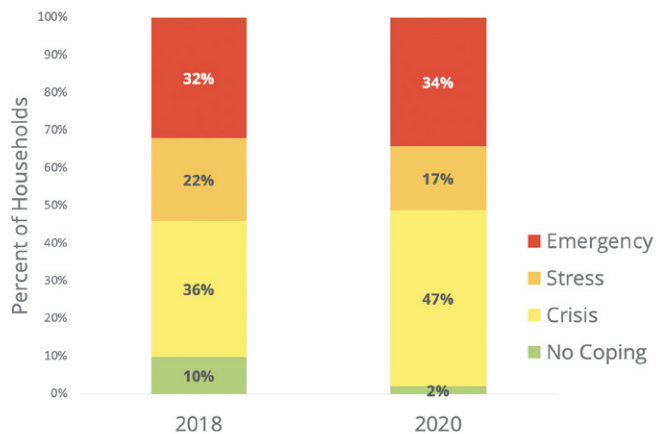
⁸WFP COVID-19 Beneficiary Contact Monitoring (BCM), April-June 2020.

⁹Ibid.

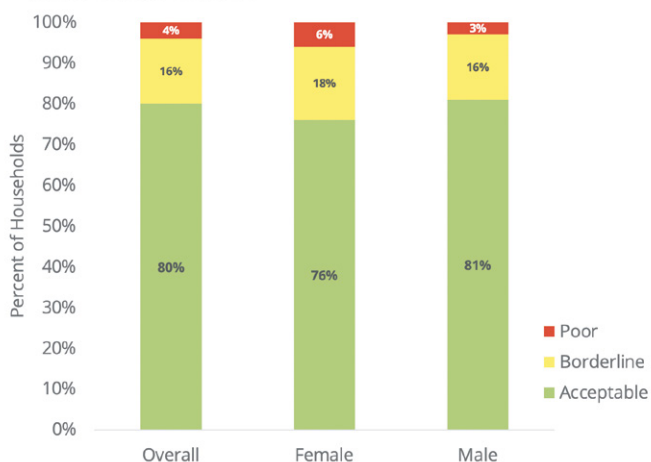
assistance received. Previously, households filled this gap by relying on their own resources (e.g. informal income) and assistance (including WFP's school-feeding programme). **Now, households are forced to adopt harmful coping strategies and take out loans.** Anecdotal data suggests that refugees sometimes use part of the WFP entitlement to meet essential needs other than food, and this comes at the expense of household food security.

COVID-19 has had a particularly harmful impact on children as schools and school meals have been suspended since March. There have been increased incidents of child labour and early marriage.

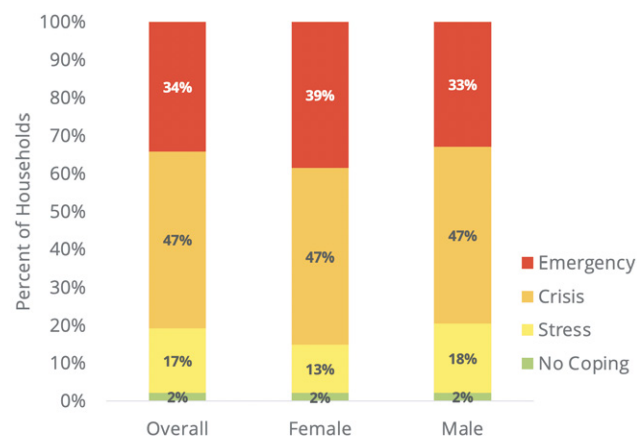
Livelihoods-Based Coping Strategy (LCSI) by Year



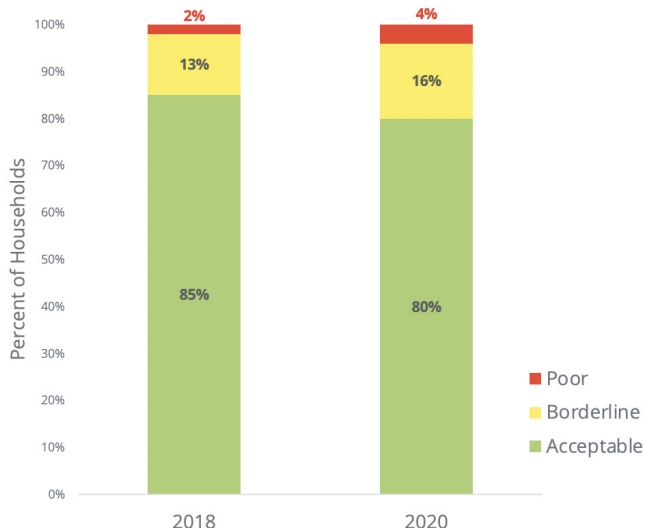
Food Consumption Score (FCS) by Head of Household Gender



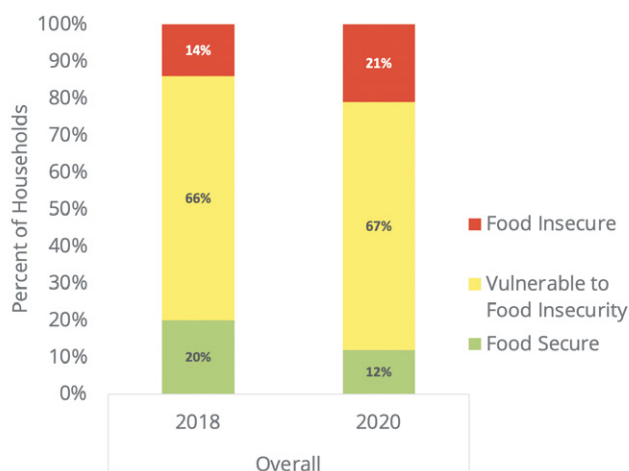
Livelihoods-Based Coping Strategy (LCSI) by Head of Household Gender



Food Consumption Score (FCS) by Year






Food Security Index (FSI) by Year



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