



World Food Programme

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RESEARCH, ANALYSIS & MONITORING (RAM) UNIT

Take Home Ration Post Distribution Monitoring Report

October 2021

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KEY MESSAGES

- Food Consumption levels among THR recipient households are generally high and no significant differences in Food Consumption Scores (FCS) were noticed between provinces, household sizes, and IDPoor groups.
- While a majority of households show medium (59.4%) and high (8.10%) Dietary Diversity (DD), a large share (32%) consumes a diet consisting of less than four food groups, mainly rice, oil, vegetables and fish, resulting in low DD.
- While overall protein consumption was lower amongst THR households than the general population, only 0.3% of THR households stated that they've never consumed protein rich food in contrast to 20% of the general population, possibly pointing to the positive short-term effects of the THR on household protein intake (through Canned Fish in the ration basket).
- Since fresh food isn't provided under the THR, dietary diversity and intake of important micro-nutrients like Vitamin A and Hem-Iron is low amongst the THR beneficiaries compared to the general population.
- More than 70.2 % of respondent households indicated that they spent more than 65% of their monthly budget on food, indicating widespread economic vulnerability of households.
- Female headed-households, on average, consumed more vegetables, and oils than male headed-households but still reported lower levels of dietary diversity.

THR OVERVIEW

Implemented by WFP-MoEYS in response to COVID-19 School closures.

01

Five Rounds

of Take-home rations (THR) have been conducted to provide safety nets for the poorest families participating in school feeding in target provinces to help reduce negative coping strategies, and help children stay engaged in their education. Three rounds were conducted in 2020, and two in 2021, reaching over 80,000 households holding government equity cards.

02

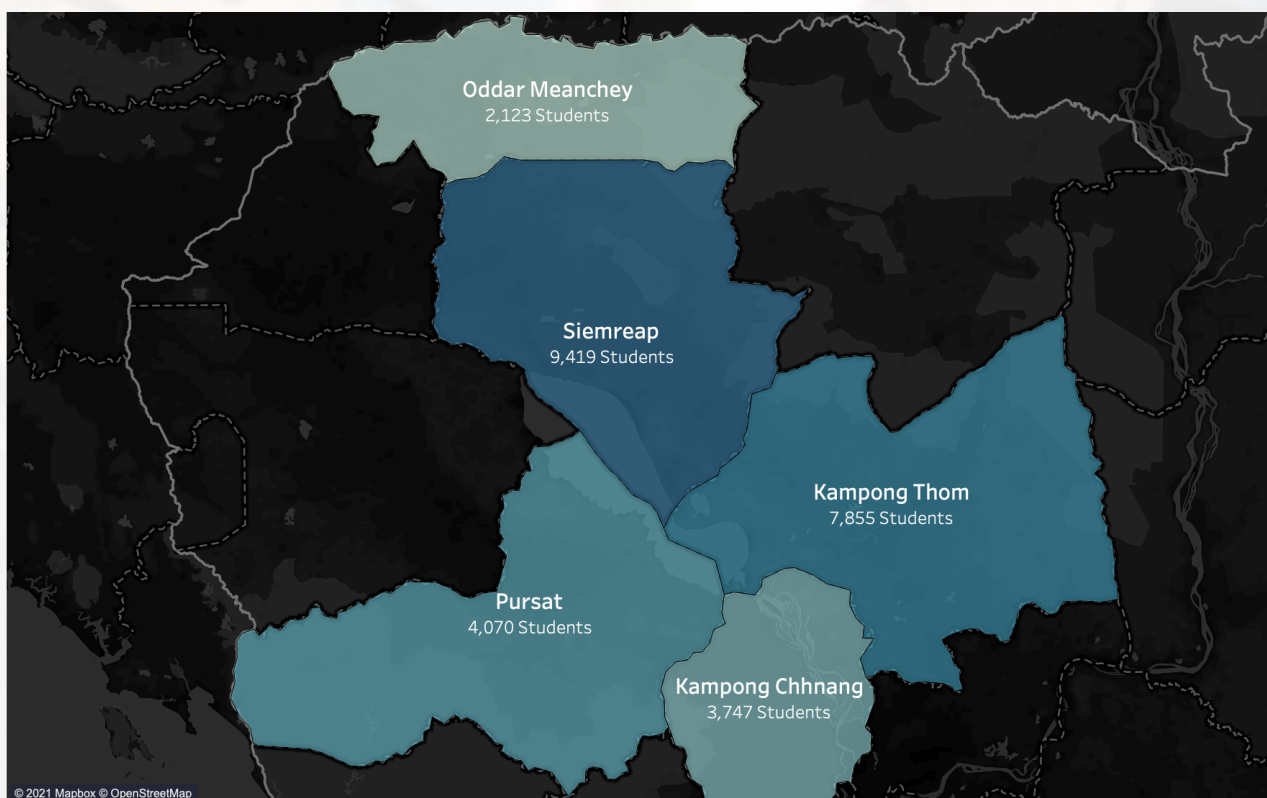
The July round

was conducted between 28 June - 2 July 2021 and covered 908 schools from the WFP School Feeding Programme (SFP). The distribution was done keeping rigorous COVID-safety checks in place.

03

28,837 households

were reached, including 27,214 student households and 1,623 school cooks (82% women) with a total of 616.376 MT rice, 42.466 MT oil, and 35.405 MT Canned Fish (CFI) distributed. The government in parallel reached an additional 11,500 households with THR as part of the national school feeding programme.

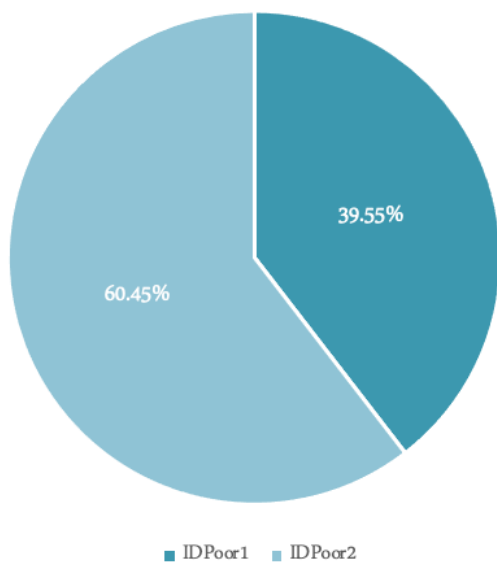


METHODOLOGY

A sample of 400 households

were randomly selected and weighted by province with 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error using the OpenEpi software. The PDM was conducted two weeks after the food distribution using remote monitoring (phone interview).

IDPoor status of recipient households



79.3%



Households interviewed were female

25.7%



reported they had female household heads

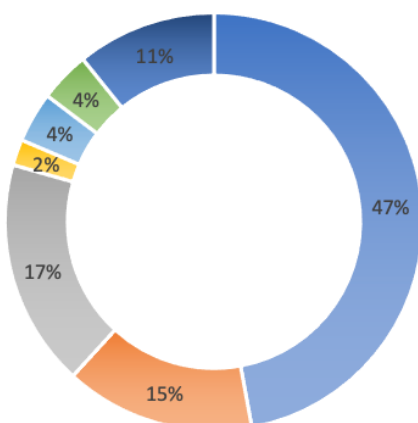
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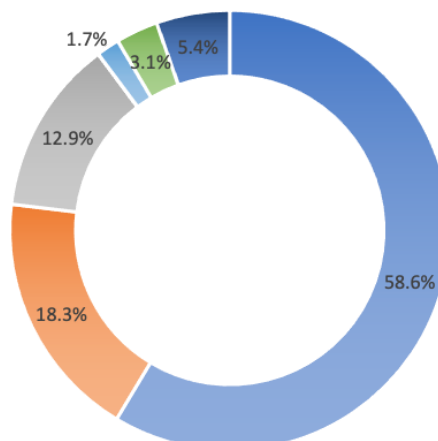
was the average household size

Main livelihood income activity of the surveyed households

Female Headed-HH



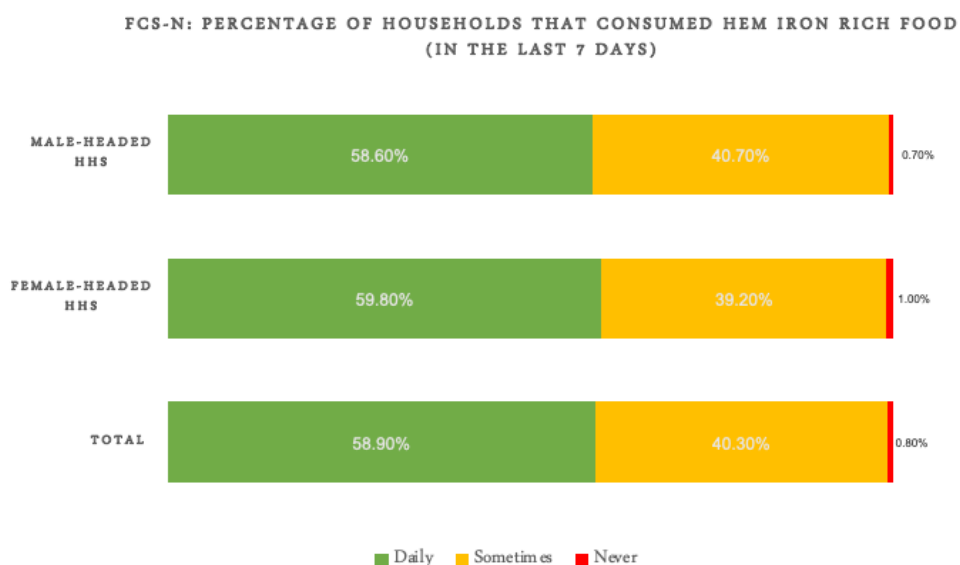
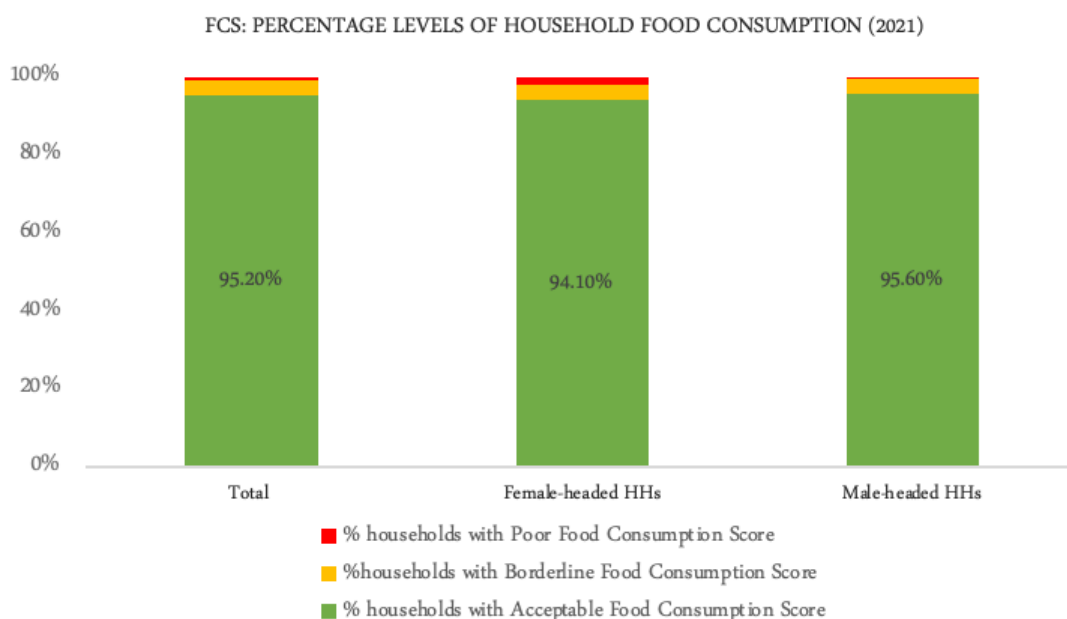
Male-headed HH



- Farming Activities
- Non-agricultural labour (daily wage)
- Agricultural labour (daily wage)
- Government officer
- Private sector employee/worker (salary)
- Depend on other (no job)
- Other: vendor/cook/broom marker

FOOD CONSUMPTION

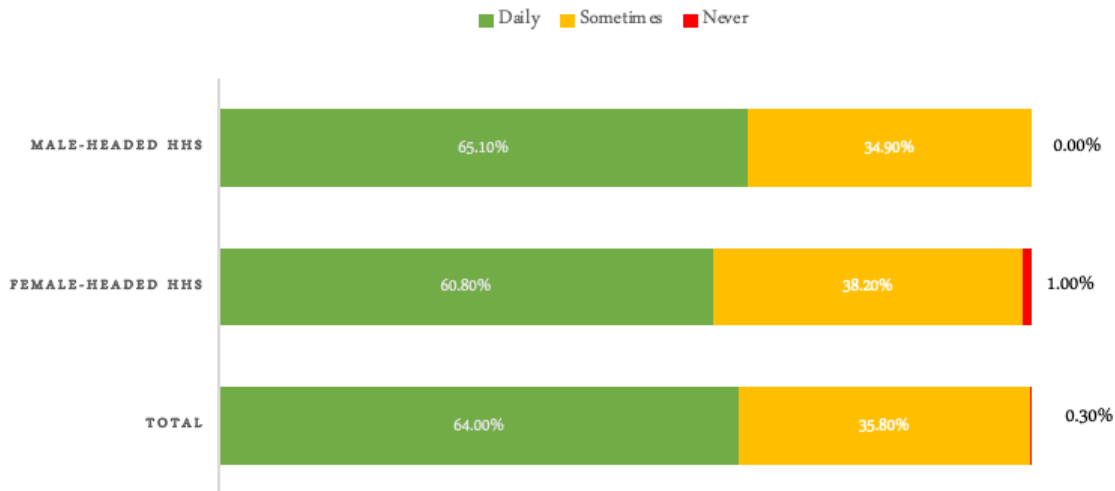
- **95.20%** HHs reported acceptable Food Consumption Scores (FCS).
- **2%** of the Female headed-HHs reported Poor Food Consumption compared to **0.3%** for Male headed-HHs, but the difference was not significant.
- No significant FCS differences were noticed between beneficiary provinces. ID Poor groups and HH Size do not seem to have a significant impact on FCS level.



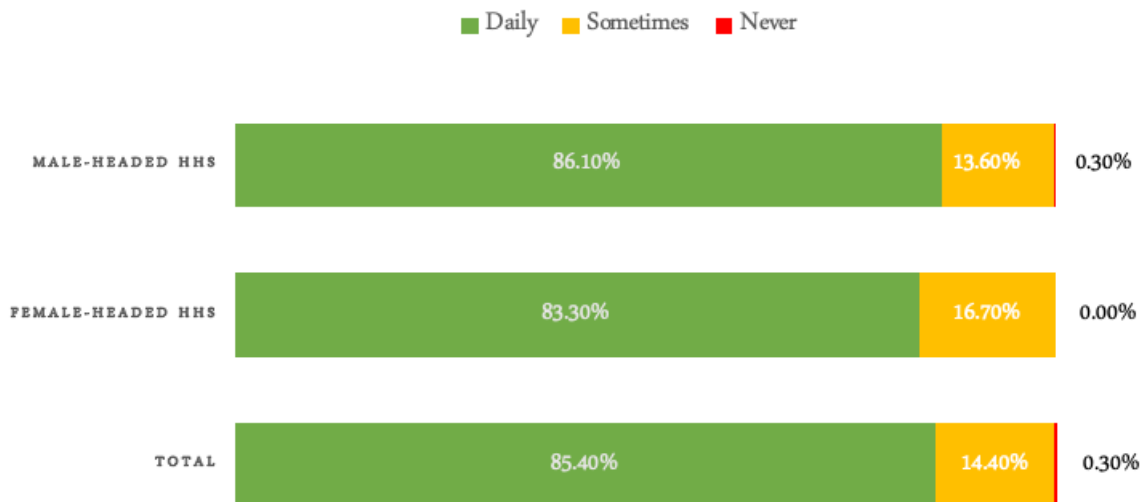
Note: FCS is a measure of dietary diversity, food frequency and the relative nutritional importance of the food consumed by a household.

FOOD CONSUMPTION

FCS-N: PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS THAT CONSUMED VITAMIN A RICH FOOD (IN THE LAST 7 DAYS)



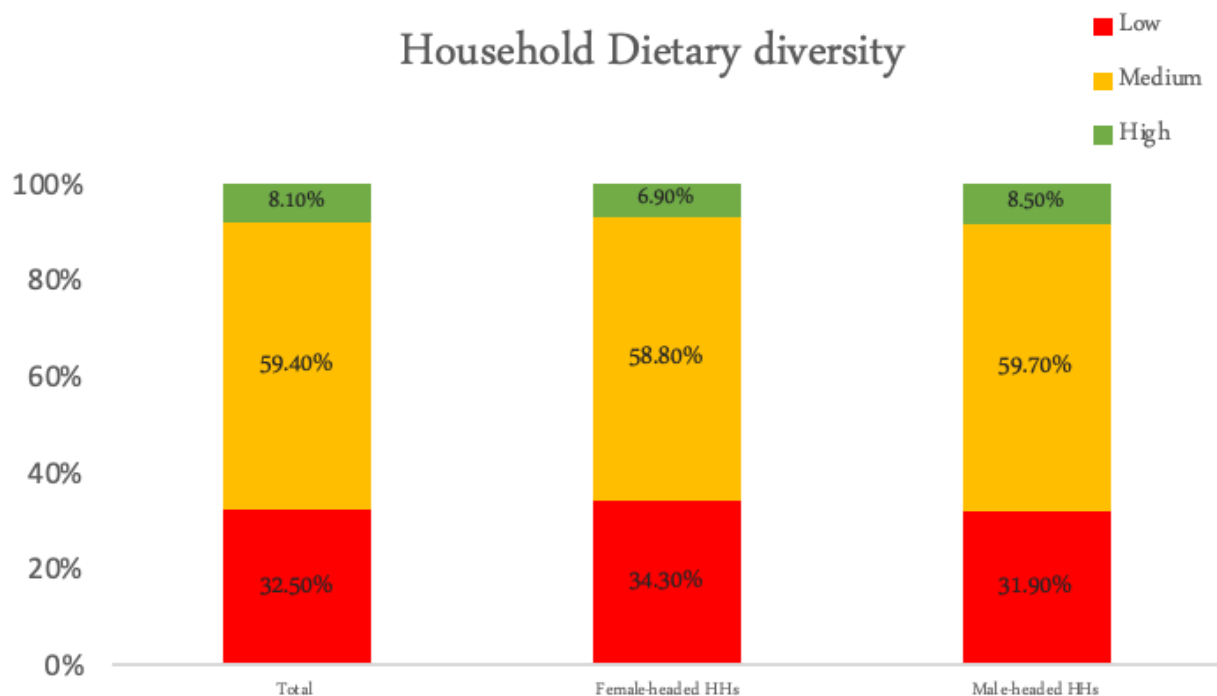
FCS-N: PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS THAT CONSUMED PROTEIN RICH FOOD (IN THE LAST 7 DAYS)



- A **majority** of the recipient households reported that they consume important micro [64% Vitamin A & 58.9% Hem-Iron] and macro-nutrient [85.4% Proteins] rich food regularly.
- Female-headed households consistently recorded **lower average levels** of daily Vitamin and Protein consumption than male-headed households

DIETARY DIVERSITY (DD)

- Only **8.10%** households were categorised as having high dietary diversity (DD) i.e. regularly consuming more than 6 food groups, **59.40%** with medium DD (4-6 food groups), and **32%** with low DD (less than 4 food groups).
- On average DD was slightly lower for female-headed HHs as compared to Male-headed HHs.



02

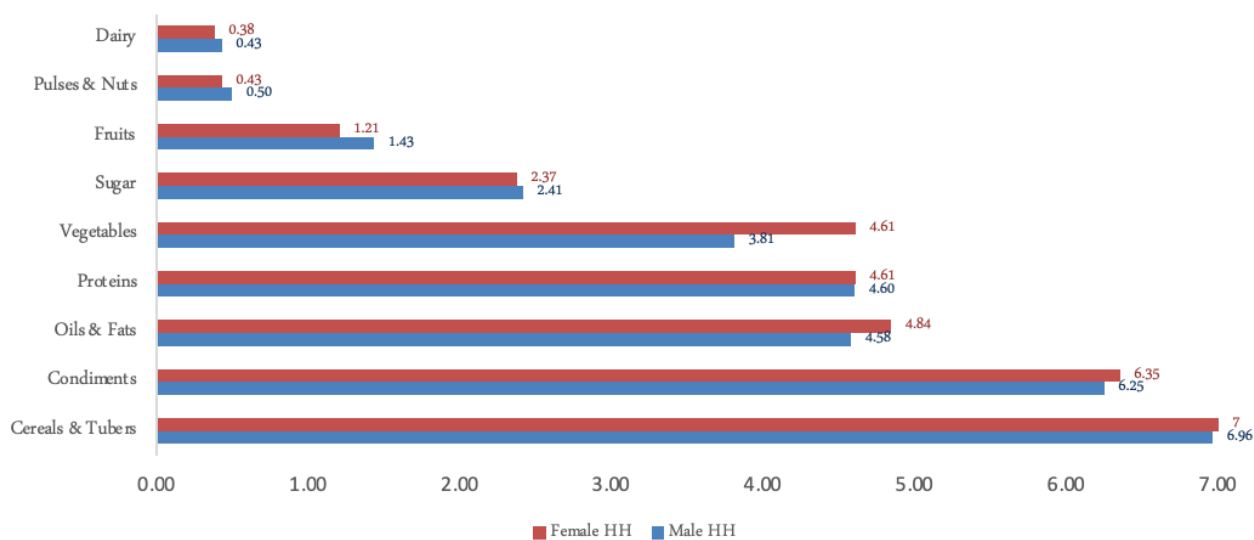
MEAN DIETARY DIVERSITY IN SCHOOL CHILDREN

is **4.3** in comparison to the 5.0 THR population average. Higher mean dietary diversity is noticed amongst schools girls (4.4) than school boys (4.3) in the THR households. On average, both groups consumed about 4 food groups.

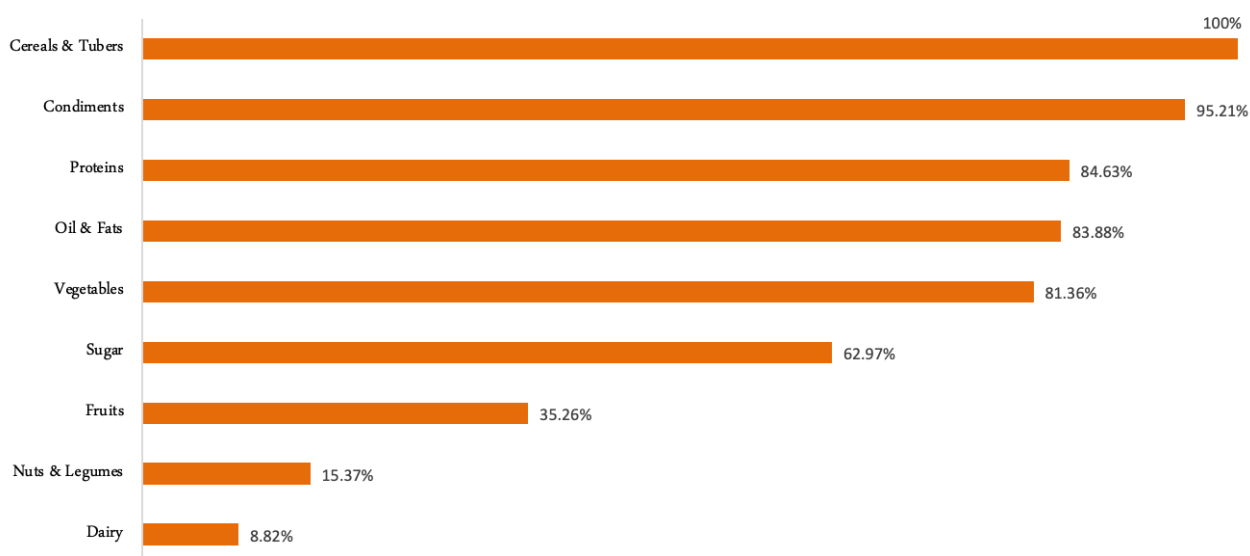
DIETARY DIVERSITY

- Female HH, on average, **consumed more** vegetables, and oils than male HHs.
- THR households consumed some items **more frequently** than the general population that reported the following figures: Cereals (6.6) and Sugar (2.0). The first could be explained by the presence of rice in the ration provided.
- On the other hand, vegetables (6.2), proteins (6.7), fruits (2.8), and dairy (1.2) rich foods were consumed at a **lower frequency** than in the general population [Comparison THR figures below].

days consumed per week by food consumption group (household)



Food Group Consumption (in children)



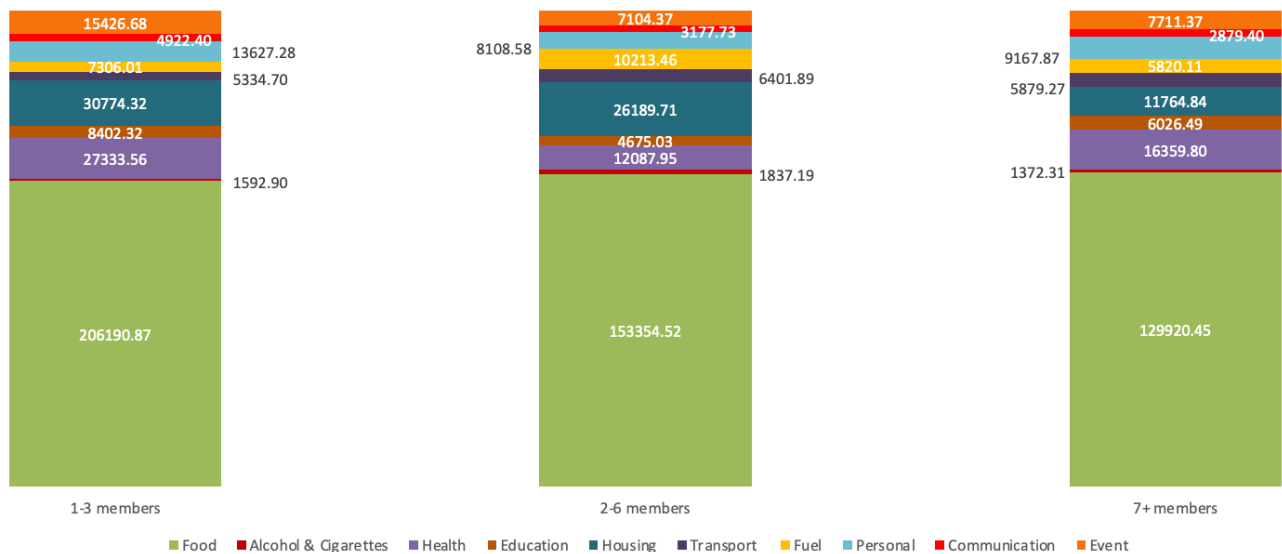
Calculated as the percentage of children that consumed a certain food group in the last 24 hours.

HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE

01 FOOD EXPENDITURE SHARE

On average, **70.20%** respondents indicated that they spend above 65% of their monthly expenditure on food.

PER CAPITA MONTHLY EXPENDITURE BY HOUSEHOLD SIZE (RIEL)



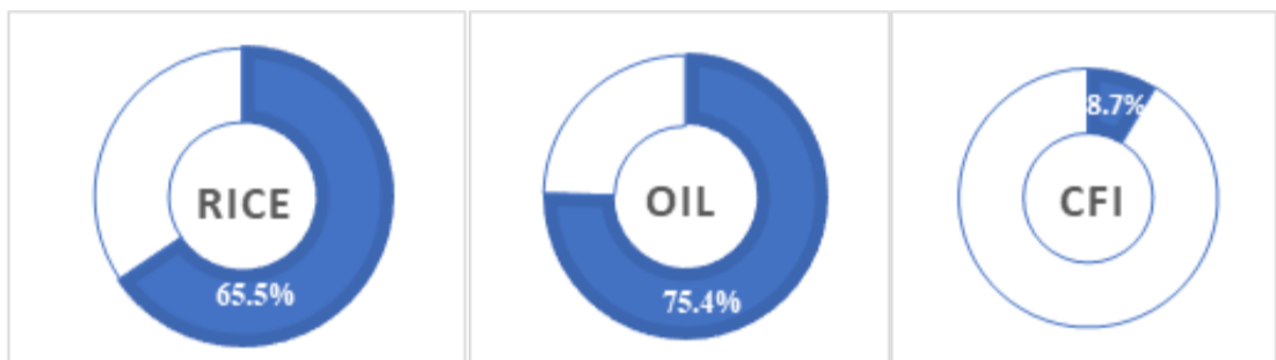
- 📌 Food, Housing and Health are the three categories individuals spent most of their money on every month. This is followed by expenditure on fuels and personal care (including toiletries, clothes, footwear, and furnishings).
- 📌 As expected, per capita expenditure in both categories decreased with increasing household sizes due to economies of scale.
- 📌 Event expenditures (classified as expenses on recreation, weddings, funerals rituals, parties, pagoda and other items unaccounted for in the questionnaire) made up a large portion of the monthly expenditure with the average per-capita monthly expenditure for individuals belonging to households with 1-3 members being 15426.68 riels, those from HHs with 4-7 people spending 7104.37 riels, and those with 7+ family members spending 7711.37 riels.

ECONOMIC CAPACITY TO MEET ESSENTIAL NEEDS (ECMEN)

79.17% of the Households in the study

indicated that their monthly expenditure was **below** the per-capita Minimum Expenditure Basket MEB (\$79.83 or 323,614 riels)* i.e. they are unable to meet their essential needs through their own economic capacity.

FOOD ASSISTANCE



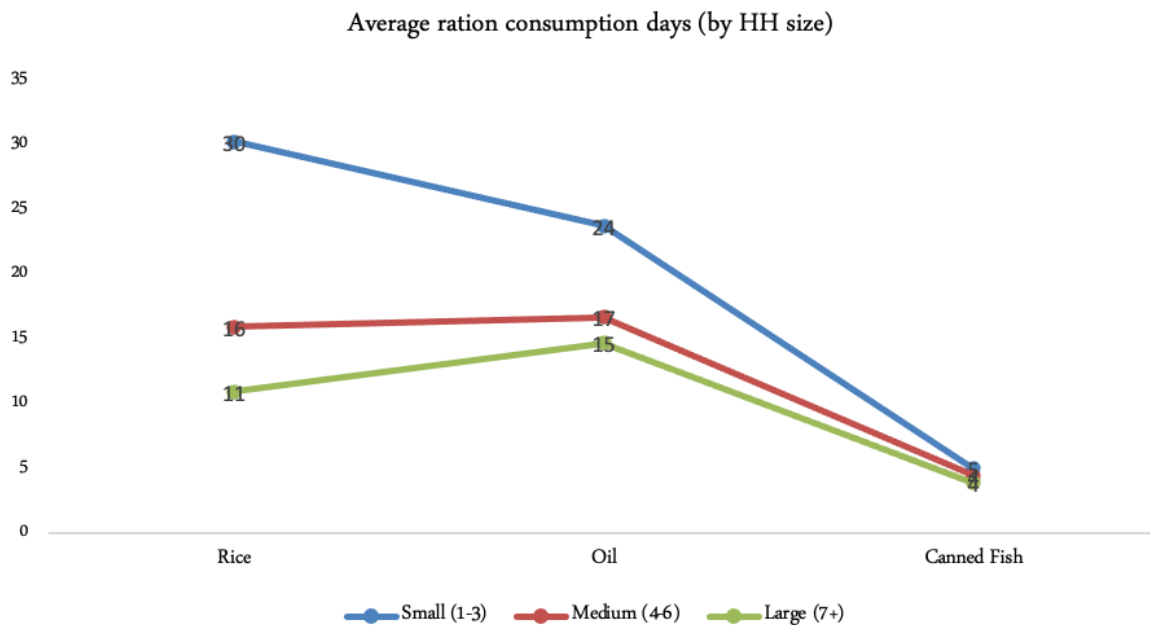
% of respondents who indicated that WFP provided food was the main food source in the last 7 days.

On average, the food lasted for

16 days for the provided rice, **17** days for vegetable oil and **4** days for canned fish (CFI). 88.4% Households also reported that they received assistance from other sources including government COVID cash transfer programmes, private sectors, and NGOs.

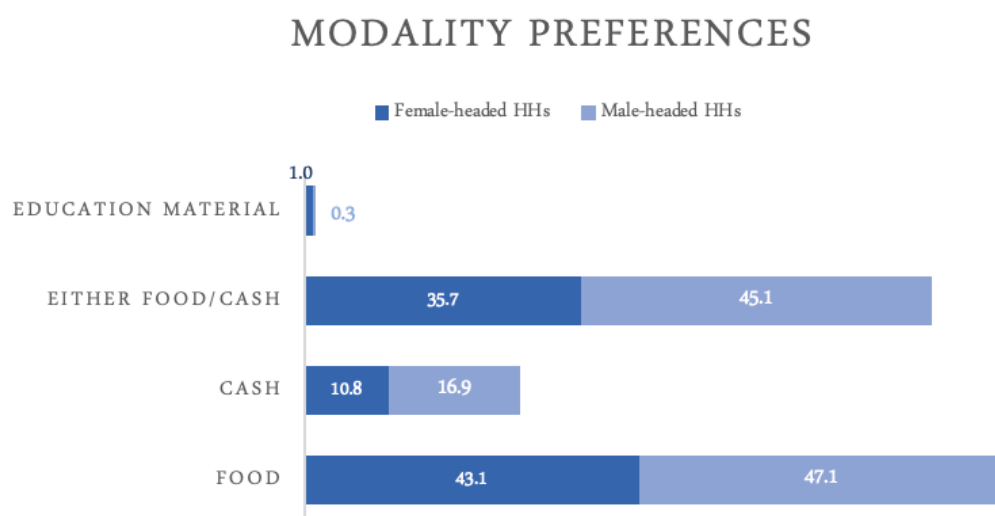
**Technical report, Estimating Minimum Expenditure Baskets and Expenditure Gaps in Cambodia, World Food Programme (WFP) Cambodia, June 2020.*

The THR distribution provided only one food ration* to the poor household of school children and cooks. Therefore, the average number of consumption days is likely dependent on the number of family members (as can be observed in the figure below).



MODALITY PREFERENCES

The largest percentage of HHs stated they prefer food support, while some also mentioned they prefer cash (10.8% female-headed & 16.9% male-headed). Few HHs even indicated they wanted educational material (1% female-headed HHs and 0.3% male-headed HHs).



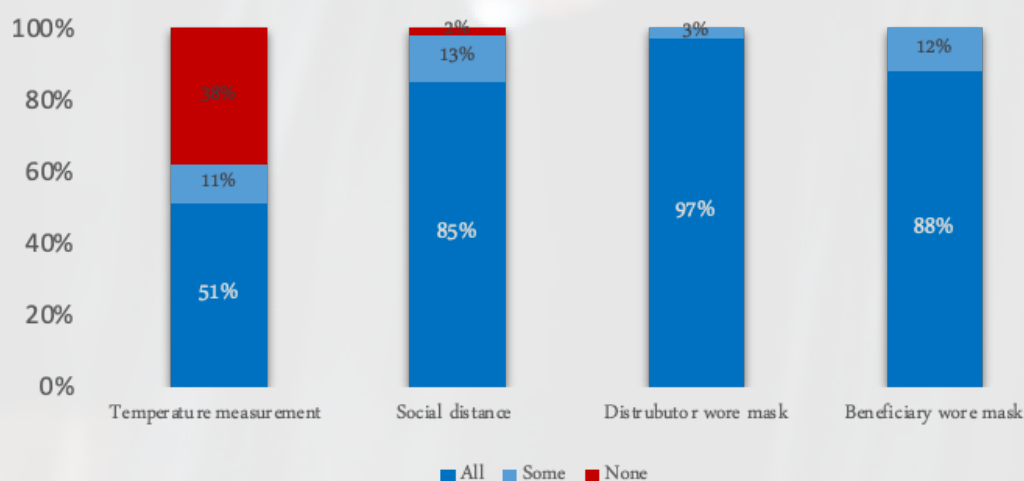
*HHs with three children were exceptionally given 2 rations, there are incidentally no such cases in the sample.

CROSS-CUTTING INDICATORS

Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)

Key Indicator	Variable	Data / Outcome
Protection	Safety While Travelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No safety problems reported. No one reported being asked for service fees or commissions for the rations.
Are HHs provided with essential activity information?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key message distribution Awareness of program ration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 97% reported awareness of entitlement. 99% school teachers or directors delivered key distribution messages.
Feedback & support mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaints Monitoring Resolution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 complaints received during field monitoring (all resolved on-spot). No complaints or feedback on 4th THR from Verboice system.
Gender	Household Decision Making on food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 69% decisions made by women, 27% decisions made jointly, 3% were mainly made by men.

Compliance with COVID-19 safety protocol



COMPARITIVE STATISTICS

A general overview on how the surveyed Households compare to the general population.*

01 Food Consumption Scores (FCS)

- Households receiving THR rations reported similar levels of acceptable food consumption (95.2%) as Households in the general population (95%).

02 Macro and Micro-nutrients

- Households in the general population reported higher levels of Vitamin A (86.10%) and Hem Iron (73.6%) intake than households in the THR (64% and 59%).
- Conversely, only 0.3% households receiving THR rations stated they have not consumed proteins in the past week as opposed to 20% of the general population, pointing to the positive effects of the THR on household macronutrient intake.

03 Dietary Diversity Scores (DD)

Only 8.10% THR households reported high Dietary Diversity scores(6+ food groups consumed) as opposed to 15.6% of the general population. 32.5% THR Households reported low DDs compared to 21.2% for the general population. The prevalence of low DDs amongst THR households is also high in comparison to trends recorded across 2020 and early 2021.

*Owing to a lack of baseline data, we use data from the 7th wave socio-impact assessment as proxy for the general population.

Note, only 28% of surveyed households in this database have IDPoor Status.

CONCLUSION

In the absence of on-site school-feeding due to school closures associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, the take-home rations (THR) provided by WFP proved effective in maintaining a minimum food consumption and dietary diversity among poor households and their children.* While not fully substituting nutritious school meals provided through on-site feeding at schools, the THR together with government cash assistance have likely prevented widespread adoption of negative coping strategies by recipient households, such as children dropping out of online education (*ADB, UNICEF & WFP, 2021, p 65-66*), child marriage and child labour; thus providing an effective mechanism for promoting remote learning and continuous engagement with school-children and their parents. For instance, a high-frequency survey by ADB, UNICEF and WFP on the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 in Cambodia found that between March and July 2021 there was a gradual increase in the proportion of parents spending at least one hour per day supporting their children's learning (*ADB, UNICEF & WFP, 2021*).

While schools are poised to re-open in November 2021, WFP stands ready to provide additional THR in the event of renewed prolonged lockdowns and will revise the design of the ration to maximise positive effects on children's diets.** (*WFP & OPM, 2021*).

*This is in line with the findings of a regional research conducted by WFP and OPM in 2021 on school-feeding amidst the COVID-19 pandemic which found positive effects of THR on household food security across the region (*WFP & OPM, 2021*).

**The 2021 regional research study by WFP and OPM highlights that the THR in Cambodia did not last the anticipated period of time due to intra-household sharing of rations provided (*WFP & OPM, 2021*).

REFERENCES

WFP & OPM. *"School feeding amidst a pandemic: Preparing for the new normal in Asia and the Pacific."* 2021.

ADB, UNICEF & WFP. *"COVID-19 Socio-Economic Impact Assessment report: Wave 7."* 2021.

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