WFP

The Philippines

FOOD SECURITY MONITORING

OCTOBER 2022

Remote Household Food Security Survey Brief

This brief was developed by WFP in November 2022, based on remote household food security surveys conducted in October 2022.

The Philippines IN NUMBERS

1 out of 10 households are currently food insecure

11%
OF PEOPLE ARE FOOD INSECURE (rCARI)[1]

Most households are relying on coping strategies to buy food

74%
RESORTING TO COPING STRATEGIES
**Livelihood-based coping strategies*

- **57%** are borrowing money for food
- **46%** are purchasing food on credit
- **38%** are spending their savings

Food security varies across different sectors and regions of the country

24% of agricultural households are food insecure, compared with 9 percent of non-agricultural households.

34% of households in BARMM are food insecure, compared with 10 percent of households in other regions.

1Remote Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators of Food Insecurity (CARI).

In Brief

One out of ten households in the Philippines are food-insecure.[1] Although food insecurity is still at a low rate, headline inflation has steadily increased in the past year (hitting a fourteen-year high of 7.7 percent in October) and the ability of households to buy food is developing into a key concern.

The poorest regions have been more affected by food insecurity. The three most food insecure regions (BARMM, Region VIII, and XII) are among the seven poorest regions in the Philippines. The Bangsamoro Administrative Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), which is the poorest region in the country, is the only area that recorded food insecurity levels above 30 percent.

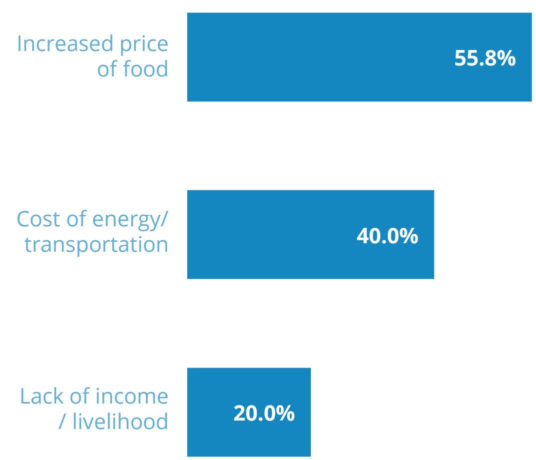
Households that rely on agricultural livelihoods are also significantly more food insecure. About a quarter of agricultural households are food insecure, compared to only 9 percent for non-agricultural households. As more agricultural households reported reduced incomes, they are more likely to resort to coping strategies to address food insecurity.

Seven out of ten households are using livelihood coping strategies to address food insecurity issues. Households, on average, said that they used two coping strategies in the past month. The most common strategies households adopt are borrowing money for food, purchasing food on credit, and spending savings. More alarmingly, however, four out of ten households are reporting use of crisis and emergency coping strategies.

Households are most concerned about increasing food prices (1st), the higher costs of energy and transportation (2nd), and lack of livelihood / income (3rd). In the context of the global crisis and rising inflation, it is unsurprising that households are most worried about being able to cope with increased food and energy prices. Around seven out of ten households also said that their incomes decreased or stayed the same in the past year, which means that they are likely more hard-pressed to afford the lifestyle that they were used to before. In line with this, other top concerns relate to households' ability to address daily and essential expenses.

Households are most concerned about increasing food prices, high energy costs, and sustaining their incomes.

% OF HOUSEHOLDS MENTIONING THE CONCERN



[1]*We categorized regions with poverty incidence levels greater than 20 percent as the poorest. These regions are V, VII, VIII, IX, XII, XIII, and BARMM. Poverty statistics were drawn from the Philippine Statistics Authority's (PSA's) estimates for 2021. More information on poverty levels per region can be found here.*

Findings

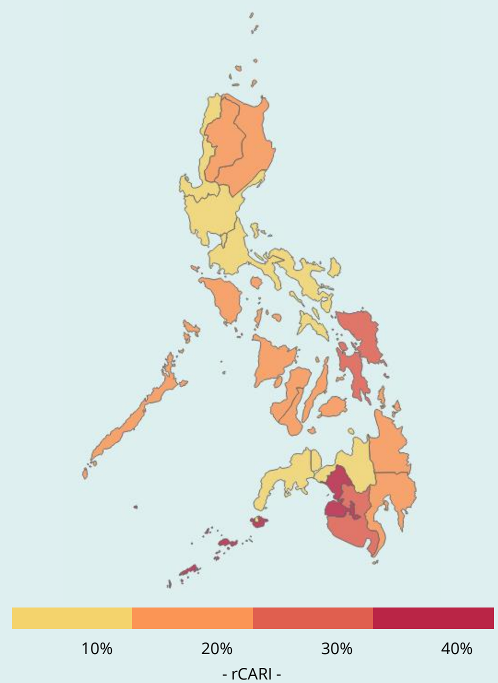
About one out of ten Filipinos are food insecure.[1] Almost all of the food insecure households are at moderate levels of food insecurity. Only 0.35 percent of households are at a severe level of food insecurity.

The poorest regions are generally the most food insecure. Only three regions – BARMM, VIII, and XII – have food insecurity levels above 20 percent, and these are among the seven poorest in the Philippines. Regions V and IX are the only regions with high poverty incidence that have a relatively low level of food insecurity.

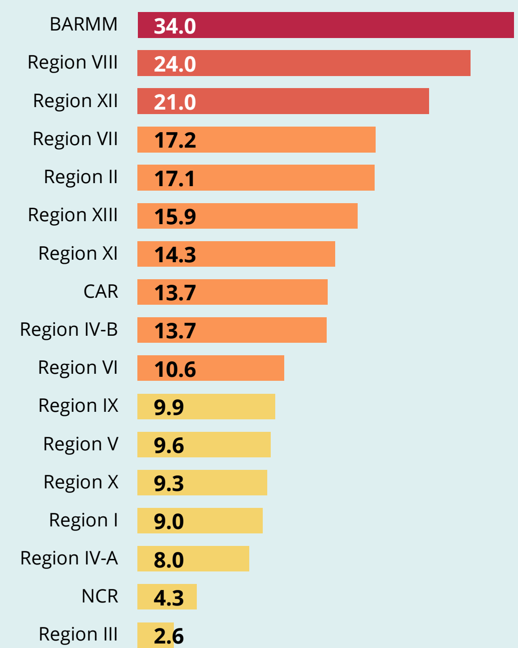
The proportion of food insecure in BARMM is significantly higher compared to all other regions. BARMM, the poorest region in the Philippines, is the only region with more than a third of households categorized as food insecure. Food insecurity in BARMM is 17 times that of the Region III, which is the least food insecure. The high level of food insecurity in BARMM is especially concerning considering that interviews were conducted before Tropical Storm Nalgae hit the region. Considering this, we expect food insecurity in the second round to increase significantly.

Regional distribution

of food insecurity in the Philippines



FOOD INSECURITY BY REGION (%)



[1] *National and regional estimates were calculated by weighting interviewed households based on their region and the educational attainment of the household head.*

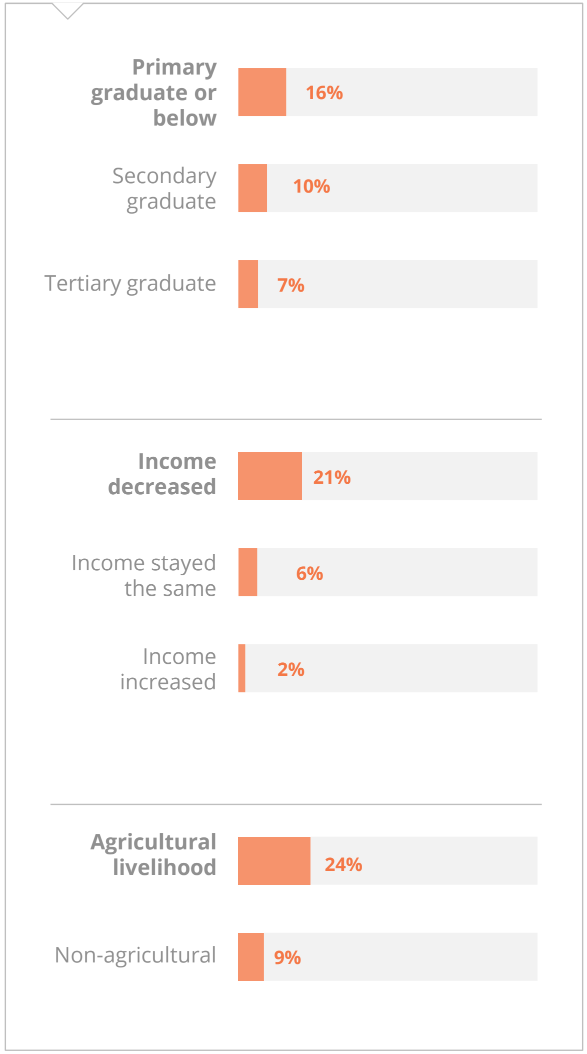
Food insecurity varies among different parts of society.

Households with heads who only had a primary/elementary education are more likely to be food insecure. Food insecurity differs significantly by level of education attainment. Since less educated households tend to have more unstable employment, they also tend to be more food insecure.

Households with reduced incomes experience worse food security outcomes. Two out of ten households whose incomes decreased are facing food insecurity. This is about three times the average of households whose incomes stayed the same or increased. Households with decreased incomes are likely struggling more to cope with the steep increase of inflation, which reached a fourteen-year high of 7.7 percent in October.[1]

The agricultural sector was much more affected by food insecurity.[2] About a quarter of agricultural households have food insecurity issues. These households report a higher frequency of income loss, and coupled with the tendency of agricultural households in the Philippines to be net buyers of food, they may have been much more impacted by the increase in food prices over the past year.

OCTOBER FOOD INSECURITY BY HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS (%)



[1] *The inflation rate is based on Consumer Price Index data published by the PSA here.*

[2] *The agricultural sector here comprises households that said that they engaged in farming, livestock raising, and fishing for income.*

Almost 1 out of 10 households are not consuming adequate diets.

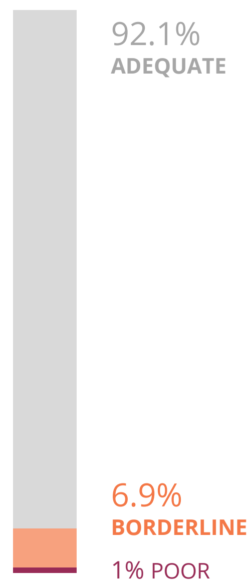
Only a very small proportion of the population suffers from inadequate levels of food consumption. Almost 92 percent of households have adequate food consumption.[1] Households from BARMM have a significantly lower food consumption score compared to households from other regions (59.85 vs. 69.81), but its average is still at an acceptable level.

Households consume less nutritious foods more frequently. Fats and sugar-based foods are the second- and third-most consumed foods after staples, which are consumed almost daily. Vegetables are consumed less often than animal proteins, while fruits and pulses are the two least-consumed food groups.

FOOD CONSUMPTION GROUP

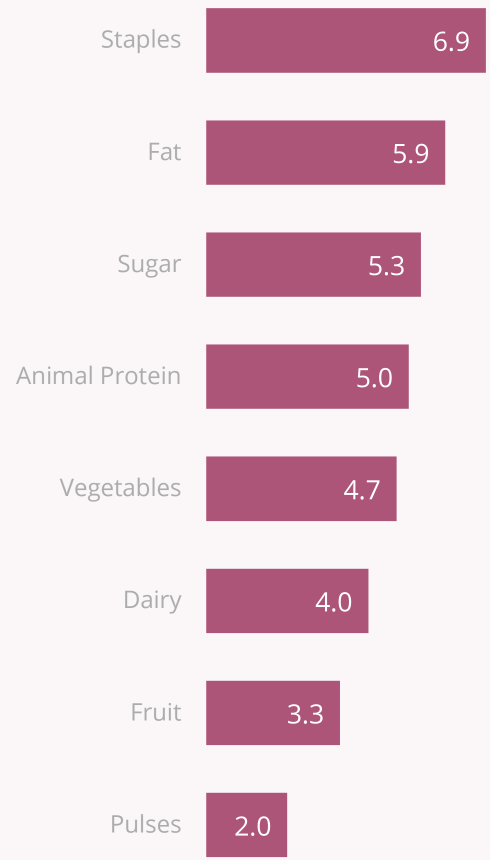
7.9%

HAVE INSUFFICIENT FOOD CONSUMPTION



FOOD CONSUMPTION

Number of days the average household consumes the following food items (every seven days)



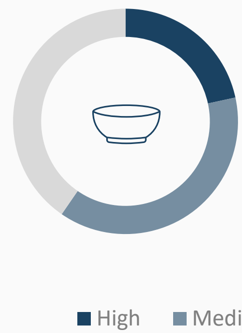
[1] The household food consumption score is calculated according to the types of foods consumed during the previous seven days, the frequencies with which they are consumed and the relative nutritional weight of the different food groups.

The majority of the population are adopting coping strategies.

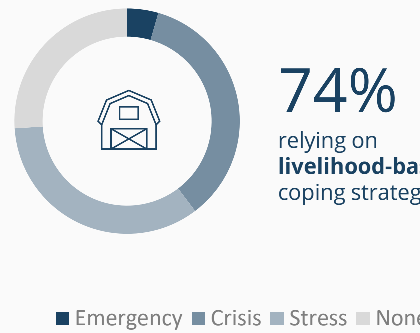
Seven out of ten households are adopting livelihood coping strategies to address their food needs.[1] Households, on average, use about two coping strategies. The most common coping strategies adopted are not severe (e.g., 57 percent borrowed money for food).

Almost four out of ten households report using more severe coping strategies. The most common among these are spending savings and reducing spending on health/education essentials. In three regions (VII, IX, and BARMM), the majority of households report having to resort to crisis and emergency coping strategies. Similarly, about half of agricultural households say they use these types of coping strategies, while this figure was only 38 percent among non-agricultural households.

Six out of ten households are relying on food-based coping strategies.[2] The most common strategy households adopt is substituting for lower quality food, with almost six out of ten households reporting this. However, there is also a significant proportion of households saying that they are reducing their consumption of food overall with four out of ten households reporting that they have reduced the size of their meals.



60%
relying on **food-based** coping strategies



74%
relying on **livelihood-based** coping strategies

STRATEGIES EMPLOYED IN THE LAST SEVEN DAYS BECAUSE OF A LACK OF MONEY OR FOOD IN OCTOBER

- **58%** are relying on less preferred food
- **52%** are borrowing food
- **39%** are reducing the size of their meals

STRATEGIES EMPLOYED IN THE LAST 30 DAYS TO COPE WITH A LACK OF FOOD OR MONEY IN SEPTEMBER

- **57%** are borrowing money for food
- **46%** are purchasing food on credit
- **38%** are spending their savings

[1] Livelihood coping strategies are categorized into three: stress, crisis, and emergency. Stress coping strategies include borrowing money for food, buying food on credit, and selling domestic assets. Criss coping strategies include spending savings, reducing essential expenses for health/education, and withdrawing children from school. Emergency coping strategies include selling seed stock, selling land, and begging.

[2] Food consumption coping strategies include substituting for lower quality food, borrowing money for food, skipping meals, reducing meal size, and adults reducing consumption for minors in the household.

Households are most concerned about the increasing prices of food and fuel.

Almost six out of ten households reported that the increasing price of food is one of their top three concerns. When asked whether their spending on food changed in the past year, 76 percent said that they increased it, with about half saying that the increase was large. The change in spending is most likely attributable to the increase in food prices since the cost of a typical food basket in October is 31 percent higher than the basket in February 2022.[1]

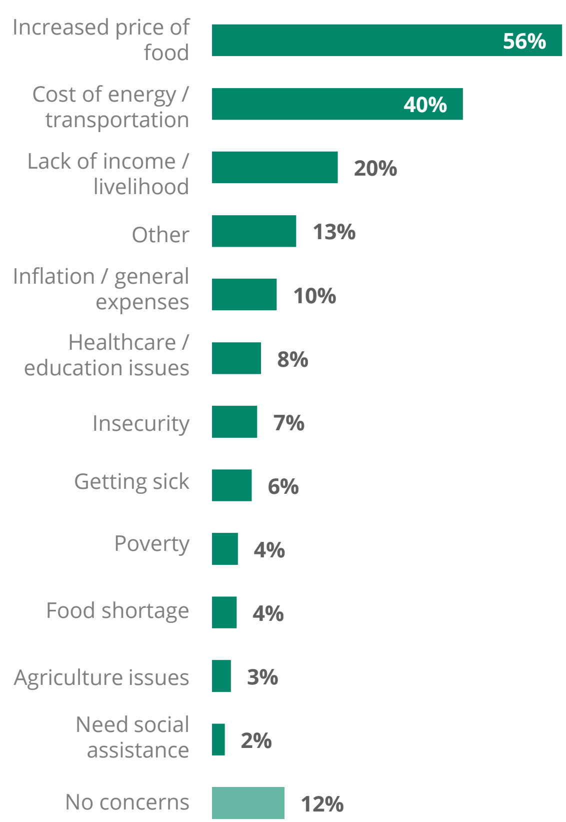
All regions have similar top concerns: the increasing price of food (1st), the increasing cost of energy / transportation (2nd), and lack of livelihood or income (3rd). In the survey, seven out of ten households report their incomes either stagnating or decreasing. With the increased prices of food and fuel due to the global crisis, it is likely that households are more hard-pressed to pay for expenses compared to the same time last year.

Agricultural households are experiencing income loss and food access issues at a higher rate. Almost half of agricultural households report a reduction in their incomes compared to the year before, which seems to have directly affected their access to food as well. Agricultural households that said that they were unable to access usual food cited "lack of money" or the "price of food items" as their main issues nine out of ten times.

[1] WFP Philippines Price Monitoring Bulletin – October 2022

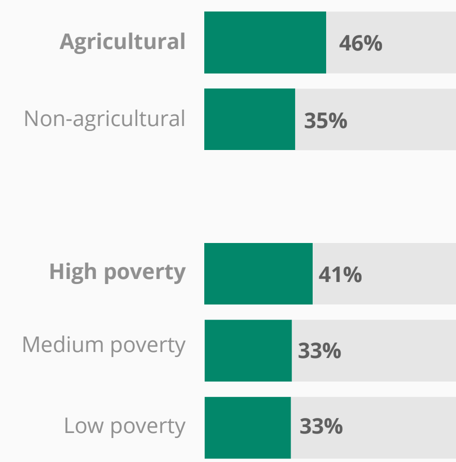
The increase in food prices is the top concern across the country.

% OF HOUSEHOLDS MENTIONING THE CONCERN

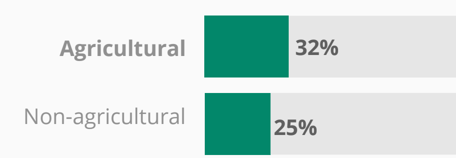


Agricultural households and the poorest regions were the most affected by income loss.

% WITH REDUCED INCOME



% WITH FOOD ACCESS ISSUE



Background and Methodology

The October mobile vulnerability analysis and mapping (mVAM) was conducted as part of the UN Joint SDG Fund. Data from the mVAM is intended to provide the government and humanitarian/development partners information on the impact of the global food, fuel, and fertilizer crisis on households. The Philippines has been hit particularly hard by the crisis, and inflation has been steadily increasing in the past months. Although the government collects data on economic indicators at the national level, data at the subnational (regional, provincial, municipal, etc.) level is rarely consolidated.

Mobile phone interviews were conducted with 2,249 households from 3 October to 31 October. The survey covered all seventeen regions of the Philippines, with a minimum of 130 interviews conducted per region. As mobile phone surveys are generally biased towards more urban areas and affluent households, we interviewed more respondents from municipalities (58 percent).

The analysis presented here used post-stratification weighting to account for the equal sampling of regions and the smaller number of low income/less educated households interviewed as compared to the 2020 census. The weighting was based on the educational attainment of the household head and the number of households in each region. While weighting aimed to address the bias of the survey towards more educated respondents, estimates may not be very precise in areas that severely under-sampled less educated households. Given this, confidence intervals for some indicators may be quite wide.

Other Resources

COUNTRY BRIEF

Overview of WFP's activities in the Philippines for the month of October, including situational and operational updates

Price Monitoring Bulletin – October 2022

Joint Assessment of the Impact of COVID-19 on Food Security

Annex: Tables

Overall

Food Insecurity (rCARI)	OVERALL
Food Secure	28
Marginally Food Secure	61
Moderately Food Insecure	**11**
Severely Food Insecure	**0**

Livelihood-based Coping Strategies	
None	26
Stress	34
Crisis	35
Emergency	5

Food-based Coping Strategies	
No/Low	40
Medium	38
High	22

Food Consumption Group	
Acceptable Food Consumption	92
Borderline Food Consumption	7
Poor Food Consumption	1

Annex: Tables

	Regional Poverty Level			Educational Attainment of Head of Household			Engagement in Agricultural Livelihood	
Food Insecurity (rCARI)	**LOW**	**MEDIUM**	**HIGH**	**PRIMARY**	**SECONDARY**	**TERTIARY**	**AGRI**	**NON-AGRI**
Food Secure	29	31	24	13	30	42	21	29
Marginally Food Secure	65	57	59	71	60	51	55	62
Moderately Food Insecure	**6**	**11**	**17**	**15**	**10**	**7**	**23**	**8**
Severely Food Insecure	**0**	**1**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**-**	**1**	**0**
Livelihood-based Coping Strategies	**LOW**	**MEDIUM**	**HIGH**	**PRIMARY**	**SECONDARY**	**TERTIARY**	**AGRI**	**NON-AGRI**
None	28	29	21	40	40	43	40	47
Stress	38	34	30	27	27	28	28	28
Crisis	33	33	40	26	26	24	25	22
Emergency	1	5	9	7	7	5	6	4
Food-based Coping Strategies	**LOW**	**MEDIUM**	**HIGH**	**PRIMARY**	**SECONDARY**	**TERTIARY**	**AGRI**	**NON-AGRI**
No/Low	43	45	33	26	41	56	32	42
Medium	36	38	40	44	40	28	37	38
High	21	17	26	30	19	15	30	20
Food Consumption Group	**LOW**	**MEDIUM**	**HIGH**	**PRIMARY**	**SECONDARY**	**TERTIARY**	**AGRI**	**NON-AGRI**
Acceptable Food Consumption	95	90	90	90	92	95	87	93
Borderline Food Consumption	5	9	9	8	7	5	10	6
Poor Food Consumption	0	1	1	2	1	0	3	1

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WFP HQ

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