WFP

The Philippines

FOOD SECURITY MONITORING

NOV-DEC 2022

Remote Household Food Security Survey Brief

This brief was developed by WFP in January 2023, based on remote household food security surveys conducted from November 21 to December 23, 2022.

The Philippines
IN NUMBERS

1 out of 10 households are currently food insecure

10%
OF PEOPLE ARE FOOD INSECURE (rCARI)[1]

Households spend more than half of their monthly income on food on average.

52%
Percent of household income spent on food

76% of households increased their spending on food in the past year

56% of households said that they are concerned about the continued increase in food prices

Agricultural households spend about **66%** of their income on food

The agricultural and informal sectors are the most vulnerable to food insecurity.

16%
of agricultural households are food insecure, compared with 9% of non-agricultural households.

20%
of households depending on informal employment are food insecure, while this was only 5 percent for the formal sector.

Note: Household outcomes are based on the results of the November-December round of the WFP's mobile Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (mVAM) survey

In Brief

One out of ten households in the Philippines are food insecure.[1] Although there was a marginal decline in food insecurity from 11 to 10 percent, the affordability of food continues to be a concern. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), headline inflation was 8.1 percent in December 2022, which is the it has been since November 2008. The largest contributor to inflation is the faster year-on-year growth of food prices at 10.2 percent.

Households spend more than half of their incomes on food on average. Compared to 2021, households' food expenditure increased substantially from 43 percent, according to the PSA, to 52 percent today based on mVAM data. The proportion spent on food was even higher for agricultural households at 66 percent.

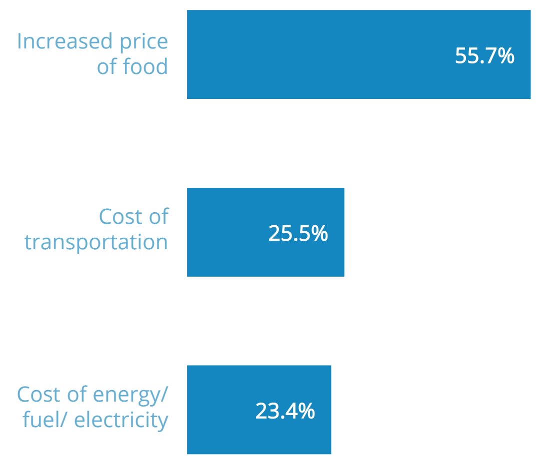
The biggest factor affecting food insecurity seems to be employment type. Agricultural households are about twice as likely to be food insecure as non-agricultural households (16 vs. 9 percent), while households depending on income from informal/irregular employment are four times more food insecure (20 vs. 5 percent).

About six out of ten households are using livelihood coping strategies to keep up with their food and fuel needs. The proportion of households resorting to livelihood coping strategies declined significantly from 74 percent in Round 1 to 65 percent in Round 2. However, use of livelihood coping strategies remained high for agricultural households at 74 percent, and use of more severe coping strategies (like selling of productive assets and seed stock) even increased from 31 percent to 41 percent of households between Rounds 1 and 2.

The global crisis is still top-of-mind: households are most concerned about increasing food prices (1st), transportation costs (2nd), and electricity (3rd). Given the steep rise in inflation, it is unsurprising that households are most worried about economic issues; however, there are differences based on income class. About 67 percent of households in the lowest income decile (monthly income less than PHP 5,000) are concerned about food prices, while this figure is only 54 percent among households in higher income levels.

Households are most concerned about increasing food prices and high energy costs.

% OF HOUSEHOLDS MENTIONING THE CONCERN



Findings

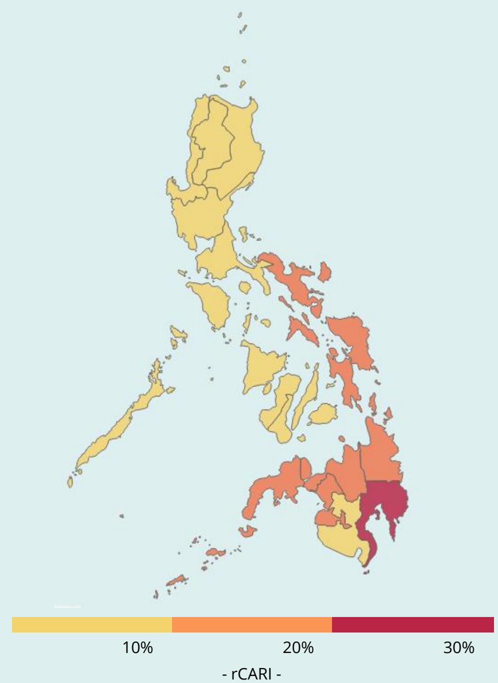
About one out of ten Filipinos are food insecure.[1] Almost all food insecure households are at moderate levels of food insecurity. Only 0.53 percent of households are at a severe level of food insecurity. The percentage of food secure households improved significantly from 28 percent in Round 1 to 37 percent in Round 2.

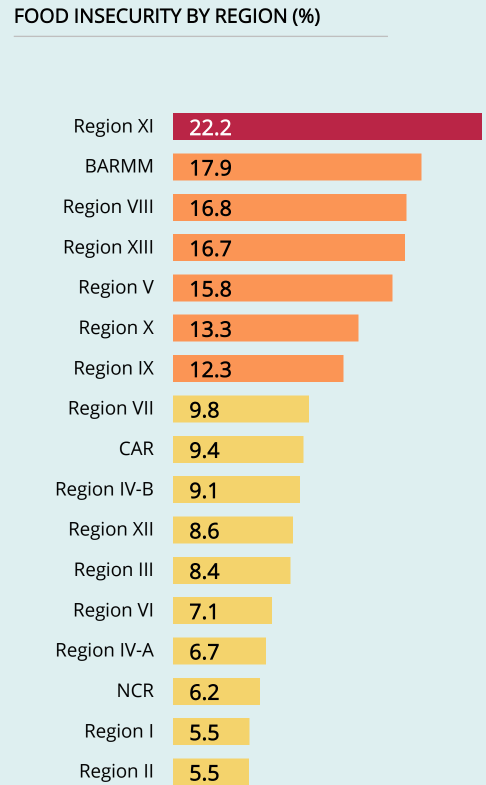
The poorest regions generally have the highest percentage of food insecure households. Among regions with a relatively high level of food insecurity, only Regions X and XI do not have a high poverty incidence. Regions V, VIII, IX, XIII, and BARMM all have a poverty incidence above 20 percent.[2]

Although BARMM still has the second highest level of food insecurity in the country, its food insecurity of 18 percent in Round 2 is significantly lower than the 34 percent it recorded in Round 1. This was largely driven by a decrease in households reporting lost income. In Round 1, almost 47 percent of households in the region said that they had experienced a loss of income in the 30 days before the survey was conducted, while in the second round, this figure was only 27 percent. It would be interesting to see if this trend holds in Round 3, or if this was more an effect of the holiday season.

Regional distribution

of food insecurity in the Philippines





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

[2] *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.*

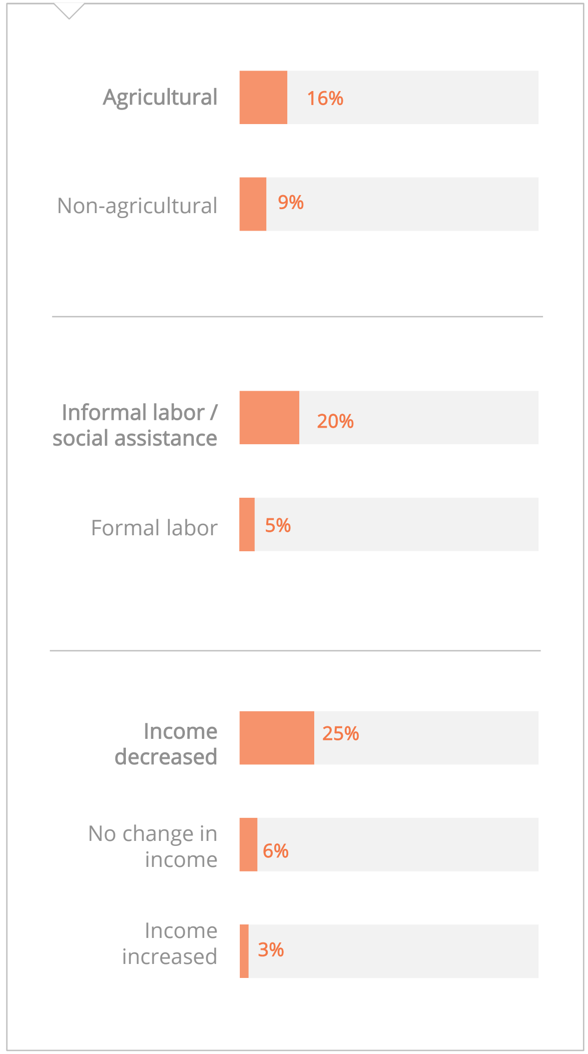
Food insecurity varies among different segments of the population.

Households relying on agriculture are more likely to be food insecure and to have issues with access to food.[1] Although agricultural households might appear to be more food secure since they can grow their own food, Filipino farmers are net food buyers. Agricultural households experienced food access issues at a significantly higher rate (39 percent vs. 29 percent).[2] Unsurprisingly, food insecurity among these households is almost twice as high (16 percent) as that of non-agricultural households (9 percent).

Households with informal/irregular employment were four times as likely to be food insecure. About 20 percent of households relying on income from informal labour are food insecure, while the figure is only 5 percent for the rest of the population. Similar to agricultural households, these households also spend about 60 percent of their incomes on food.

Food insecurity is about 25 percent among households whose incomes decreased. This is about six times that of households whose incomes increased or were unchanged. On a positive note, a lower proportion of households experienced income loss in this Round 2 (27 percent) compared with Round 1 (34 percent).

OCTOBER FOOD INSECURITY BY HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS (%)



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

2 Food access is defined as not being able to consume food that one usually consumes, at this time of year, in the past 14 days.

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

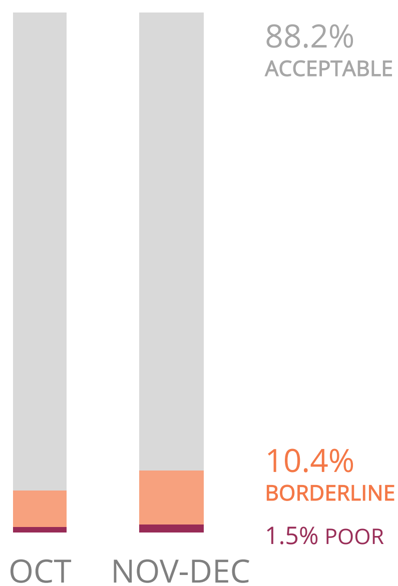
Only a very small proportion of the population suffers from inadequate levels of food consumption. Around 88 percent of households have acceptable food consumption,[1] which is a slight decreased from the 92 percent recorded in Round 1. There was no region that had food consumption that was significantly different from the average.

Consumption of food groups was generally the same between Rounds 1 and 2. Fats and sugar-based foods are the second- and third-most consumed foods after staples, which are consumed almost daily. Although diets are fairly diverse in that Filipinos consume a variety of food groups a day, the most consumed foods do not tend to be the most nutritious ones.

FOOD CONSUMPTION GROUP

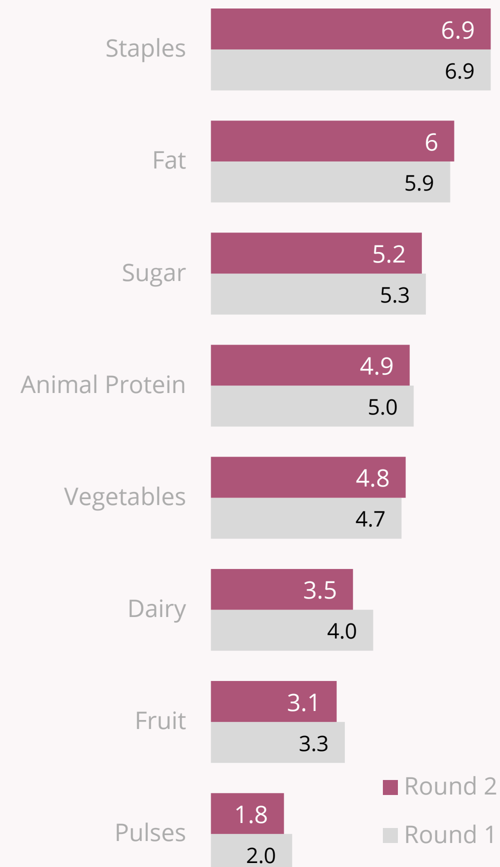
11.8%

HAVE INSUFFICIENT FOOD CONSUMPTION



FOOD CONSUMPTION

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



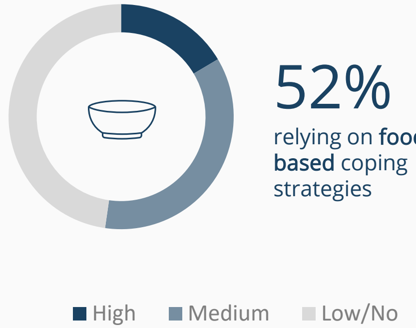
[1] *The household food consumption score is calculated according to the types of foods consumed during the previous seven days, the frequencies with which they are consumed and the relative nutritional weight of the different food groups.*

The majority of the population are adopting coping strategies.

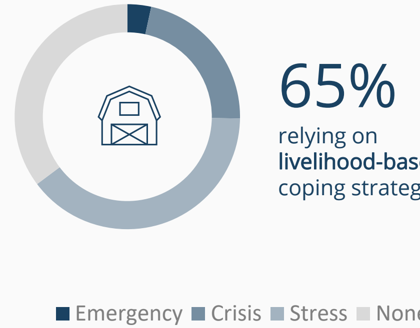
Six out of ten (65 percent) households are adopting livelihood coping strategies to address their food needs.[1] This figure decreased compared to Round 1 when 74 percent of households used livelihood strategies. Households, on average, use about two coping strategies. The most common coping strategies adopted are not severe (e.g., 47 percent borrowed money for food).

Agricultural households use more severe coping strategies more frequently. Although non-agricultural households decreased use of crisis and emergency coping strategies between Rounds 1 and 2, the same was not the case for agricultural households. The proportion of the latter using these more severe coping strategies increased from 31 percent to 41 percent.

Five out of ten households (52 percent) are relying on food-based coping strategies.[2] The most common strategy households adopt is substituting for lower quality food at 52 percent. 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 had skipped meals or lessened the quantity of food that they eat.



52%
relying on **food-based** coping strategies



65%
relying on **livelihood-based** coping strategies

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

- **52%** are relying on less preferred food
- **39%** are borrowing food
- **32%** 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

- **46%** are borrowing money for food
- **39%** are purchasing food on credit
- **29%** 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.

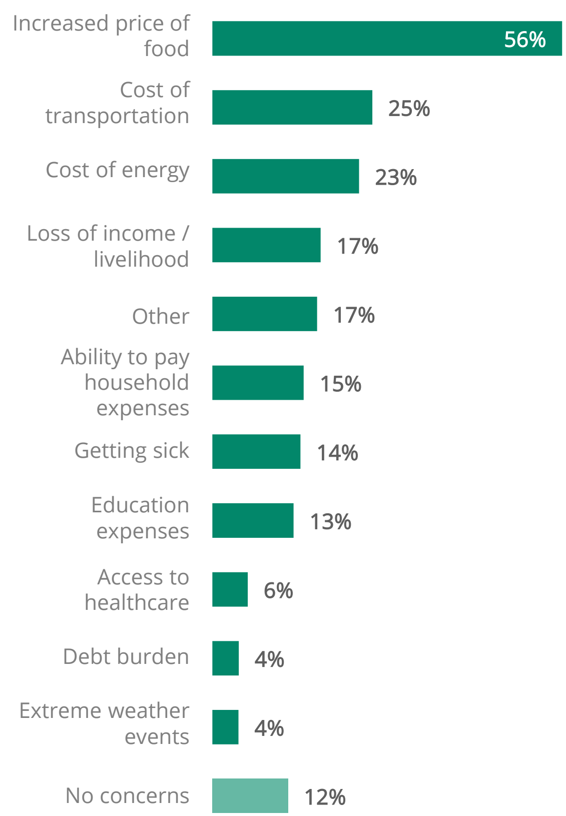
Almost six out of ten households (56 percent) reported that shortage of food / the increasing price of food is a main concern. When asked whether their spending on food changed in the past year, 76 percent said that they increased it. This is unsurprising as food has been the largest contributor to inflation with a year-on-year growth of 10.2 percent.

Issues with the economy are top-of-mind. The cost of transportation and energy are the second- and third-biggest concerns of households. While other top concerns include potential disruption of income/livelihood and being able to manage household expenses. Despite food security seemingly improving between Rounds 1 and 2, it is clear that households are still feeling the pinch of the global crisis and are worried about their situations worsening.

Households relying on agriculture and informal employment are spending more on food. Agricultural households spend about 66 percent of their incomes on food, while households depending on income from informal employment spend about 60 percent. These figures are much higher than the population average of 53 percent, which is already very high.

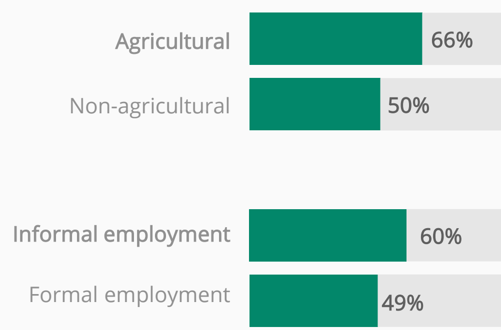
The increase in food prices is the top concern across the country.

% OF HOUSEHOLDS MENTIONING THE CONCERN



Households depending on agriculture and informal labor are more vulnerable to food issues.

% SPENDING ON FOOD



% WITH FOOD ACCESS ISSUE

Background and Methodology

The November-December round of 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 and 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 2,181 households from 21 November to 23 December. The survey covered all seventeen regions of the Philippines. Although we aimed to conduct a minimum of 130 interviews per region, we were not able to achieve this goal as the holidays made it difficult to get respondents.

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 December, including situational and operational updates

Price Monitoring Bulletin – December 2022

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

Annex: Tables

Overall

Food Insecurity (rCARI)	OVERALL
Food Secure	38
Marginally Food Secure	53
Moderately Food Insecure	**9**
Severely Food Insecure	**1**

Livelihood-based Coping Strategies	
None	35
Stress	40
Crisis	22
Emergency	3

Food-based Coping Strategies	
No/Low	48
Medium	36
High	16

Food Consumption Group	
Acceptable Food Consumption	88
Borderline Food Consumption	10
Poor Food Consumption	2

Annex: Tables

	Change in Income			Employment Type		Engagement in Agricultural Livelihood	
Food Insecurity (rCARI)	DECREASE	NO CHANGE	INCREASE	INFORMAL	FORMAL	AGRI	NON-AGRI
Food Secure	9	49	47	21	46	25	40
Marginally Food Secure	66	46	50	60	49	59	51
Moderately Food Insecure	23	5	3	18	5	15	8
Severely Food Insecure	2	-	-	1	-	0	0
Livelihood-based Coping Strategies	DECREASE	NO CHANGE	INCREASE	INFORMAL	FORMAL	AGRI	NON-AGRI
None	24	40	38	35	35	26	37
Stress	36	43	38	38	40	33	41
Crisis	33	14	22	23	21	29	21
Emergency	6	3	2	4	3	12	2
Food-based Coping Strategies	DECREASE	NO CHANGE	INCREASE	INFORMAL	FORMAL	AGRI	NON-AGRI
No/Low	27	52	60	46	49	37	50
Medium	41	37	29	35	36	41	35
High	32	11	11	19	15	22	16
Food Consumption Group	DECREASE	NO CHANGE	INCREASE	INFORMAL	FORMAL	AGRI	NON-AGRI
Acceptable Food Consumption	84	87	93	85	90	86	89
Borderline Food Consumption	13	11	7	12	9	13	10
Poor Food Consumption	3	1	0	3	0	2	1

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UN Joint SDG Fund

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