Understanding the Impacts of the Global Crisis on Filipino Households

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Mobile Vulnerability Analysis & Mapping Summary Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of the United Nations joint programme on 'Monitoring the Food, Energy, and Finance Crisis towards informed Policy and Response Options in the Philippines', the Wold Food Programme (WFP) conducted mobile Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (mVAM) surveys from October 2022 to March 2023 to understand the food security situation of households. This brief discusses the main lessons and takeaways of WFP regarding food security monitoring and the impacts of the crisis. In summary, we found that:

1. There are significant regional disparities in food security and that monitoring it only at the national level is insufficient.
2. Economic vulnerability and households' coping capacity are the main drivers of food insecurity, but the current focus of government food security monitoring is on food consumption.
3. Households depending on income from agricultural activities have been the most impacted by the crisis as the crisis has made their livelihoods more vulnerable.

BACKGROUND OF THE MVAM

The Philippine economy was hit hard by the effects of the global food, fuel, and finance (3Fs) crisis in 2022. However, it was unclear to what extent these economic issues were affecting households. Understanding this, WFP determined that its mVAM tool would be an ideal data collection method to learn more about the impacts of the crisis. The mVAM relies on mobile phone technology to collect data more frequently and less expensively than an in-person survey. With each round of the mVAM, the Project would be able to: (1) understand the state of food insecurity in the Philippines at the regional level, (2) identify the most vulnerable sectors, and (3) determine the regions that were crisis hotspots.

Three rounds of the survey were conducted from October 2022 to March 2023. The total target for each round was 2,210 surveys, and regional quotas (130 per region) were set to ensure representativeness at that level. At least 95 percent of the total target for each round was achieved.

LESSONS FOR FOOD SECURITY MONITORING

Through the mVAM, WFP was able to understand the distribution of food security in the country, determine the main drivers of food insecurity, and identify the sectors that have been most affected during the crisis. We will discuss those findings and their implications in the succeeding subsections of this summary.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN NATIONAL AND REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY

After three survey rounds, we found food security to be generally stable at the national level but highly variable at the regional level. Food insecurity for the Philippines, overall, ranged between a low of 10 percent of households (Round 2) to 15 percent (Round 3), so changes were quite small. However, in comparing the regions, we found that regional food insecurity can vary significantly month to month. The mVAM survey was also able to identify regions in the Philippines with persistently high concentrations of food insecure households like the Bangsamoro Administrative Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), Region VIII, and Region XIII.

Conventionally, the Philippines assesses food security at the national level, but from these results of the mVAM, the need to analyze and understand issues at a subnational level is made clear, especially during crisis periods when targeted action is needed. Looking only at national level data, food insecurity would not seem to be a major issue, but regional data tells a completely different story and emphasizes disparities between different areas.

ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY AS THE DRIVER OF FOOD INSECURITY

The economic vulnerability and livelihood coping capacity of households were the biggest factors in the changes in food security. In Round 2, when a large proportion of households reported an increase in income (likely due to opportunities opening up for the holidays and year-end bonuses), food insecurity was at its lowest, but in Round 3, when more households reported a decrease in income, food insecurity reached its highest point. Households that had negative changes in income were, unsurprisingly, more likely to adopt severe livelihood coping strategies[1] to address their food needs, which also made them more food insecure.

Between the three rounds of the survey, we found that use of coping strategies significantly decreased in Round 2, from 74 percent to 66 percent, but increased again by Round 3 to 71 percent, following a similar trend to the changes in income of households. In Round 3, the most common coping strategy used was borrowing food or money to buy food with around half of households saying that they had done this, while 38 percent of households had spent their savings and 31 percent had reduced their spending on healthcare/education to address their food needs.

Households remain most concerned about food affordability and access since fast-increasing food prices were the main driver of headline inflation. More than half of respondents in all rounds of the survey said that 'food shortage / increase in food prices' was one of their top three economic concerns in the coming months. Despite this difficult economic context, food consumption has remained relatively stable throughout the three rounds of the survey. Households with borderline and poor food consumption were only 8 percent in Round 1, 12 percent in Round 2, and 11 percent in Round 3. The slight differences between rounds had very little impact on overall food security at the national level.

Based on the results of the mVAM, concentrating on food consumption to characterize food insecurity is insufficient as it is unable to include the economic stresses and sacrifices that households are making to address their food needs. Integrating economic vulnerability and livelihood coping capacity in how food security is analyzed is critical to better contextualize vulnerability and to forecast whether households will continue to be able to weather shocks from crises.

DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACTS ON THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR

Throughout the study, households engaged in agriculture consistently had worse food security outcomes. In the latest round of the survey, about 20 percent of these households were food insecure, while this figure was only 13 percent for non-agricultural households.

In investigating why agricultural households were more likely to be food insecure, we found economic capacity to be the main issue once again. On average, agricultural households earned about PHP 4,000 less than non-agricultural households (PHP 15,000 vs. PHP 19,000). As agricultural households in the Philippines are often net food buyers, their lower incomes likely make it harder for them to meet their food needs. This is further supported by the finding that agricultural households also report having worse access to food (37 percent vs. 30 percent) – most often due to high food prices or not having enough money.

Agricultural households were also much more likely to adopt severe livelihood coping strategies. About a fifth of all households engaged in farming said that they had sold seed stocks for the next cropping season due to lack of food or money to buy food.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the lessons from the mVAM, we have three recommendations to improve crisis monitoring and response.

IMPLEMENT AN INTEGRATED MONITORING FRAMEWORK FOR THE FOOD, ENERGY, AND FINANCE CRISIS

To be able to manage a shock like the recent economic crisis, it is necessary to integrate the systems monitoring food security, energy issues, and financial indicators. An integrated system can help decision-makers understand the interconnectedness of the different issues and to design and to implement policy and programmatic solutions that directly respond to the core of the problems.

ESTABLISH AN INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISM TO CARRY FORWARD MONITORING AND RESPONSE

We recommend instituting a body to be responsible for food security monitoring and responding to crises like this. The government recently established the Inter-Agency Committee on Inflation and Market Outlook which is responsible for monitoring macroeconomic stability, and WFP joined its first meeting. We view this as an encouraging step towards unifying government response to future crises like El Niño.

CONDUCT TARGETED MONITORING OF AGRICULTURAL HOUSEHOLDS

Given the impact of the crisis on agricultural households, we recommend that the government conduct more targeted monitoring of these households. Although many government programs in response to the crisis aimed to target this sector, based on the results of the mVAM, there were many who were not able to receive government assistance. Mapping the agricultural sector and more regularly updating the Registry System for the Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA) can help the Department of Agriculture better identify the areas and individuals that need more support.

[1] Livelihood coping strategies are negative behaviors adopted by households to address a lack of food or money to buy food. These behaviors impact their livelihoods and way of living. Severe coping strategies include consumption of seed stocks (households engaged in agriculture), selling land, and begging.

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

CONCEPTUALIZATION

By April 2022, the global food, energy, and finance crisis had begun to impact the economy of the Philippines. The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) announced that inflation hit 4.9 percent, which was the highest rate recorded since January 2019. Food and transport costs led to the increase in commodity prices. Around the same period, the Social Weather Stations (SWS) released the results of their survey on self-rated poverty. It estimated that around 10.9 million (43 percent of the population) families considered themselves poor, while around 3.1 million families experienced involuntary hunger at least once in the first quarter of 2022.

To respond to the crisis, the government introduced 'targeted relief', e.g., cash transfers and fuel subsidies, for the sectors that appeared to be the most vulnerable at the time. However, these measures only addressed the crisis in the short run, and there was a need to implement longer term measures to mitigate the overall impacts of the crisis, to support economic recovery, and to ensure future resilience.

For the Philippines to respond effectively to the economic shock, there was a clear need for more information on the crisis. Although there was some information on food security and prices, more up-to-date and granular data was lacking since food security was not being monitored regularly at the subnational level. Information on food supply chain management and dynamics was also limited and unconsolidated. Given this context, the United Nations Joint Sustainable Development Goals Fund (Joint SDG Fund) saw the need to enhance food security monitoring through a Joint Programme (JP) modality. [2]

ACTIVITIES OF THE JOINT PROGRAMME

This JP provided the UN and the Government of the Philippines with clear, up-to-date information on the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis at both the macroeconomic and household levels. Although it was common knowledge that inflation was hitting decade-high levels in the past year, there was insufficient information on how exactly the country's food systems had been affected, how households were coping with the crisis, and how equipped the government was to respond to the economic shock. The JP aimed to fill the information gap by conducting three studies: **(1) an assessment of the Philippine agri-food systems, (2) a nationwide survey on the household-level impacts of the crisis, and (3) an assessment of the shock-responsiveness of the country's social protection systems.**

The first study by FAO confirmed the types and scales of impacts and the interconnectedness of effects on the agri-food value chains. While agri-food production levels were found to be tenable, the affordability of food was a top concern as price hikes in feed, fertilizer, and fuel increased the cost of agricultural commodities. To complement this study and to understand impacts on the ground, WFP conducted three rounds of phone surveys at the household level. The results highlighted the need to understand the crisis at a subnational level as food security varied significantly between regions but remained relatively stable at 10-15 percent nationally. The surveys also found that more than a quarter of households adopted severe livelihood coping strategies to address lack of food or lack of money for food, and adoption of these coping strategies was more prevalent among agricultural households. In turn, the assessment of social protection by ILO, identified needed changes to improve their effectiveness and efficiency, especially in case of new shocks.

The JP raised awareness and importance of monitoring and responding to the food, energy, and finance crisis at the highest levels of the Philippines Government. It also established strong technical level engagement with agencies working on agriculture, labor and employment, economic development, nutrition, and overseas workers on the triple crisis issues. Senior government policymakers were provided

[2] The Joint SDG Fund is an innovative instrument to incentivize the transformative policy shifts and stimulate the strategic investments required to get the world back on track to meet the SDGs. A JP is a set of activities contained in a joint work plan and related common budgetary framework, involving two or more UN organizations and/or subnational governmental partners, intended to achieve results aligned with national priorities or an equivalent development framework.

specific policy options and recommendations to: (a) improve monitoring of the crisis and coherent coordination of government's response; (b) mitigate risks to food security brought about by the crisis; and (c) adapt existing social protection systems to address the differentiated impacts of the current and similar future shocks.

Table 1. WFP's guidance on assessing food security remotely

Domain			Indicator	Food Secure (1)	Marginally Food Secure (2)	Moderately Insecure (3)	Severely Insecure (4)
Current Status	Food Consumption	**Preferred option**	Food consumption score	Acceptable	Acceptable consumption + using 'severe' food coping[1]	Borderline	Poor
		Alternative if preferred option not available (web survey)	Number of meals consumed	3 meals	2 meals	1 meal	0 meal
			Worry about food availability/food coping	Not worried	Worried	Worried + skipping meals	Worried + skipping day/night without eating
Current Coping Capacity	Economic vulnerability	**Only available option** to measure economic vulnerability remotely as expenditure cannot be collected *(classification needs to be contextualized)*	Main income source and change in income	**Regular employment** (formal labour or self-employed) – no change/ no decrease	**Regular employment** but reduced income or **informal labour/ remittances,** no change/ no decrease	**Informal labour /remittances** but reduced income	**No income,** dependent on assistance or support *Or informal labour with complete loss of income*
	Livelihood coping	**Preferred option** *(classification of strategies needs to be contextualized)*	Livelihood-based coping strategy categories	Neutral	Stress strategies	Crisis strategies	Emergency strategies (or do not have the capacity to do anything)
		Alternative if preferred option not available	Livelihood-based coping strategy number strategies (short version)	No strategies	1 strategy	2 strategies	3 strategies (or do not have the capacity to do anything)

[1] Severe food coping refers to using any of the following strategies over the past week at least one time: reduced number of meals, reduce meals portion, reduce consumption by adults in order for children to eat. Further testing is required for the definition of severe coping.

MOBILE VULNERABILITY ANALYSIS AND MAPPING

The surveys conducted by WFP were done through its mobile Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (mVAM) tool, which leverages mobile phone technology to reach households more quickly and efficiently. The surveys covered all seventeen regions of the Philippines with a target of 130 interviews per region. There were three survey rounds: Round 1 was conducted in 3-31 October, Round 2 from 21 November-23 December, and Round 3 from 30 January-9 March. For each round, WFP was able to reach at least 95 percent of its total survey target. Interviews were administered in two main languages: Tagalog and Bisaya (Cebuano).

MITIGATING BIAS

Mobile phone surveys, by nature, lean towards urban areas and more affluent income classes since these groups have better cellular reception and have multiple household members with cell phones. To account for the urban bias, we set quotas for respondents from municipalities (to represent rural households). We also set soft quotas to target respondents who were less educated (did not graduate from high school) to reach more low-income households.

The results presented in this report 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.

MEASURING FOOD SECURITY

To measure food security, WFP used the remote Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators (rCARI) of Food Security. The rCARI has two dimensions: current status and coping capacity. The current status dimension measures household food consumption, while the coping capacity dimension estimates the ability of a household to stabilize consumption over time in relation to their economic and livelihood status. Table 1 provides a summary of how the rCARI is calculated using the different indicators of each dimension.

The current status dimension comprises two main indicators: Food Consumption Score (FCS) and reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI). The FCS is used as a proxy for food access and measures the adequacy of household food consumption in the week prior to the survey. The rCSI, in comparison, is used to measure the level of stress households experience due to shortages in food.

The coping capacity dimension uses employment type, changes in income, and the Livelihood Coping Strategies Index (LCSI) to measure coping capacity. Employment type and changes in income are used to approximate economic vulnerability, while measuring the adoption of coping strategies allows measurement of coping capacity in relation to food security.

IMPACT ON HOUSEHOLDS

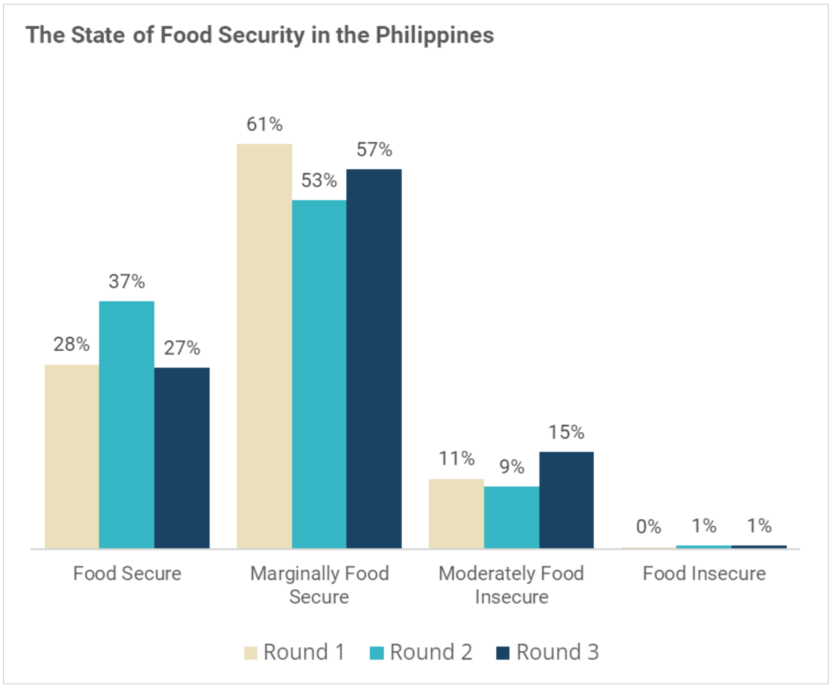
FOOD SECURITY

At the national level, food insecurity was generally stable between the three rounds of the mVAM; however, significant regional disparities exist that show the need for more in-depth and localized data on food indicators.

Changes to food security, based on the rCARI, at the national level were largely marginal between the three survey rounds. Figure 1 compares the food security averages from each round. Food insecurity (combination of moderately food insecure and food insecure) was highest at around 15 percent during Round 3, which was done between late January to early March.[3] This coincided with the point when inflation reached its peak; however, since then, inflation has been gradually decreasing.

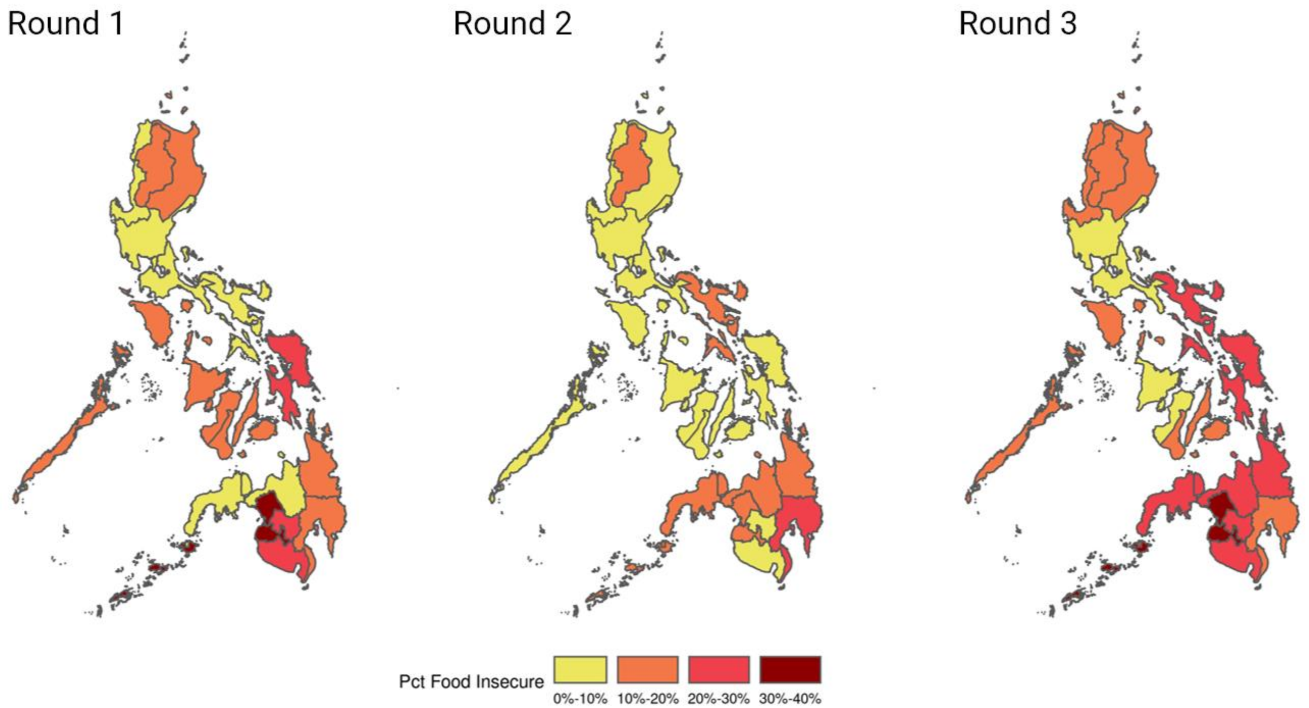
By contrast, there were clear regional differences in food insecurity as shown in Figure 2. When comparing the different parts of the Philippines, it is notable that the eastern seaboard and the Mindanao island group had higher incidence of food insecurity. The survey results clearly show that regional food insecurity is significantly correlated with regional poverty (correlation of 0.88). The eastern side of the Philippines generally has higher poverty incidence as they are more vulnerable to typhoons, while regions in Mindanao tend to be less developed than those in Luzon and Visayas. The regional differences are exemplified by comparing the poorest region in the Philippines – the Bangsamoro Administrative Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) – with the largest areas of economic activity in the country –the National Capital Region (NCR), Region III, and Region IV-A. Food insecurity affected more than 30 percent of the population in BARMM, while in the economic centers, food insecurity incidence was always lower than 10 percent.

Figure 1. Food security at the national level from three rounds of the mVAM



[3] The figure for the percentage of food insecure in Figure 1 has been rounded up from 0.56 percent.

Figure 2. Comparison of regional food insecurity between the three rounds of the mVAM



FOOD CONSUMPTION

In the mVAM, food consumption is measured through the FCS, which is a proxy measure of households' food access and a core WFP indicator used to classify households into different groups based on the adequacy of the foods they consumed. This indicator is a composite score based on households' dietary diversity, food frequency, and relative nutritional importance of different food groups. The FCS is calculated by inspecting how often households consume food items from the different food groups during a seven-day reference period.[4]

Similar to the rCARI, there were only minute changes to the FCS between rounds. Unlike the rCARI, though, regional differences in FCS were far less apparent. Only BARMM, had consistently lower FCS results than the average (77 percent for BARMM vs. 89 percent for all other regions in Round 3), but these were also still in the 'acceptable' consumption range.

It is important to note that while FCS estimates the adequacy of food consumption, a rating of 'acceptable' does not mean that the household has a nutritious diet or that food consumption is sufficient calorically for the different members of the household. In fact, looking more closely at the types of food consumed most frequently, we find that fat (six days a week) and sugar (five days a week) are second and third to staples (daily) as the most consumed foods. This indicates that, in general, Filipino households are eating less nutritious foods most often.

CONSUMPTION-BASED COPING STRATEGIES

To assess and compare the level of stress faced by households due to shortages of food, WFP uses the rCSI. The rCSI measures the frequency and severity of the food consumption behaviours households had to engage in due to food shortage in the seven days prior to the survey. Households are grouped by low, medium, and high rCSI.[5]

For the three rounds of the survey, about 58 percent of the population had medium to high rCSI. This indicates that the majority of households are constraining their consumption in a significant way due to lack of food or money to buy food. The most common strategy households adopted was eating lower quality food with about half of households doing this, while more severe strategies that affected the amount of food consumed were adopted less often (between 30 to 40 percent of the population).

LIVELIHOOD-BASED COPING STRATEGIES

The LCSI is used as a descriptor of a household's coping capacity and is derived from a series of questions related to households' experiences with livelihood strategies due to lack of food during the 30 days prior to the survey. Responses are used to understand mechanisms used by households to cope with internal and external shocks. The coping strategies describe households' medium and long-term capacity for

[4] In the FCS module of the survey, respondents are asked how many days in a week they consumed the following foods: staples, pulses, vegetables, fruit, animal protein, dairy, fat, and sugar.

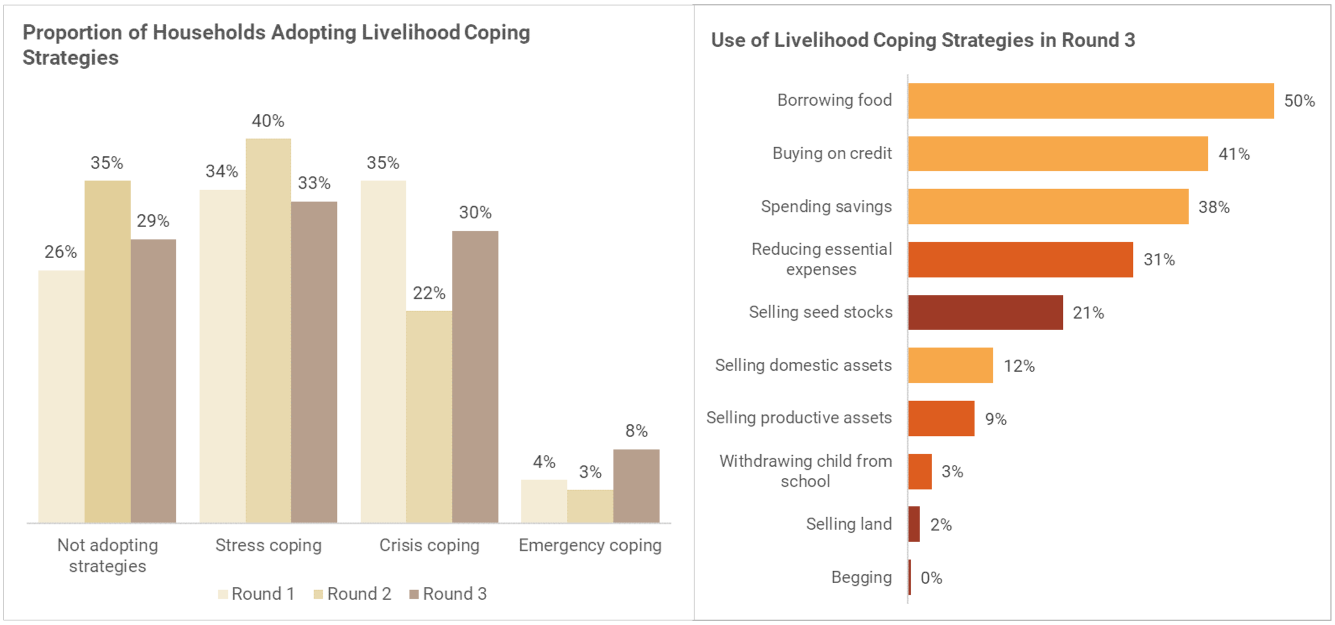
[5] The rCSI module of the survey includes five strategies: consumption of lower quality food to replace preferred food, borrowing of food from friends/family, reduction of meal size, skipping meals, and restriction of adult consumption of food on behalf of children in the household.

future productivity and food security. The LCSI comprises ten strategies which are grouped into three: four stress strategies, three crisis strategies, and three emergency strategies.[6]

As shown in Figure 3, more than 60 percent of households used livelihood coping strategies to address their food needs in all three survey rounds. About 40 percent used crisis and emergency coping strategies during Rounds 1 and 3, which indicates that a significant proportion of households had to make livelihood sacrifices due to the economic impacts of the global crisis. The most common crisis coping strategy used in Round 3 was spending savings (38 percent) and reducing essential expenses on healthcare/education (31 percent).

The high use of crisis coping strategies likely stem from a lack of stable employment and low incomes, which will be discussed further in the next subsection. The decline in LCSI in Round 2 gives credence to this assumption since that survey round was done during the holiday season (late November to mid December) when there was an increase in temporary employment opportunities and many workers received year-end bonuses.

Figure 3. Comparison of livelihood coping strategies used by households



INCOME AND EXPENDITURES

Although almost all households felt the impacts of the global crisis through the increase in prices of household expenses, the extent of the impact was largely a function of the stability of the households' economic status. Households with less stable employment and incomes felt the brunt of the impact.

CHANGES IN INCOME & STABILITY OF LIVELIHOOD

For the majority of the population, household incomes either declined (33 percent) or remained stagnant (40 percent) compared to the same period in the previous year. With inflation reaching decade highs, this meant that households were more hard-pressed to meet their needs. Figure 4 shows the relationship between changes in household income and adoption of livelihood coping strategies based on the results of the last round of the survey. Households that experienced a significant decrease in their incomes were much more likely to adopt livelihood coping strategies to be able to buy food.

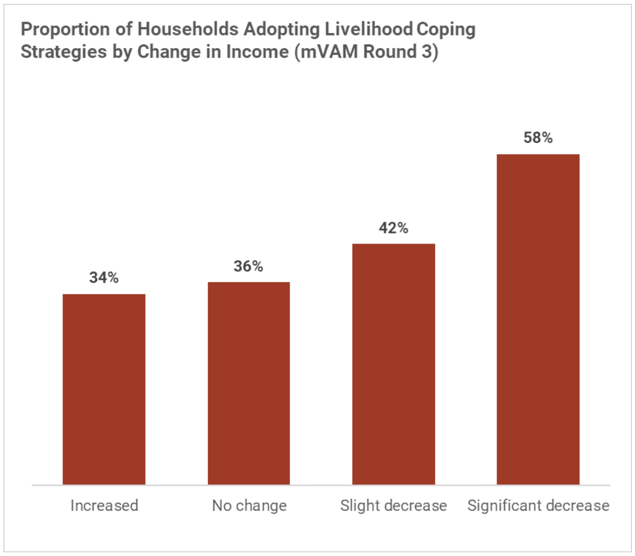
In general, households that relied only on informal livelihoods had significantly lower incomes (PHP 14,402.31 in Round 3) and were more prone to negative changes in income than households with members who were formally employed (PHP 18,753.32 in Round 3). As mentioned earlier, in Round 2, households reported more positive changes in income, but these were largely due to temporary sources of employment. In Round 3, we found that income changes reverted back to how they were in Round 1.

When comparing regions, once again, BARMM was the region with the lowest rates of formal employment. This indicates that BARMM households were not only more food insecure at

[6] The ten strategies in the LCSI are: borrowing money for food, buying food on credit, spending savings, selling domestic assets, reducing essential expenses (e.g., healthcare and education), selling productive assets, withdrawing children from school, selling seed stock (for farming households), selling land, begging.

the time of the surveys but were also less likely to be able to weather further shocks.

Figure 4. Relationship between changes in income and adoption of livelihood coping strategies



AFFORDABILITY OF HOUSEHOLD EXPENSES

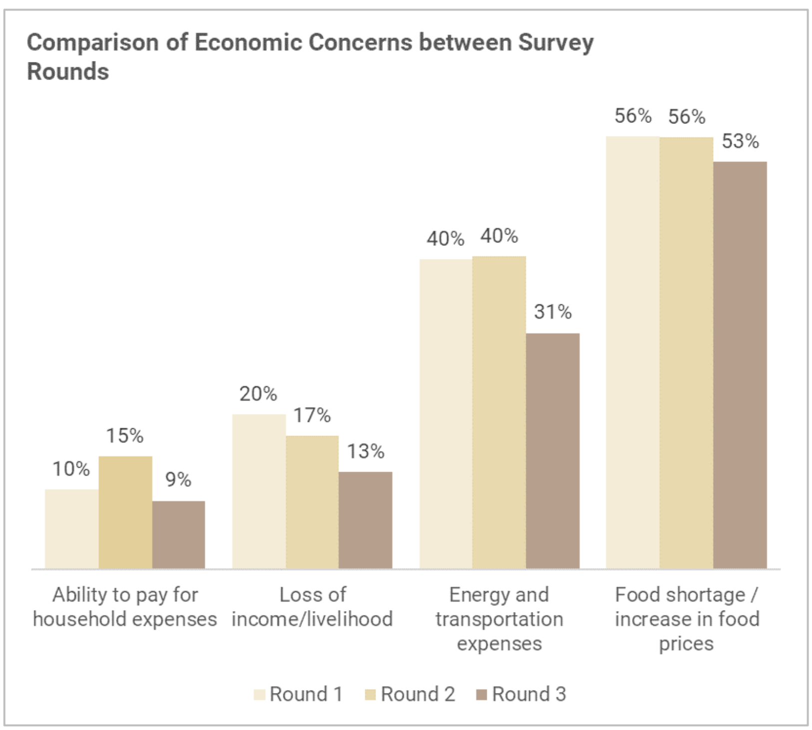
Since inflation was headline news, we also wanted to know whether all households were feeling the effects of the increase in prices. Interestingly, although the majority of respondent households said that their spending on transportation, electricity, and food had increased, the effects were not the same for all three categories. About 70 percent of households said that they had increased their spending the most on food, while this was only 14 percent for electricity and 11 percent for transportation.

To further assess how the increase in food prices has affected household spending, we can compare household incomes with the food poverty threshold. In an SWS survey conducted in March 2023[7], the self-rated food poverty threshold was estimated at PHP 8,000 for the average Filipino family. For households relying on informal employment, food expenditures would constitute almost 60 percent of the total household income.

It should come as no surprise that respondents were most worried about food issues in each round of the survey when asked about their top concerns (see Figure 5). Households were most anxious about further increases in food prices and possible shortages. Although inflation started easing in March, at the time of the surveys (between October to early March), inflation was steadily increasing, with its biggest driver being the category of food and non-alcoholic beverages.

Although the government had provided targeted assistance to some sectors, when we asked whether respondents had received assistance, we found that households in the bottom 30 percent in household income were not more likely to have received assistance than other households. This indicates that government programs may not have been able to reach the most vulnerable.

Figure 5. Top economic concerns of households



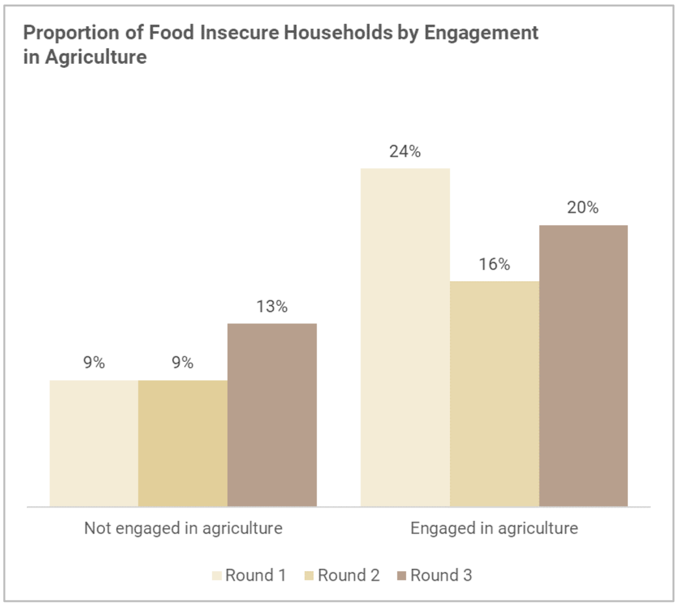
[7] Social Weather Stations. 7 May 2023. "Filipino families Self-Rated as Food-Poor rise to 39% from 34% in December 2022". *Social Weather Report.* https://www.sws.org.ph/swsmain/artcldisppage/?artcsyscode=ART-20230507084016

AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

Among all households, those depending on agricultural livelihoods were the most affected by the global crisis. They experienced a twofold blow: (1) an increase in prices of agricultural inputs resulting in decreased yields/revenues and (2) an increase in the expenditures of the households.

Throughout the study, households engaged in agriculture consistently had worse food security outcomes. In the latest round of the survey, about 20 percent of these households were food insecure, while this figure was only 13 percent for non-agricultural households. Figure 6 compares the two groups between all three rounds of the survey.

Figure 6. Comparison of food insecurity between agricultural and non-agricultural households



In investigating why agricultural households were more likely to be food insecure, we found economic capacity to be the main issue once again. On average, agricultural households earned about PHP 4,000 less than non-agricultural households (approx. PHP 15,000 vs. PHP 19,000), which is similar to the incomes of those in the informal sector. As agricultural households in the Philippines are often net food buyers, their lower incomes likely make it harder for them to meet their food needs. This is further supported by the finding that agricultural households also report having worse access to food (37 percent vs. 30 percent) – most often due to high food prices or not having enough money. Assuming that most agricultural households purchase food at the same rates as non-agricultural households, then they would be spending more than 50 percent of their incomes on food on average based on a food poverty threshold of PHP 8,000.

With the increased cost of agricultural inputs, these households would be forced to choose between limiting their normal household expenses or investing less on their farms. We find evidence of the latter in the data with agricultural households being much more likely to adopt severe livelihood coping strategies. About a fifth of all households engaged in farming said that they had sold seed stocks for the next cropping season due to lack of food or money to buy food.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the three rounds of the mVAM, it is clear that while the impacts of the global crisis are felt at the national level, there are geographic areas and sectors that require more targeted assistance. To improve food security monitoring and response, we recommend three main points of action:

1. Implement an integrated monitoring framework for the food, energy, and finance crisis;
2. Establish an institutional mechanism to carry forward monitoring and response; and
3. Conduct targeted monitoring of agricultural households.

IMPLEMENT AN INTEGRATED MONITORING FRAMEWORK FOR THE FOOD, ENERGY, AND FINANCE CRISIS

Currently, the government body responsible for food security monitoring in the Philippines is the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI). It conducts the Expanded National Nutrition Survey (ENNS) on a rolling basis every three years, and it targets about 40 provinces each year. Although the ENNS provides comprehensive and in-depth information on both food security and nutrition, it is unable to monitor food security at a subnational level on a frequent basis. In contrast, food prices are monitored regularly by the Department of Agriculture (DA) on a local basis through its *Bantay Presyo* platform; however, aggregated data from the website is very difficult to access.

To be able to manage a shock like the recent economic crisis, it is necessary to integrate these systems, and other systems like it that monitor energy and finance indicators. An integrated system can help decision-makers understand the interconnectedness of the different issues and to make policy and programmatic solutions that directly respond to the core of the problems.

ESTABLISH AN INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISM TO CARRY FORWARD MONITORING AND RESPONSE

In response to the crisis, the government mobilized different agencies to provide assistance and support to specific sectors. While the government response was quick, there was no single government entity that could be looked to for leadership in responding to the crisis and to ensure that the activities of the different agencies were aligned with each other.

We recommend instituting a body to be responsible for food security monitoring and responding to crises like this. The government recently established the Inter-Agency Committee on Inflation and Market Outlook which is responsible for monitoring macroeconomic stability, and WFP joined its first meeting. We view this as an encouraging step towards integrating government response to future crises like El Niño.

CONDUCT TARGETED MONITORING OF AGRICULTURAL HOUSEHOLDS

Given the impact of the crisis on agricultural households, we recommend that the government conduct more targeted monitoring of these households. Although many government programs in response to the crisis aimed to target this sector, based on the results of the mVAM, there were many who were not able to receive government assistance. Mapping the agricultural sector and more regularly updating the Registry System for the Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA) can help the DA better identify the areas and individuals that need more support.

APPENDIX

FOOD SECURITY INDICATORS (IN PERCENT)

	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
Food Insecurity (rCARI)			
Food Secure	28	38	27
Marginally Food Secure	61	53	57
Moderately Food Insecure	11	9	15
Severely Food Insecure	0	1	1
Livelihood-Based Coping Strategies			
None	26	35	29
Stress	34	40	33
Crisis	35	22	30
Emergency	5	3	8
Consumption-Based Coping Strategies			
No/Low	40	48	44
Medium	38	36	38
High	22	16	18
Food Consumption Score			
Acceptable Food Consumption	92	88	89
Borderline Food Consumption	7	10	9
Poor Food Consumption	1	2	2

Inspired by the Secretary General's reform of the United Nations, the Joint SDG Fund supports the acceleration of progress across all 17 Sustainable Development Goals. We incentivize stakeholders to transform current development practices by breaking down silos and implementing programmes built on diverse partnerships, integrated policies, strategic financing, and smart investments. To get the 'world we want' we need innovative solutions that fast-track progress across multiple development targets and results and contribute to increasing the scale of sustainable investments for the SDGs and 2030 Agenda.

For more information visit us at www.jointsdgfund.org.