



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

FOOD SECURITY UPDATE

For Internally Displaced Populations in
Southern Gaza Strip

14 DECEMBER 2023

In the span of just two months, more than 85 percent of the population in Gaza have been displaced. This update analyzes the food security situation of Internally Displaced Populations (IDPs) in the southern governorates in Gaza 12 days after the end of the humanitarian pause on December 1st, compared to similar assessment that was made during the pause¹.

HIGHLIGHTS

In a matter of 12 days only:



An 18-point increase in the share of households who experienced **severe levels of hunger, rising from 38% to 56%**.



Nearly all IDP households reported **inadequate food consumption, rising from 83% to 93%**, and a 27-point increase in share of households with **poor consumption rising from 39% to 66%**.



Almost half of the IDPs are aware of individuals resorting to **consuming wild or raw food due to hunger**. This marks a seven percentage-point increase, compared to 42 percent during the pause period.



Nearly all IDP households are reporting using **extreme levels of consumption-based coping strategies** to deal with food shortage, rising from **82% to 96%**.



There has been an 8-point increase in households reporting having **no access to any type of cooking fuel (7% to 15%)**. And approximately, **13%** of IDPs are **burning solid waste** as their primary source of cooking fuel.



Access to water remains severely constrained, with **less than 2 liters** per person per day, **falling short by 15 liters** of the basic survival-level water requirement as per the Sphere Standards.

With this significant deterioration of IDPs food security situation in the southern governorates compared to the pause period, **households in northern governorates are now expected to face a catastrophic situation**, having already experienced worse conditions during the pause period.

¹ <https://www.wfp.org/publications/gaza-food-security-assessment-december-2023>

HOUSEHOLD FOOD CONSUMPTION

The remote survey collected three food security outcome indicators to measure food consumption: the Food Consumption Score (FCS), the Household Hunger Scale (HHS), and the reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI).

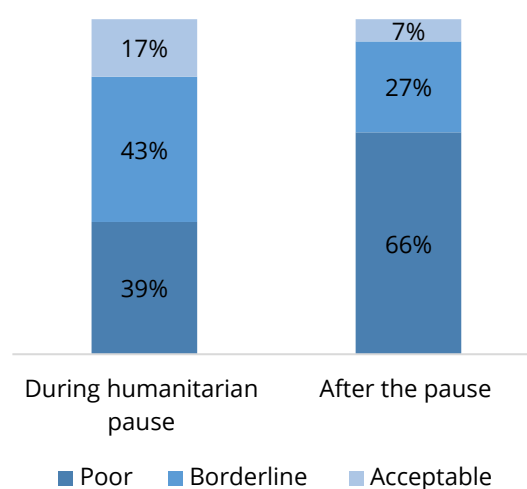
FOOD CONSUMPTION SCORE

Trend analysis has revealed an alarming 27 percentage-point surge in poor food consumption levels among IDPs in southern governorates, deteriorating from 39 to 66 percent in just 12 days. This translates to **two out of every three IDP households in southern governorates experiencing poor food consumption**. With this drastic deterioration in the consumption levels of IDPs in southern governorates compared to the pause period, **households in northern governorates are now expected to face a catastrophic consumption situation**, having already been worse compared to IDPs in the southern governorates during the pause period. Poor food consumption levels in households could manifest as a lack of daily consumption of staples and vegetables, along with nearly no intake of protein-rich foods such as meat and dairy.

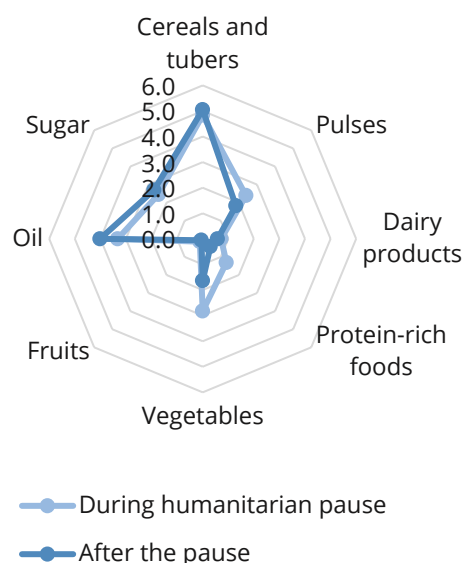
In the post-pause period, the analysis indicated a reduction in the average number of days IDPs consumed some food groups, compared to the pause period. The sole exceptions were the consumption levels of cereals and tubers, and oil, which remained stable. The consumption of protein-rich foods had further deteriorated approaching zero. The average days of consumption of pulses decreased from less than 3 days to less than 2 days, while consumption vegetables reduced from 3 to 1.5 days.

Nearly half of the IDPs in the southern governorates have reported being aware of people around them who had no choice but to resort to consuming wild or raw inedible food to cope with hunger. This reflects a seven percentage-point increase in just a matter of days, compared to 42 percent during the pause period.

FOOD CONSUMPTION SCORE OF IDPS IN SOUTHERN GOVERNORATES



AVERAGE DAYS OF CONSUMPTION OF DIFFERENT FOOD GROUPS



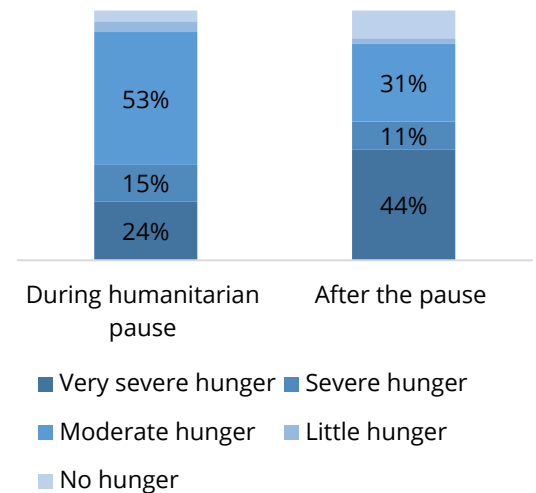
HOUSEHOLD HUNGER SCALE

The Household Hunger Scale (HHS) measures household food deprivation based on their experience of hunger. Comparisons of the HHS analysis results between the pause and post-pause periods revealed a **significant increase in IDP households classified under the 'very severe hunger' category**, while those under 'moderate hunger' have reduced.

The proportion of IDP households reporting their members going to sleep hungry at night at least 10 times in the past 30 days has increased from more than one-third (34%) during the pause to half of all households.

Another question asked IDP households whether there was no food to eat of any kind in their house in the last 30 days because of a lack of resources to obtain the food. Those reporting having experienced this situation more than 10 times in the past four weeks had increased from 38 to 69 percent in just 12 days.

HOUSEHOLD HUNGER SCALE FOR IDPS IN THE SOUTHERN GOVERNORATES

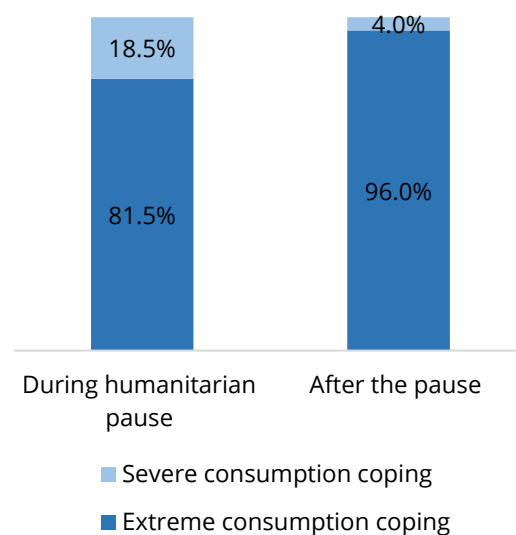


REDUCED COPING STRATEGIES INDEX

When households face a lack of food or money to buy food, they engage in behaviours such as relying on less preferred and less expensive foods, reducing portion sizes, limiting the number of daily meals, or restricting adults' consumption to allow children to eat. Capturing such behaviours shows how households deal with sudden food shortfalls and meet their short-term food needs.

Results indicated that **nearly all of IDP households in the southern governorates are resorting to extreme consumption coping strategies (96%)**, to deal with the lack of food or money to purchase food. Almost all strategies were consistently applied for an average of around seven days. The only strategy that exhibited a significantly lower average (of 3 days) is borrowing food or relying on assistance from friends or relatives. This highlights the widespread devastation among households, indicating that the **option of help and support from others is no longer possible**. This trend was also found to be consistent when comparing results from both the pause period and after. Further emphasizing the gravity of the food insecurity situation.

FOOD-BASED COPING STRATEGIES OF THE IDPS IN THE SOUTHERN GOVERNORATES



FOOD UTILIZATION

The conflict in Gaza continue to severely compromise food utilization. The absence of cooking gas has resulted in a heightened reliance on firewood, wood residues, and waste burning as a primary source of cooking fuel.

The majority of IDPs (70%) in the southern governorate of Gaza continue to burn firewood for cooking fuel. However, there has been an apparent increase in those reporting the unavailability of any kind of fuel source compared to the pause period, rising from seven to 15 percent. Meanwhile, the proportion of IDPs forced to rely on burning waste for cooking fuel has remained at 13 percent. The latter source of fuel has adverse effects on human health, exposing people to heightened risks of respiratory diseases.

The shortage of water and concerns about its safety are affecting food utilization. In besieged, war-torn Gaza, IDPs in the southern governorates have reported an average access of less than 2 liters of water per person per day. This amount is significantly lower than the Sphere Standards basic survival level at 15 litres.

METHODOLOGY

The conflict in Gaza has led to the forced displacement of 1.9 million² out of 2.2 million Palestinian people within the Strip³. The vast majority of IDPs are displaced in the southern governorates of Deir Al Balah, Khan Younis and Rafah.

Amid the humanitarian pause, WFP conducted a remote food security assessment from 27 to 30 November to assess the food security situation. During this assessment, 311 phone interviews were completed in the southern governorates of Gaza of which 233 interviews were conducted with IDPs⁴. As the situation changing rapidly, another rapid assessment was conducted between the 3rd and 12 December, where a new sample of 151 phone interviews were completed among the IDPs in the southern governorates in Gaza.

As the other population groups in Gaza such as those in north Gaza or residents represents a smaller share of the total population, the random sample was not able to capture a sufficient sample size from these groups. Therefore, this report focuses on IDPs in southern governorates in Gaza.

Please refer to WFP's [VAM Resource Centre](#) for technical information on the Food Consumption Score, Household Hunger Scale and reduced Coping Strategies Index.

² <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-67>

³ <https://data.humdata.org/dataset/cod-ps-pse>

⁴ <https://www.wfp.org/publications/gaza-food-security-assessment-december-2023>

WFP CONTACTS

Mr. Samer Abdeljaber,
Palestine Representative and Country Director
Samer.Abdeljaber@wfp.org

Mr. Salah Lahham, VAM Officer, Palestine CO
Salah.Lahham@wfp.org

Mr. Ali Jabbarin, Programme Associate, Palestine CO
Ali.Jabbarin@wfp.org