

FIJI ISLANDS



mVAM Bulletin

The data presented here was collected via the World Food Programme’s mobile Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (mVAM) survey through telephone interviews conducted across 14 provinces using random-digit dialing between February and March 2023.

HOUSEHOLD FOOD CONSUMPTION

In March 2023, food consumption patterns of 85% of Fijian households was at acceptable levels. About 13% of respondents had a “borderline” frequency and diversity of main food groups. Overall food intake of households in Fiji reduced by 13% and 9% compared to September and March of 2022 respectively.

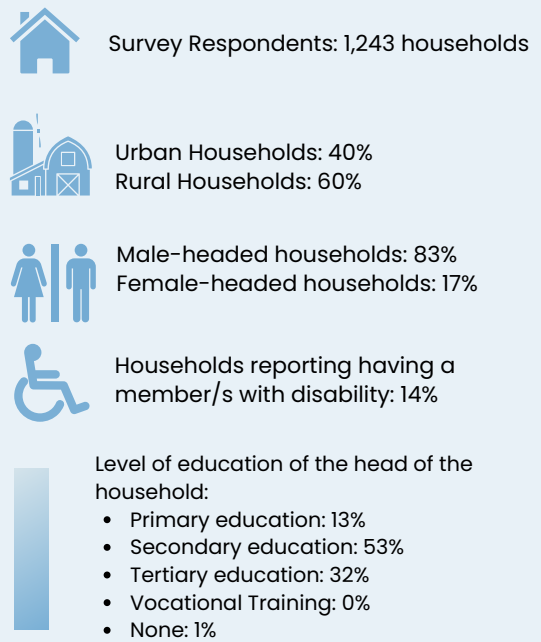


Households have been consuming more staples, fats, and sugars than the recommended levels. This trend is aligned with the patterns observed in previous rounds of the survey, suggesting a certain level of consistency in dietary choices over time by Fijian households. The consumption of foods that are essential for a balanced and healthy diet, for instance vegetables, fruits, proteins, dairy products, and pulses, is seen to have **decreased** among interviewed households. These nutrients are rich sources of vitamins, minerals and dietary fibre as well as vital sources of protein.

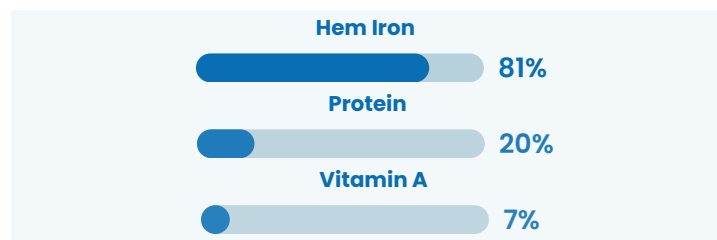
Diets have **declined** compared to September 2022. In seven days, the average Fijian household in March 2023 consumes:

STAPLES	VEGETABLES	FATS	SUGARS
5.7 days down from 6.9	5.6 days down from 6.3	5.1 days down from 6.3	4.8 days down from 6.6
FRUITS	PROTEINS	DIARY	PULSES
4.5 days down from 5.3	3.6 days down from 4.5	3.2 days down from 4.7	2.0 days down from 2.3

Sample Population at a glance :



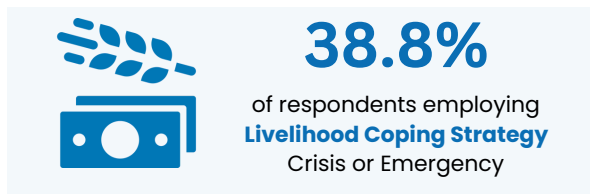
Percentage of interviewed households with low or no intake of nutrient rich food



In this quarter, intake of specific nutrient rich food by households has declined. Low or no intakes of **hem** iron was reported by 81% of the respondents, 8% more than September 2022. A Hem Iron is a crucial macronutrient required for the prevention of anemia and is typically found in animal based proteins such as meat, poultry, shellfish and fish. Insufficient intake of **protein** has been observed by 18% and **Vitamin A** by 7% of households, remaining higher by 10% and 6% respectively compared to the previous round.

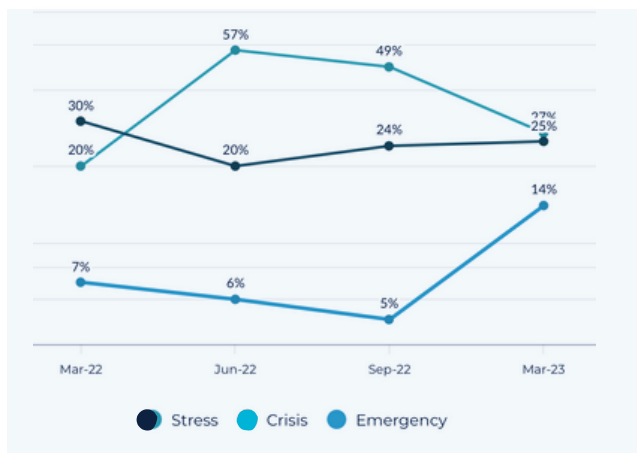
LIVELIHOOD-BASED COPING STRATEGIES (LCS)

LCS identifies negative coping strategies adopted by households to meet essential needs. It classifies households according to the most severe coping strategies adopted, which highlights how households' mid to long-term capacity to sustain livelihoods and meet their essential needs is negatively impacted by shocks or disasters.



Fijian households were seen to employ negative coping strategies to sustain their livelihoods and consumption patterns. Severe forms of coping strategies was adopted by about 39% of interviewed households, indicating improvement compared to previous two rounds. Use of such strategies in March 2023 decreased by 15% and 24% of households in comparison to September and March 2022 respectively.

Percentage of households resorting to coping strategies

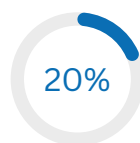


Stress strategies, such as borrowing money or spending savings, showed a slight increase - by 1% in comparison to September 2022 but a reduction of 5% compared to March 2022. Prolonged use of this strategy may reduce the ability of households to deal with future shocks given a reduction in resources or increased debt.

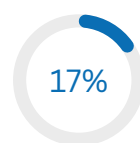
Crisis strategies decreased by a quarter in March 2023 compared to September 2022, pointing to a reduction of the practice of selling productive assets, which may affect future productivity.

Emergency strategies saw a significant increase: from 5% in September 2022 to 14% in March 2023. By selling-off major productive assets, emergency strategies may affect future productivity, thus keeping the food security conditions of the households more susceptible to shocks and crisis.

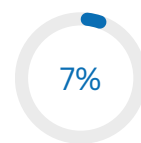
The **top three** negative coping strategies adopted by Fijian households in March 2023 were reducing health expenses, utilisation of personal savings and resorting to borrowing money or food.



Reduce health expense



Spent savings



Borrow money/food

These negative coping strategies have remained unchanged or changed insignificantly from the previous rounds, however show signs of improvement as there has been a reduction in health related expenditure. Whereas, interviewed households expressed ongoing challenges, as they continue to rely on using their personal savings and resorting to borrowing money or food.

The interviewed households employing negative coping strategies seem to be driven by **several factors** they have expressed as main concerns in this quarter. The primary and most pressing concern revolves around the experience of **food shortage**, with a substantial 57% of the surveyed households expressing this worry.

Following closely as a concern is the increase in **food prices**, cited by 4% of the interviewed households. Escalating costs of essential food items can create a considerable strain on household budgets, forcing families to make difficult decisions about their consumption patterns. This concern is closely intertwined with the overall economic conditions and inflation rates, which can have cascading effects on the affordability of basic necessities.

Another notable concern highlighted by 3% of households is the **lack of work**. The inability to secure stable employment opportunities directly impacts their financial stability and ability to meet their basic needs.



Methodology:

This mVAM Spotlight reflects data collected from February to March 2023 via remote data collection facilitated through telephone calls in participants preferred language, either Itaukei, Hindi or English. The telephone numbers were generated using random-digit dialing, yielding 1,243 households. The questionnaire contained questions on households, livelihoods, food consumption - nutritional quality, livelihood based coping strategies, multi-dimensional deprivation index, remittances, and debt. A final open ended question gives respondents the chance to share any additional concerns regarding disruptions about food security in their community. The Information collected through mobile interviews may be biased towards gender and households subscribed to the phone provider.

Other Resources: [Fiji mVAM Dashboard](#)



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