

# FIJI ISLANDS

## mVAM Bulletin

The data presented here was collected via the World Food Programme's mobile Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (mVAM) survey. Data was collected through telephone interviews conducted across 14 provinces using random-digit dialing, between October and November 2024.

### MVAM SURVEY BACKGROUND

Overall, food security in Fiji remained stable during the first three quarters of 2024. Difficulties such as high food price trends compounded by localized environmental hazards however had an impact on household consumption patterns and livelihoods in both urban and rural areas.

The Government took a proactive approach to maintain and, to the extent possible, enhance food security, including through collaborations with development partners, new programmes and policies.

Fiji's Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways launched its 5-year strategy to support farmers and facilitate sustainable food production. The Ministry of Education continued the "Back to School Support" initiative, providing FJ\$200 per child to assist families.

Other Government direct support programmes and initiatives have also contributed to households food security, sustaining livelihoods and savings.

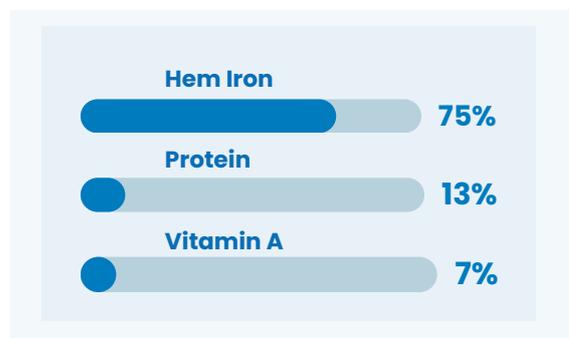
*In seven days, the average Fijian household in October 2024 consumed:*

STAPLES	VEGETABLES	FATS	SUGARS
5.2 days down from 6.6	5.1 days down from 6.1	5.0 days down from 5.1	5.5 days down from 6.0
FRUITS	PROTEINS	DIARY	PULSES
2.2 days down from 3.9	3.7 days no change 3.7	4.1 days up from 3.7	2.8 days up from 2.0

The consumption of specific nutrient-rich foods, particularly those containing hem iron declined. In October 2024, **74 percent** of respondents reported insufficient (consumed over 1 to 6 days) or no intake (never consumed over past 7 days) of hem iron rich foods. That is **10 percent** and **7 percent higher** from **September 2023** and **March 2023** respectively.

Hem iron is typically found in animal based proteins such as meat, poultry, shellfish and fish and is a crucial macronutrient essential for the prevention of anemia.

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



In October 2024, **13 percent** of households reported insufficient **protein** intake, while **7 percent** reported less consumption of **Vitamin A** rich foods.

This marks a decline from September 2023, when 22 percent and 8 percent of households reported on inadequate intake of protein and Vitamin A rich foods respectively.

### HOUSEHOLD FOOD CONSUMPTION

In October 2024, food consumption of the majority of Fijians remained stable with **84 percent** of households having acceptable food intake. **Eleven percent** of interviewed households across Fiji had **borderline** and **5 percent** had **poor** frequency and diversity of the main food groups, based on a past 7-day recall.



The proportion of households with a lower diversified food consumption pattern remained higher among **rural** populations, with **20 percent** of households **reporting** at borderline and poor food consumption levels, compared to **10 percent** of **urban** households.

Interviewed households consumed less staples, vegetables, fruits and sugars, but more dairy products and pulses over past 7 days compared to the last round of mVAM in September 2023.

## LIVELIHOOD-BASED COPING STRATEGIES (LCS)

LCS identifies negative coping strategies adopted by households and captures the activities households have to engage in when there aren't enough **resources** available (food, cash) to access essential needs (e.g. adequate shelter, education services, health services or other basic needs).



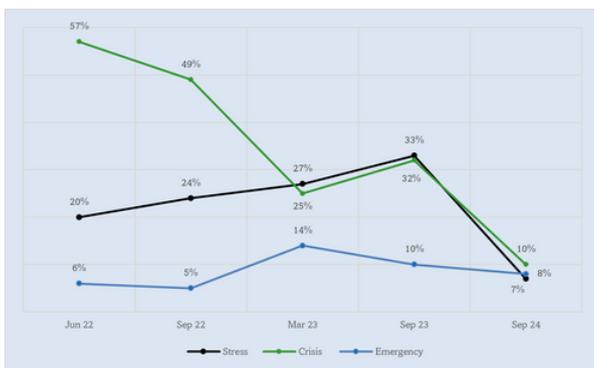
**18.7 %**

of respondents employing a **Livelihood Coping Strategy** Crisis or Emergency

Households across Fiji reported using various negative coping strategies to maintain their consumption patterns and livelihoods when faced with a shock or disaster. In October 2024, **19 percent** of respondents resorted to extreme strategies – **crisis** and **emergency**, indicating a significant – 24 percent – decrease in comparison with the proportion of households adopting these strategies in September 2023 (42 percent).

Reduction in the use of emergency and crisis negative coping strategies reflects a notable decline in the households practices of selling productive assets and ensuring maintaining human capital to minimize impacts of future shocks and disasters.

### Percentage of households resorting to coping strategies



A 2 percent decrease was recorded in adoption of **Emergency** coping strategies in comparison with September 2023, with 8 percent of interviewed households adopting this strategy to access food and other essential needs.

The proportion of households employing **Crisis** strategies, such as selling productive assets or means of transport, **reducing expenses on health** (including medications) and **education**, taking children out of school, also dropped by **22 percent** in October 2024 compared to the same period last year, with **10 percent** of households resorting to these coping strategies.

Of those using Emergency and Crisis coping strategies **female-headed** households were more than **male-headed** households: 25 percent and 18 percent respectively.

**Stress** coping strategies, such as borrowing money or spending savings, applied by **8 percent** of households also decreased – by 17 percent – in comparison with September 2023.

Spending savings to sustain livelihoods and meet essential needs can result in a depletion of savings or an increase in debt and reduce short-term ability of households to address future shocks.

The **top three** negative coping strategies adopted by Fijian households in October 2024 included reducing health expenses, selling houses/lands and the use of personal savings.



**Reduce health expense**



**Sold Houses/Land**



**Spent Savings**

Reducing spending on health was cited by 24 percent of respondents as a top concern in September 2023. In October 2024, 8 percent of respondents adopted this negative coping strategy to cope with a shock and/or a disaster.

The use of negative coping strategies by households was driven by several factors. The primary concern of **88 percent** of the respondents was the **high cost of food**. Increase in the cost of essential food items created considerable pressure on households budgets, impacting affordability of basic necessities, dietary choice and decisions about the frequency and diversity of meals.

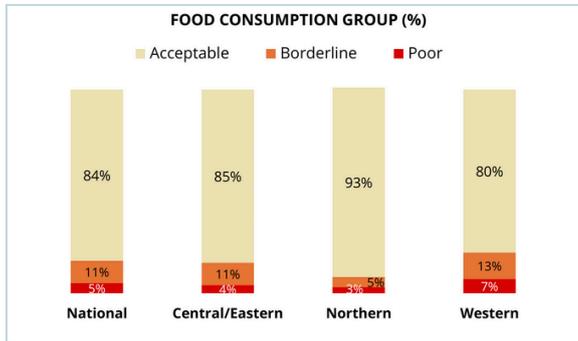
### Interviewed Households Top Three Concerns



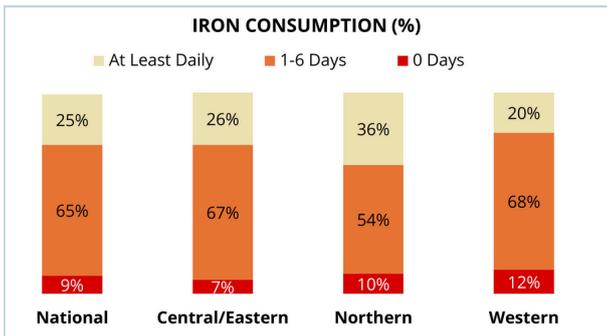
The other noteworthy concerns highlighted by the interviewed households were the disruption of livelihoods followed by lack of employment.

## SUB-NATIONAL ANALYSIS

In October 2024, the survey highlighted that across Fiji, **Western Division** had the highest number of households with inadequate food consumption levels, with **20 percent** reporting borderline and poor frequency and diversity of diet.

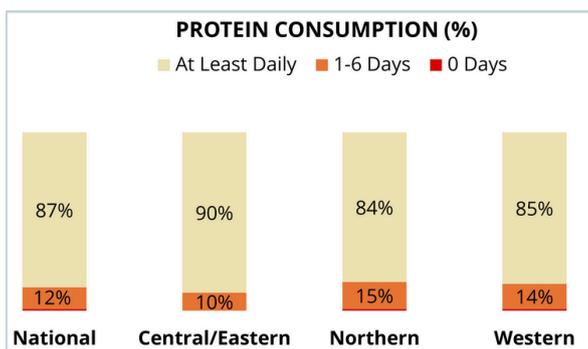


**Nadroga-Navosa** Province in the Western division had the most households - **31 percent** with inadequate food consumption patterns, followed by **Naitasiri** province in Central division with **29 percent** and **Ra** province in Western division with **27 percent** respectively. Households in Tailevu, Rewa and Cakaudrove had the lowest frequency and diversity of main food groups.



Insufficient consumption of iron-rich food (1-6 days) was reported by over **50 percent** of households in all four divisions. In Western and Northern divisions, **12 percent** and **10 percent** of households had not consumed iron-rich foods for the past 7 days respectively.

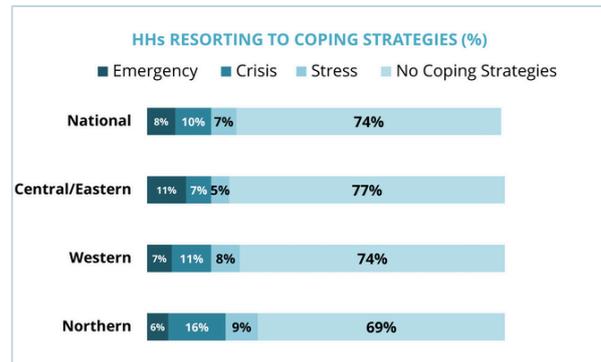
The provinces with highest proportion of households with "zero days" iron consumption were Cakaudrove (24 percent) and Nadroga-Navosa (19 percent) in the Western division and Naitasiri (12 percent) in the Central division.



Over **10 percent** of households in the 3 divisions had consumed insufficient **protein-rich** foods (1-6 days in a week).

Households in provinces of **Tailevu** (Eastern division), **Macuata** (Western division) and **Rewa** (Northern division) reported consuming the lowest quantity of protein in last 7 days.

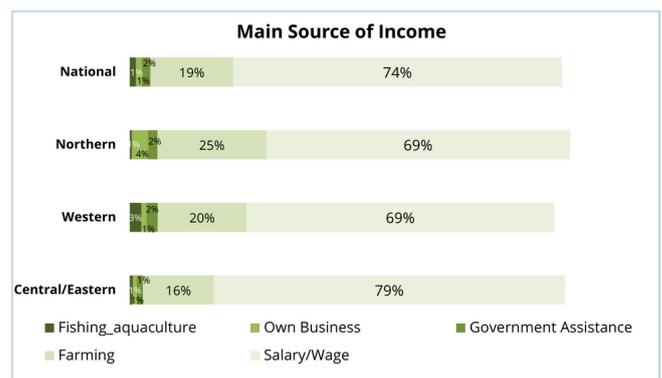
Households in four divisions used various coping strategies to maintain their consumption patterns and livelihoods. **Emergency** and **crisis coping strategies** - was used by **11 percent** and **7 percent** of interviewed households in Central/ Eastern and Western divisions respectively.



Around **16 percent** of the respondents adopted **crisis** strategies in Northern division (the highest among the four divisions) when facing a shock for past quarter. Another **9 percent** of respondents in Northern and **8 percent** in Western provinces noted using their personal savings and/or borrowing money or food to cope with the situation when shock hit.

Over 85 percent of respondents living in **rural** areas across four divisions mentioned the **high food prices** as a top concern. In **urban** locations, increased prices for food remains as the main worry for **90 percent** households.

Salary/wage was a **main source** of income for **74 percent** of respondents. Nineteen percent of interviewed households earned their income from farming. Other main sources of income of respondents included self-employment and fishing.



## Methodology:

This mVAM Bulletin reflects data collected in October and November 2024 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 1,341 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](https://resources.vam.wfp.org)  
<https://resources.vam.wfp.org>

## Bulletins & Dashboard:



## Sample Population at a glance :



Survey Respondents: 1,341 households



Urban Households: 43 percent  
Rural Households: 57 percent



Male-headed households: 83 percent  
Female-headed households: 17 percent



Households reporting having a member/s with disability: 6 percent

Level of education of the head of the household:

- Primary education: 24 percent
- Secondary education: 52 percent
- Tertiary education: 22 percent
- Vocational Training: 0.4 percent
- None: 2 percent



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