

November 2013

Highlights

- There are currently over 200,000 Syrians accommodated in camps and there are expected to be 300,000 by the end of the year, almost all of these households are reliant on food assistance to meet their basic needs.
- In the camps where WFP and the Turkish Red Crescent implement a joint food assistance programme, 99 percent of households have Adequate Food Consumption, as measured by a standardised Food Consumption Score.
- In the camps where WFP is operational, the continuation of WFP food assistance is vital to ensure an adequate diet, with more than three-quarters of all beneficiaries relying solely on WFP assistance to purchase food.
- Little information is known about the food security needs outside of camps, however it is evident that thousands of people have reached a point of destitution and can-not meet their basic food needs and that food security needs are likely to be increasing.

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this food security and needs review is to provide a stocktake on the current food security situation and food needs of Syrians in Turkey utilising the limited available data as a supplement to the recent “Syrian Refugees in Turkey, 2013 Field Survey Results” report released by the Government of Turkey. Within this broad context, the paper focuses on data obtained in the 14 camps¹ where WFP and the Turkish Red Crescent Society (TRC) support the Government in the provision of food assistance. It includes the results of over 800 household surveys over a seven month period (March – September). Primary food security data has not been collected for populations living outside of camps and there is insufficient secondary data available to ascertain the food security situation of this population or their level of need.

Background

As the crisis in Syria extends beyond three years, the enduring and escalating nature of the humanitarian needs of Syrians in Turkey far exceed initial projections. There are now over 500,000 registered Syrians in Turkey. According to the Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD), which is the main Governmental agency responsible for supporting Syrian’s in Turkey, 200,000 Syrians (about 36 percent of all registered Syrian refugees in Turkey) are accommodated in camps and over 300,000 registered refugees (64 percent) live outside of camps. However, the registration of Syrians living outside of camps is ongoing, and the Government of Turkey (GoT) estimates that the actual population is

¹ Altinozu 1, Altinozu 2 (Boynuyogun), Saricam, Yayladagi 1, Yayladagi 2, Cevdediye, Harran, Islahiye, Karkamis, Kahramanmaras (Merkez), Nizip 1, Nizip 2 and Oncupinar, Adiyaman (Merkez).

significantly greater². About 17 percent of families living in camps are headed by a woman compared to 22 percent of families outside of camps³.

Refugees settled in camps managed by AFAD are provided with food, shelter, education, basic services and medical assistance. WFP and TRC jointly provide food assistance via an Electronic Food Card programme in 14 camps, and the Government provides food assistance in the other seven camps with hot meals and/or an electronic food card modality.

Registered refugees living outside of the camps are allowed to access free health care and education but receive minimal other assistance to meet their basic needs. In many areas, efforts are being made at a local level to provide food assistance through existing State and non-government social security mechanisms, however this is occurring in an ad hoc manner. According to UNHCR, there is a growing level of destitution amongst the poorest Syrians families that are living outside of camps⁴, with increasingly visual signs of this (including families sleeping in public places such as parks and abandoned buildings).

Estimated Number of Syrian Refugees and Food Security Needs by 2014

Arrivals are expected to continue throughout and beyond 2014. Based on arrival trends and as foreseen by the GoT, the number of Syrian refugees in Turkey is expected to reach 1,000,000 by the end of 2014, with 300,000 living in camps and 700,000 outside of camps.

Admissions into camps vary widely per month depending on space availability in existing camps and when new camps are opened. An enhanced registration capacity for Syrians outside camps is planned by the Government of Turkey in 2014, for which Turkey has established Coordination Centres in Gaziantep, Sanliurfa and Kilis for the (basic) registration of urban Syrian refugees.

Demographic profile and vulnerable groups

Of the 200,000 Syrians in camps, 75 percent are women and children, 52 percent are male and 48 percent female.⁵ In general, it is considered that families who opt to live in camps are the most vulnerable when they enter Turkey however once admitted to camps they received a very high level of assistance.



*A Syrian mother bakes traditional bread with wheat purchased on her WFP/TRC E-Food Card.
Photo: Christina Hobbs, WFP Turkey*

² Source: Survey conducted by the Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD), June-July 2013.

³ Ibid

⁴ Source: DRAFT Regional Response Plan Six – Turkey, UNCR, October 2013.

⁵ Source: Survey conducted by the Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD), July 2013.

It is assumed that Syrians living in camps will continue to require assistance to meet their basic food needs. There is insufficient information available to ascertain the food security situation outside of camps. However, it is presumed that a substantial percentage of the population outside of camps is already food insecure and unable to meet its basic food needs. It is also expected that in 2014 the pressure on families living outside of camps will increase substantially as more households deplete their resources and positions in camps become more difficult to obtain.

The living condition of Syrians accommodated outside of camps, including their access to national services, is of concern for both UNHCR and the authorities. The protracted nature of the displacement means that refugees are exhausting their resources and struggling to make ends meet. According to GoT figures, one out of four non-camp refugee lives in inadequate conditions or in an open area. About 62 percent of Syrian refugees living out of camp live together with at least seven people in sometimes very crowded conditions, and these types of living conditions are being experienced by Syrians in almost all provinces of Turkey.

Given that the population waiting access to camps (both in Turkey and on the Syrian side of the border) exceeds the available accommodation in camps, the level of vulnerability is likely to be increasing.

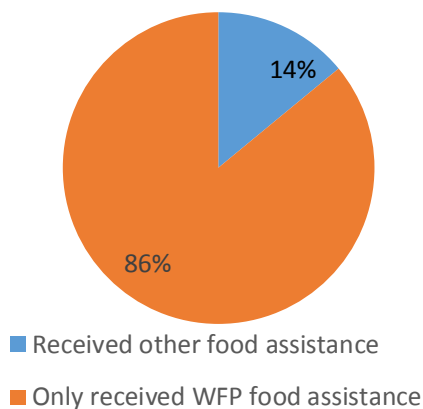
Food Availability and Prices

Food markets across Turkey are strongly integrated to regional and global markets and therefore food availability is not an issue of concern. In addition, the estimated Syrian population of 1,000,000 in Turkey by the end of 2014 is relatively small in comparison to the total Turkish population of 73.6m, and is not expected to have any notable impact on food price inflation at a national or regional level. In the rural and urban areas hosting high concentrations of Syrians there are typically multiple large supermarket chains, as well as smaller supermarkets and markets.

- In the latter part of 2012, the Turkish Statistical Institute indicated a reduction in annual food price inflation to 3.7 percent, from 10.6 percent recorded in 2011, and a decrease in the general Cost Price Index (CPI) rate. From January to October 2013, the general CPI has risen to a similar level as experienced during 2011 which may indicate an opportunity for per capita cost saving that will warrant more detailed local market assessment.

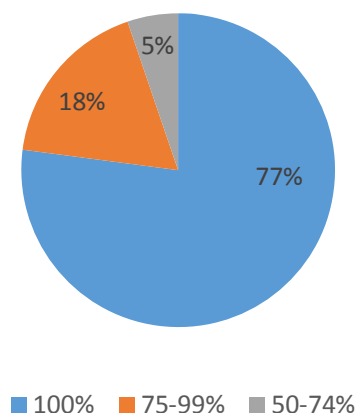
Food Access

Figure 1. Reliance on WFP food assistance in camps where WFP operates



In camps where WFP is operational, the assistance provided is generally the only form of significant food assistance received. It was found that 86 percent of WFP beneficiaries received food assistance only from WFP. Of the 14 percent of households that received some other form of food assistance, this was typically either loaning or gifting from other households or small scale assistance from the government – either for banned WFP food items or special distributions (such as meat in some camps during the festival period).

Figure 2. Percentage of total food consumed by household that is supported by WFP assistance



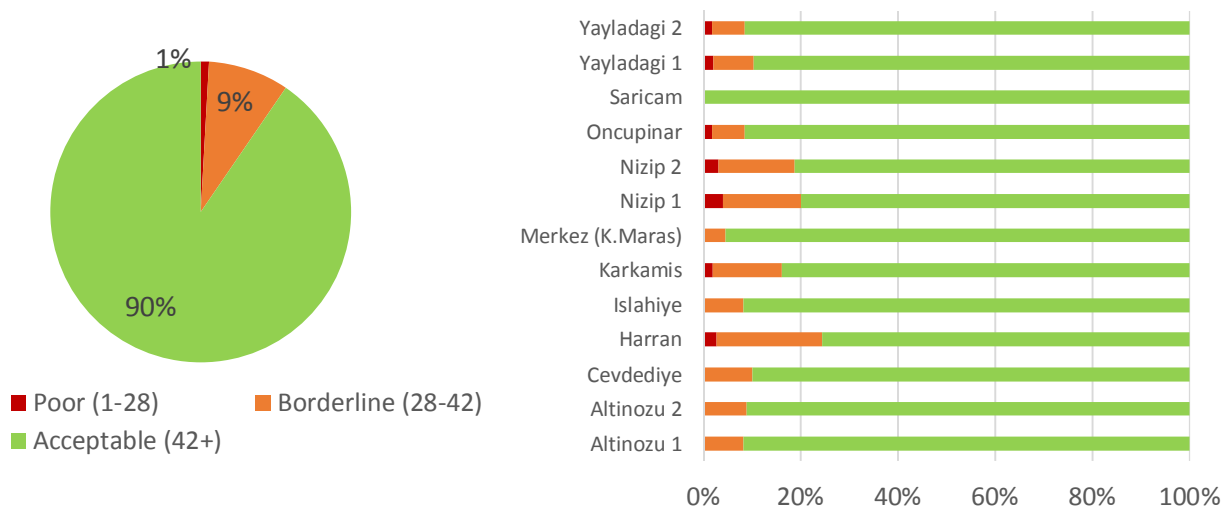
In camps where WFP provides food assistance, most households rely on the assistance provided to meet their entire dietary needs. In the camps where WFP operates, 95 percent of all WFP beneficiaries consumed more than 75 percent of their total diet from WFP assistance.

Food Security Outcomes in Camps where WFP is Operational- Consumption and Coping Strategies

Food Consumption Score

In order to ascertain the adequacy of food consumption in camps where WFP is operational, a standard Food Consumption Score (FCS) was generated. The FCS considers the amount of times a household consumed food from various food groups over a seven day recall period. It is a measure of both quantity and variety of the diet. The findings showed that 99 percent of Syrians in the camps where WFP and TRC operate are consuming an adequate diet (with either a borderline or acceptable FCS). There was no significant difference between female and male headed households and no camp had higher than two percent of households with poor consumption. While no data is available from camps in which the government is providing food assistance, a review by WFP indicates that the quantity and variety of food provided is likely to also result in adequate dietary outcomes.

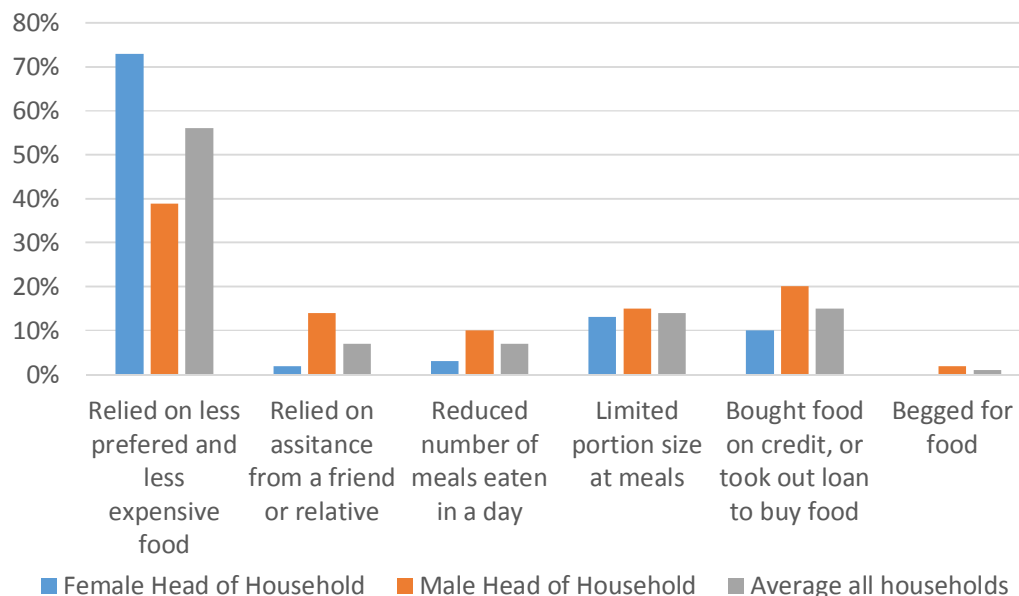
Figure 3. Food Consumption in camps where WFP is operational



Coping Strategies

Figure 4 below shows the coping strategies that are used by some households to meet basic food needs, when the assistance provided by WFP and TRC is not perceived to be sufficient. Of households surveyed, 15 percent said they had adopted one of these strategies. As can be seen, the most common mechanism is to rely on less preferred foods, this often results in reduced consumption of meat and other costly items compared to normal eating habits. However, as can be seen from the Food Consumption Score, most households are still consuming adequate diets in terms of quantity and variety. It can be seen that females are more likely to cope by reducing their consumption of least preferred foods compared to men who are slightly more likely to rely on assistance from family members or friends or to purchase food with credit or loans. Overall, the use of negative coping strategies is low and demonstrates that the level of food assistance is adequate to meet basic needs.

Figure 4. Coping strategies employed in camps where WFP is operational



Implications and Way Forward

- The findings of WFP monitoring show that in camps where food assistance is being provided by WFP and TRC there is adequate consumption, which highlights that existing assistance is sufficient and that most households are managing their food budgets adequately.
- Reduced CPI inflation in 2013, may indicate an opportunity for per capita cost savings, however any review of the voucher value would require a more detailed local market assessment.
- The number of Syrians in camps is expected to increase to 300,000 in 2014 and then be capped at this amount. This will result in up to 700,000 Syrians living outside of camps in 2014 which will significantly shift the food security dynamics. The level of destitution amongst the poorest households outside of camps will likely increase in 2014 and WFP will continue to work with the Government and UNHCR to strengthen knowledge of this population and to provide technical assistance as required for the design and implementation of food assistance to this population.
- WFP continues strengthening its robust food security and programme monitoring system in camps in which it is operational and a more comprehensive food security update is expected to be available in late 2013/early 2014.



A young boy poses in front of a WFP/TRC programme information poster.

Photo: Christina Hobbs, WFP Turkey

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