

Food Insecure and  
Vulnerable People in  
Jordan

Jordan

December 2012



**World Food Programme**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WFP has a long standing commitment to Jordan and its people since 1964. Over 18 million trees have been planted in Jordan under WFP food-for-work programmes. In 2011, WFP embarked on an initiative to embed food security indicators into the government conducted surveys at the household level. As a result, the government statistics now include food security and vulnerability data. The Executive Director visited Jordan recently and held high level meetings with the government which highlighted the growing needs of poor in Jordan. The ED instructed formulation of a mission to design targeted cash or food for work interventions to boost the local economy and increase self-reliance. This report presents VAM findings of the mission.

Jordan is in a protracted economic crisis since 2008. Poverty is estimated at 14% while the food insecure and vulnerable are 2.4%. The 14% unemployment is rising and is expected to worsen due to the high population growth of 3% per annum and low rate of job creation. About 50% of the workforce is directly or indirectly employed by the state. The hilly terrain and low precipitation renders poorly for cereal production and the state imports 90% of wheat consumed as the staple diet. Poverty in Jordan is chronic exasperated by external shocks.

Jordan is a small country of 6.3 million people strategically located in the midst of the conflicts of Palestine, Iraq and Syria with direct impacts on the financial status of the government and the well-being of its citizens. Waves of refugees have camped, settled and joined the local workforce benefitting from the social services, safety nets and high standards of living. The recent Syria crisis has resulted in 240 thousand refugees. This is a sizable number compared to the total population and far exceeds the total number of poor in Jordan.

Poverty and food insecurity are more concentrated in the rural areas where people own small parcels of low production agricultural land. A series of development projects undertaken by the Ministry of Agriculture, in partnership with the Alliance Against Hunger and technical inputs from UN agencies have proven good results. Rainwater harvesting programmes have been popular and successful in this country which is ranked amongst the five most water-deficit countries of the world. De-rocking, planting of home gardens, growing of alfalfa grass and planting of olive trees are traditional activities that lead poor people out of poverty and improve their food consumption and food security. For urban areas, poverty is linked to unemployment. There is a poor link between education and needs of the job market. Social preferences and biases towards job categories also play a role. Less preferred jobs are taken by expatriate labour which amounts to 30% of the labour force. Women participation, at 19% is a small portion of the labour force.

The WFP programme would create assets that would raise the resilience through asset creation and provide poor families the opportunity for better nutrition and incomes. The designed programme is in line with the government's Economic Development Programme, Poverty Reduction Strategy and the United Nations Development Framework. It carries the spirit of *Kulluna Al Urdun* (We Are All Jordan) initiative.

## 1.0 BACKGROUND

At a meeting in August 2011 the Minister of Agriculture and the WFP Regional Director agreed that WFP would provide assistance to Jordan under a development project that targets regions with the highest poverty rates in rural areas. Consequently, a letter from the Ministry of Agriculture was addressed to the WFP Executive Director stipulating that the Government of Jordan “seeks assistance and support for implementing water harvesting and forestry projects, which are considered a priority for increasing water allocated for the agriculture sector and supporting agricultural projects, we also request assistance in the areas of income generating activities and training that targets the poor, which aims at enhancing their livelihoods and improving their food security. Lastly, we request emergency assistance for drought affected farmers and livestock breeders as you deem appropriate, in order to alleviate the financial burden on the state treasury already caused by providing direct aid for refugees from different nationalities”.

During her November 2012 visit to the Syrian refugee camp in Jordan, the Executive Director also met with senior Jordanian government officials and donors in Amman. At their meeting, the Prime Minister noted that “the massive influx of refugees has significantly increased pressure on the national economy and public services. The negative impact has been particularly hard on the most food insecure households in the “poverty pockets”; some of them are even more vulnerable and poorer than refugee households. Further deterioration of the Syrian conflict would further exacerbate food security concerns”.

The ED informed donors that “she was asked by the Government of Jordan to reconsider and expand WFP’s country programme in order to meet the growing needs of the poor in Jordan. WFP is planning to expand voucher programs to host communities and is also ready to initiate targeted food/cash for work interventions to boost local economy and increase self-resilience”.

As a result of this commitment, a mission consisting of Regional Bureau and Headquarters members visited Jordan in Nov/December. Terms of Reference of the mission are attached. The main objective of the mission was to design a project for the poor and vulnerable people of Jordan. This report captures VAM findings of the mission to feed into the new project for ED approval.

### 1.1. WFP in Jordan

WFP began operations in Jordan in 1964, supporting the government with almost US\$200 million in development and emergency operations. Developmental operations focused on the agricultural sector, with the majority of activities geared to farmland development, forestry, rangeland establishment and animal husbandry, in line with the government's highland development strategy which aimed at transforming vast arable barren areas into productive and sustainable resources. As a result, 18 million trees planted in Jordan were achieved under the WFP operations<sup>1</sup>. WFP also provided US\$30 million of relief assistance to the government through emergency food assistance to victims of droughts, frosts, and regional conflicts. From 1965 to 1996, WFP invested over US\$ 30 million in school feeding, realizing significant improvements in enrollment rates. In 1998 the government initiated a

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<sup>1</sup> Project Report, Programme Management Unit, Ministry of Agriculture

universal school feeding program, aiming at reaching all schools around the country. In January 2013 WFP will start a three year school feeding programme with Russian funding.

After a decade of implementation, WFP's last food based project was phased out in 2007. GoJ expressed its strong interest in further WFP presence and cooperation, and WFP agreed to a modified role which included: advocacy for food security and hunger alleviation; support to GoJ in vulnerability / food security assessments and monitoring; support to GoJ in designing and implementing safety net programmes; support to drought early warning system; emergency stand-by capacity; logistical functions for humanitarian assistance to neighboring countries; cooperation among UN Agencies in fields of its core competencies; enhanced cooperation with other partners in fields of core competencies; contingency support to Iraqi Refugees in Jordan; and follow-up of existing operations. WFP continued with a limited programme of work during 2008-9:

- a) strengthening government response and planning for drought, and cooperating with the National Center for Agricultural Research and Extension (NCARE) to establish a drought early warning unit, and improve NCARE's capacity, systems and operations in terms of national "preparedness", and its ability to respond to emergencies and the delivery of humanitarian assistance beyond WFP's support/involvement
- b) cooperation with the Jordan Alliance Against Hunger on a food security survey in the "poverty pockets" in Jordan, to assess the impact of food price increases at the household level, and to identify the areas most vulnerable to food insecurity; set-up of a food security database covering the poverty pockets, and means of sustained assistance identified. The survey enabled for the first time an understanding of a new dimension of poverty-related vulnerability, as the first research done into food security at the household level in Jordan, by calculating both food insecurity and vulnerability rates in the poverty pockets, and identifying the sources of food insecurity. It also recommended areas for future interventions; and
- c) in the context of SO5, a study was undertaken in 2010 to review existing food subsidy and social safety net systems in Jordan and identify opportunities for WFP capacity support. A markets analysis was conducted in 2012 which concluded the country was more suitable for cash or voucher transfer modality.

## 1.2. Food Security Monitoring

WFP has contributed to a Food Security Monitoring System for Jordan. The approach adopted consisted on the premise that it would be more efficient and sustainable if the existing information gathering systems of the government were improved with food security indicators. The first step was a study of the existing information systems. The most appropriate tool was found to be the Household Income and Expenditure Survey originally established under World Bank guidelines. The second step was a series of sensitization meetings/workshops where the government was introduced to food security and the need for food security monitoring. The third step was to provide training to technical staff at the Department of Statistics (DOS) in food security data collection. The key indicators introduced to the HIES process were a) Food Consumption and b) Coping Strategies. Technical staff were trained on how to interview households on these indicators and how to generate the Food Consumption Score and the Coping Strategy Index. Finally, analysis

training was provided to senior analysis on how to generate food security statistics from the household data and how to link food security with poverty indicators. As a result the HIES 2010 includes food security parameters and the resulting report contains a food security chapter. The results ensure that the food security data are compatible with all other household level data generated by the government. It also ensures the 2010 baseline could be used in successive surveys to monitor the food consumption and stress levels of food insecure populations.

### 1.3. Country Strategy

A series of consultations were undertaken during 2008-9, together with other activities as per WFP provisional guidance. An orientation meeting in May 2009 between the programme team from the regional bureau and government's stakeholders from the MoPIC, MoA, MoIT and JAAH, was convened to build consensus on intervention priorities in light of the new assistance modalities. A second series of consultations in November 2009, incorporated feedback from previous government discussions and documents provided by the WFP Jordan office, and has resulted in this document.

The preparation of a strategy for WFP Jordan was planned to result in corporate endorsement that the office would enter a period of handover and exit during 2010-11 before the closure of the office by 2012. This strategy also recommended that a staff retreat be held with the team in Jordan as early as possible in 2010, facilitated by the Regional Bureau, to develop a detailed implementation plan, address key questions arising from the direction laid out in the Strategy document, including the implications and decisions concerning staff roles and responsibilities, and the decision on whether to proceed with the strategy, or not.

## 2.0 GOVERNMENT

### 2.1. Jordan Overview

Jordan is situated on the east bank of the Jordan River, bordering Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Israel and Palestine. With 6.3 million inhabitants and per capita income of US\$2,500<sup>2</sup>, Jordan is a lower-middle income, resource-poor, food deficit country with limited agricultural land, no oil resources and serious water scarcity, ranking 95 out of 187 on the Human Development Index (HDI),<sup>3</sup> and with unemployment and poverty rates of 12.9%<sup>4</sup> and 14.4%<sup>5</sup> respectively. The 2011 HDI ranks Jordan at 95 out of 187 countries<sup>6</sup>. The high volatility of the regional political context places extra burdens on Jordan. During the Gulf War in 1991, almost 340,000 Jordanians (10% of the population at that time) were repatriated, straining the infrastructure, even though US\$1.6 billion was injected into the economy. During the war in Iraq, in 2003, large numbers of people crossed the borders seeking asylum and 450,000-500,000 Iraqis<sup>7</sup> currently live in Jordan, placing considerable stress on resources.

### 2.2. Syrian Crisis

According to the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, by November 2012, there were 240 thousand Syrians in Jordan. This is 4% of the total Jordanian population; higher than the number of food insecure/vulnerable local population; and more than a quarter of the poor population. Syrians are spread across the country adding pressure on municipal services. Hosting such a large number of displaced people has direct and indirect costs including depletion of resources, competition in the limited labour market, access to subsidised food, water, electricity, gas, schools and health services. Like Iraqi refugees, Syrians have free access to schools. Currently there are 21 thousand Syrian students enrolled and another 9 thousand on the waiting lists. (For detailed expenses incurred by the government due to the Syrian crisis see Joint Jordan-UN Appeal October 2012.) The World Bank is compiling a detailed analysis of the impact of the Syrian crisis on the poor in Jordan.

### 2.3. Economy

Jordan is in a protracted economic crisis. The poor resource base and the weakness of real sector<sup>8</sup> economy jeopardize the steady growth and leave the economy vulnerable to adverse international dynamics. The Government ended subsidies for petroleum and other consumer goods in 2008 in an effort to control the budget<sup>9</sup>. The fuel subsidy was eventually reinstated only to be withdrawn in November 2012. For details on macro-financial status see WFP Macro-financial Analysis of Jordan March 2012.

The agricultural sector, a source of income for more than 15% of the population, continues to grapple with the challenges of scarce water,<sup>10</sup> recurrent droughts, urbanization and desertification, producing no more than 8-10% of cereal requirements. Over 90% of cereal needs are imported and Jordan is among the countries most affected by the food price increases.<sup>11</sup> Inflation averaged 13.9% in 2008 with food the major contributor.<sup>12</sup> The thin

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2 HDR 2007/2008

3 Human Development Report 2011

4 EBRD Jordan Assessment Report Sep 2012

5 HIES 2010

6 Human Development Report Jordan 2011

7 Iraqis in Jordan: Figure quoted by MoPIC in meeting with WFP Mission 27Dec2012.

8 The real sector of the economy is the sector that produces tangible things. Services are not part of the real sector.

9 Source: CIA World Factbook: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

10 Jordan is one of the world's five most water-deficit countries

11 FAO

cereal market, inelasticity of demand and limited storage give no space to manoeuvre around fluctuating prices and impose high budgetary strains on the Government.

The high food and fuel crisis followed by the recent Syrian crisis has had adverse effects on tourism, remittances and FDI inflows. Food costs have risen adding more people to the poverty line. Growth levels have reduced to half then the year average and stood at only 2.3% in 2011. Current account deficit widened to 12% of GDP from 7% and primary fiscal deficit increased to 9.6% from 5.6% while gross public debt level reached 71% of GDP (2011 figures). This difficult macro-economic environment has limited finances available for capital investments in priority sectors such as poverty reduction and employment generation. The most telling factor indicative of the financial status is the recent (November 2012) withdrawal of the nationwide fuel subsidy. As a consequence, gas prices rose by 40 percent. On account of its financial status, in May 2012, Jordan became an OECD recipient country.

In spite of the various poverty reduction strategies in place, the Executive Development Program 2011-13 acknowledges the following challenges:

- Poverty is not being addressed in a multi-dimensional and comprehensive manner.
- The weak link between wage levels and inflation rates.
- The weakness of the concept of social responsibility in the contribution of the private sector and non-governmental organizations in activities relating to combating poverty.
- The increase in housing costs beyond the capabilities of poor households.
- The decrease in the level of social welfare services and the weak institutional capacity of those in charge.
- The absence of a link between cash assistance and the general improvement of standards of living of the poor.
- Poor coordination and cooperation between public and private sectors, leading to the marginalization of issues related to persons with disabilities and special needs.
- Weak cooperation and proper coordination between the sectors involved in the promotion of social solidarity and the fight against poverty. This leads to duplication in the work of these institutions and a waste of resources and capabilities.

The 14 objectives outlined in the Executive Development Program 2011-13 include:

- enhance the agricultural sector's competitiveness and raise its quantitative and qualitative productivity
- promote local development to achieve a high level of developmental balance between governorates, protect the middle class, reduce poverty and reduce unemployment
- expand the base of social services, provide infrastructure including appropriate housing and focus on poverty pockets
- develop water resources and upgrade their management efficiency

According to the National Agenda (2006-15) the active-to-total population ratio is one of the worst in the world with 4 non-active individuals dependent on one single worker. The workforce consists of 30% foreign workers and only 19% of women<sup>13</sup>.

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12 Central Bank of Jordan 2008

13 Executive Development Programme 2011-13

## 2.4. Social Safety Nets

Considering social safety net spending as a share of GDP (purchasing power parity), Jordan at about 1.4% of GDP, spends a greater share of GDP than Yemen (about 1.1%) and less than Egypt (about 1.7 %) <sup>14</sup>.

The government safety nets consist of cash through the NAF, food subsidy, health insurance, school feeding and the recently withdrawn fuel subsidy. NAF is the most significant safety net. The regulations list 16 categories of eligible beneficiaries: Families with orphans who are less than 28 years of age, widows with orphans, families with disabled persons, families of detained or prisoners, elderly individuals, foster families, young women (above 18 years of age), divorced women, Jordanian women who are married to non-Jordanians, humanitarian cases, deserted women, persons receiving both assistance and rehabilitation loans, families of workers on an irregular basis, families of missing and absent fathers, those receiving Handicapped Care Aid, and any other category that is approved by the Board. It is a top-up scheme whereby selected beneficiaries receive a monthly cash transfer. The applicant family's monthly income is calculated topped-up through the cash transfer to reach JD 180 for a family of 5. This figure is much less than the poverty line of JD 290 per family per month. Selection criteria include:

- a) a family income less than JD 180 and
- b) the head of household is unable to work due to health, age, disability etc.

This means that other members of a NAF recipient family could be able to work. A family is not eligible if the head of household is able to work. This consideration would be important while considering food for assets programming. The other cash transfer is under the Zakat fund. However, that transfer is only JD 30/family/month and is considered as income while calculating the NAF transfer.

Currently, NAF is supporting 87 thousand families (about 250 thousand people) through 76 centres across the country. The money is transferred through the local post offices. The post office charges NAF JD 0.5 per family per month. The government has phased out the voucher scheme and NAF advised the Royal court against in-kind distributions. The other significant subsidy is bread (wheat flour) which is sold throughout the country at a subsidized price. NAF Assistance Programmes include:

- a) Recurring Cash Assistance: persons or families with income below the abject poverty line. The monthly payments range in amounts from 40JD up to 180JD, depending on income, assets and family circumstances.
- b) Individuals are eligible if income falls below the national abject poverty line (24JD/person/month or 139JD/family/month, 2008).
- c) Handicapped Care Aid Cash: poor families who provide care to disabled child(ren)
- d) Health Insurance Card Fees: For health insurance cards to beneficiaries of the cash assistance programmes.
- e) Vocational training Fee Programme: Vocational training for NAF beneficiaries. The program covers fees for vocational training institutions to provide access to job opportunities.

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<sup>14</sup> Social Protection Public Expenditure Perspective Working Paper, USAID, August 2011.

Percentage of successful job placement by the program is very low, due in some instances to the “culture of shame” or unwillingness of trainee to accept low-paying or perceived low-esteem jobs (according to NAF officials). Other reasons cited for low job placement include job offers are outside of the home area or the jobs are for females. Traditionally, jobs requiring transport are less favourable to women workers. This is an important factor for WFP programme decisions. Female workers would be more inclined to tend vegetable gardens on their own lands without need for transport. Similarly the FFW activity of de-rocking and tree planting would be on their own lands, again not requiring transport.

## 3.0 FOOD SECURITY

### 3.1. Food Security Classification

The household food consumption score is a method used to classify consumption and dietary diversity. A seven day recall of food consumption is recorded. Foods are categorised by their nutrient value and assigned weights. The frequency of consumption and the weights are combined to reach a household score. The households were classified into three categories according to the degree of food consumption, as follows:

**Food insecure:** Households with poor food consumption. Households falling under this profile are thought to be in a state where they do not have the resources to maintain adequate level of food supply around the year. The lack of funding and positive coping mechanisms, indicate lack of assets. In addition to food and non-food assistance, long-term intervention and support is required to create sustainable livelihoods for this group.

**Vulnerable:** Households with borderline food consumption (vulnerable towards food insecurity). Households falling under this profile are thought to be in a better condition than the food insecure. Nevertheless, they are highly at risk of becoming insecure. Any external shock, i.e. inflation of basic commodities, environmental calamities, , or any man-made crises (e.g. withdrawal of major subsidy), would make those households food insecure. Their resilience to shocks could be enhanced by building their long term capacities and improving their livelihoods.

**Food Secure:** Households with acceptable food consumption. Households falling under this profile are thought to be in a well-off condition, in terms of food security. They have sufficient capacities to secure adequate food levels around the year, and can adopt good coping strategies in response to external shocks. It is worth mentioning here that those households are not necessary above the poverty line, but they are food secure.

### 3.2. Who is food insecure and vulnerable?

The Household Income and Expenditure Survey of 2010 included food security indicators allowing an analysis of those food insecure and those vulnerable to food insecurity. About 0.3% of Jordanian households (3,887 households) are food insecure and 2.1% (27,210 households) are considered vulnerable towards food insecurity. The highest rate of food insecure households was found in the governorate of Zarqa with a percentage of 1.3%, followed by Karak. Female headed households are exposed to double the risk of being vulnerable towards food insecurity than those headed by males.

Food secure households consume meat on an average of 7 days a week, while insecure families consume it on an average of 2 days a week. All households consume pulses and wheat/rice on a daily basis. Oil and sugar were consumed on average of 6 days a week.

The “absolute poverty level” is defined by the Department of Statistics, based on data collected in the 2008 Household Expenditure and Income Survey, as the minimum

requirements (food and non-food) needed by a person to guarantee a decent life. Household expenditure or income levels needed to meet these requirements were determined to be 56 JD/person/month or 323 JD/family (of 5.7 persons)/month throughout Jordan. According to the latest Household Income and Expenditure survey (2010) there are 14.4% poor (907,000 people).

A sizable portion of the population has been in poverty for years suggesting poverty is chronic. Poverty rates pre-dating the Syria crisis are significant compared to rates in the light of the Syria crisis. Stunting levels also indicate a long term poverty cycle. The NAF confirms a portion of their beneficiaries to be constant over the years, though this may be more a reflection of vulnerable families with member(s) with permanent disability. The total number of families under NAF has shown a progressive increase from 8,308 (1987) to 75,788 (2009) and 87,000 (2012). Poverty is of a chronic nature and its reduction requires development initiatives.

**Table 1: National Breakdown by Food Insecurity and Vulnerability**

Category	Percentage of Households	Total People
<b>Food Insecure</b>	0.3	19 000
<b>Vulnerable</b>	2.1	132 000
<b>Food Insecure/Vulnerable</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>155 000</b>

**Table 2: National Breakdown by Poverty and Food Insecurity/Vulnerability**

Category	Percentage of Households	Total People
<b>Kingdom</b>	100	6 300 000
<b>Poor (including Abject Poor)</b>	14.4	907 000
<b>Abject Poor</b>	1	63 000
<b>NAF Recipients</b>	4.2	250 000
<b>Food Insecure/ Vulnerable</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>155 000</b>

According to the HIES 2010 there are 0.3% food insecure and 2.1% vulnerable households. This translates to 155 thousand food insecure/vulnerable people. The National Aid Fund supports 87 thousand families consisting of about 250,000 people. Poverty being a fundamental selection criteria. NAF has adopted a top-up approach whereby their contribution is calculated to raise the family income to JD 180 per family (of 5 persons) per month. This equates to JD 36 compared to the poverty line of JD 58 per person per month. It is also much lower than the minimum wage of JD 190/person/month. Therefore, the 250,000 caseload of NAF are considered food insecure/vulnerable, in spite of NAF

assistance. Another measurement that DOS uses for the poor in extreme poverty is the abject poverty line (food only): 1) households with income or expenditures at or below 1,664 JD/year or 139 JD/month, and; 2) individuals having income of 292 JD/year or 24 JD/month.<sup>15</sup>

Poverty is multi-dimensional and not just reflected in one or two indicators such as income, food, shelter or assets. According to the USAID study on safety nets the Coordination Commission for Social Solidarity (CCSS) together with the UNDP, with the support of the World Bank’s SPEP grant administered by MOSD, is looking into the dimensions of poverty and developing a multi-variable measurement of poverty called a proxy means test for use in targeting social assistance benefits. They are considering a large range of indicators—some 63 currently—to apply to a proxy means test evaluation and scoring of applicants. To date, the proxy means test has not been introduced. For WFP purposes, the food consumption score has been embedded into the Household Income and Expenditure surveys and should be used to quantify the food insecure and vulnerable people. As the HIES is updated every 2 years, a FSMS consisting of six monthly data surveys would be a useful introduction.

### 3.3. Household Expenditure

In regards to HIES 2010, the average expenditure of food insecure households was 2812 JDs/year, versus 9797 JDs/year for households with acceptable food consumption<sup>15</sup>. The average expenditure of households that were vulnerable towards food insecurity was double that of the food insecure households, and half that of the overall expenditure rate for the kingdom. The average expenditure of food insecure households on food items was JD 974/year, versus an average of JD 3886/year for households with acceptable food consumption.

**Table 3: Average Household Expenditure (JD) and Food, HIES 2010**

<b>food Consumption rate Categories/ Average expenditure</b>	<b>expenditure on food items</b>	<b>expenditure on non-food items</b>	<b>expenditure on all items</b>
<b>Food insecure households</b>	974	1839	2812
<b>HHs Vulnerable towards food insecurity</b>	1647	2515	4162
<b>HHs with acceptable food consumption</b>	3886	5911	9797
<b>The kingdom</b>	<b>3828</b>	<b>5825</b>	<b>9653</b>

Reference: DOS/household income & Expenditure Survey, Food Security Survey

<sup>15</sup> The complete HIES 2010 report, once released, will contain food consumption patterns.

**Table 4: Household Food Insecurity and Vulnerability by Income, HIES 2010**

<b>HH income categories (JD)</b>	<b>Food insecure HHs</b>	<b>Vulnerable Households</b>
<b>Less than 2000</b>	7.8	16.5
<b>3000-2000</b>	35.3	19.8
<b>4000-3000</b>	35.7	22.6
<b>5000-4000</b>	4.9	12.0
<b>6000-5000</b>	13.1	13.1
<b>7000-6000</b>	1.4	6.8
<b>8000-7000</b>	1.7	5.2
<b>8000+</b>	0.0	4.1
<b>The Kingdom</b>	100.0	100.0

Reference: DOS/Household Income & Expenditure Survey, Food Security Survey

Owning livestock plays an important role in reducing food insecurity and vulnerability by consuming food products (meat, milk, eggs, yogurt) or by selling these products and buying food from the proceeds. Only 4%<sup>16</sup> of food insecure/ vulnerable households own livestock suggesting the importance of livestock in achieving food security for rural areas.

### **3.4. Reasons for Food Insecurity**

The main reasons for food insecurity in the poor areas of Jordan are limited purchasing power and lack of dietary diversity. Underlying causes include large family size, education level of the head of household, rural versus urban location, wealth status, and income and expenditures. Most of the labour force consists of employees,<sup>17</sup> so most households are highly dependent on salary adjustments to cope with external shocks and price fluctuations. According to the WFP Country Strategy for Jordan (2010), at the household level, lack of economic access is the main source of food insecurity, linked to illiteracy, insufficient assets and large family size. Food consumption is inadequate for the poor, and most have experienced periods without enough resources to cover their basic needs. The poor, with food utilizing a high percentage of their consumption profile, were most affected by the food price increase in 2008-2009 and will be affected by the recent (Nov 2012) fuel subsidy withdrawal.

### **3.5. Where are the Food Insecure?**

According to the Department of Statistics, poverty is more concentrated in the rural areas at 23% compared to 13% in the urban areas<sup>18</sup> in spite of the fact that more people live in urban than rural areas. This rural bias of poverty is also supported by the World Bank analysis. At the national level, stunting is 12%, the under 5 mortality rate is 20 per thousand live births, and infants with low birth weight are 13%.<sup>19</sup> The poverty pockets survey<sup>20</sup> found 11% of

<sup>16</sup> Food Security Survey in the Poverty Pockets Sep 2008

<sup>17</sup> whether by government, military/civil defence/public security bodies, or by private sector firms

<sup>18</sup> Poverty indicators report, Department of statistics 2006

<sup>19</sup> UNICEF, Tracking Progress on Child and Maternal Nutrition, Nov. 2009. Overall Jordan is on track against the indicator under MDG 1 for the prevalence of children under 5 years who are underweight, or whose weight is less than it should be for their age.

<sup>20</sup> i.e. where the poverty rate exceeds 25%, per the government survey of 2006.

households in the rural areas and 4.5% among urban households food insecure. Once the complete HIES 2010 report is published, a rural/urban analysis would be available. Average monthly expenditure in the poverty pockets is 17.1 JOD per capita.<sup>21</sup> The income/expenditure gap is 21% indicating negative savings and a pattern of increased dependency on remittances, loans, and assets liquidation. 56% of households take loans or have debt, and 29% of households have to borrow money to cover food needs.

The rural/urban divide could be misleading and figures depend on definitions adopted by various studies. For example, almost half of the population lives in the main city, Amman. But many Amman residents have family, relatives and dependents living in rural areas. For this report, rural areas are defined as where more than 50% of households own land beyond their constructed houses. Land having current or potential use for home gardens, trees and grazing. By such a definition, most of the poverty pockets are rural areas. Land holdings vary but average between 4 to 6 dunnums (10 dunnums = 1 ha). Most, if not all, poor families own very marginal, non-productive or low productive lands. A major cause of this poor land use is the extent of rocks. A major effort in de-rocking could deliver most poor households with land ready for vegetable gardens, olive tree planting and growing alfalfa grass for livestock.

In addition to the poverty level established through the screening process, additional anecdotal information was gathered through a brief field mission that interviewed NAF recipients. The average poor family would spend JD 20 on electricity, JD 20 in water and between JD 30-50 on gas fluctuating from low needs in summer season to highest needs in winter. Considering their top-up ceiling which is only JD 180, this leaves very little money for food. The family breakfast consists of olive oil sprinkled with thyme and sesame, subsidized wheat bread from the bakeries and tea with sugar. Often consuming two instead of three meals a day, the second meal would consist of tomatoes, onions and potato. Meat is consumed less than once a week and fruits are virtually absent from the diet due to cost. Similarly, milk consumption amongst children is very low. Detailed diets have been recorded in the Poverty Pockets survey of 2008 and the HIES 2010. Such poor dietary diversity certainly qualifies these families as food insecure.

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21 Poverty Pockets Survey 2008. The national average is 41 JOD per capita per month

### 3.6. Geographic Distribution of Food Insecurity, HIES 2010

Table 5: Percent of Food Insecure and Vulnerable Households by Governorate HIES 2010

Province	Governorate	Sub-District	Food insecure	vulnerable	Use food coping strategies	Received food assistance
Middle Province	The Capital	Qasbet Amman	.20	2.0	11.0	3.6
		Marka	.00	1.7	9.3	1.1
		AL Quaismeh	.00	.40	30.6	1.6
		AL Jamaa'a	0.0	.70	5.3	1.6
		Wadi Eseer	.60	2.5	14.5	1.1
		Sahab	3.7	9.9	55.5	3.0
		AL Jeezeh	.00	1.5	22.5	16.3
		Um AL Rasas	.00	.00	9.5	27.7
		AL Mowaqar	.00	1.7	8.7	5.1
		Rajam AL Shami	.00	.00	7.6	.00
		Na'aaor	.00	2.3	52.9	5.4
		Um AL Basateen	0.0	6.5	46.0	5.8
		Hesban	1.3	5.8	39.7	1.6
	Balqa'	Qasbet AL Salat	.00	.00	10.4	2.7
		AL Aardah	.00	.00	6.0	.00
		Zay	.00	.00	17.5	3.3
		Eera o Yarga	.00	2.1	5.9	3.7
		Southern Shoneh	.00	.00	10.7	37.5
		Dair Aala	.00	2.2	35.2	20.3
		Ein Al Basha	.00	6.5	42.9	11.8
		Mahes & Fuhais	.00	.00	26.6	1.7
	Zarqaa'	Qasabet AL Zarqaa'	.40	1.3	48.8	1.2
		Bairain	0.0	5.0	86.8	8.6

		Al Dolail	2.6	18.6	67.6	9.6
		Azraq	4.1	10.0	93.1	15.2
		AL Rosaifeh	2.7	4.9	76.5	5.4
		AL Hashmieh	.00	.00	51.9	1.7

Province	Governorate	Sub-District	Food insecure	vulnerable	Use food coping strategies	Received food assistance
Northern Province	Ajloun	Qasbet Ajloun	0.0	5.4	17.5	21.3
		Sakhras	0.0	0.0	1.4	5.6
		Aarjan	1.6	6.3	16.8	62.6
		Kufranjah	0.0	0.0	10.5	55.0
Southern Province	Karak	Qasbet AL Karak	0.0	2.1	21.5	35.8
		Southern Mazar	0.0	0.0	20.2	15.0
		Moa'ab	0.0	0.0	35.2	3.8
		AlQaser	1.4	0.0	35.3	16.5
		AL Mujib	3.1	4.4	42.4	49.6
		Ghoor Al Safi	2.6	9.9	69.1	76.3
		Ghoor Al Mazraa'	0.0	6.2	51.6	63.8
		Aay	0.0	0.0	36.6	43.4
		Faqoo'	0.0	5.7	45.1	64.6
		AL Qatraneh	0.0	5.5	66.3	69.2
	AL Tafilah	Qasbet AL Tafilah	0.0	1.7	64.4	5.6
		Busirah	0.0	6.8	78.0	49.7
		AL Hassa	2.1	2.1	51.9	5.6
	Maa'an	Qabet Maa'an	0.0	2.2	45.0	5.6

		Ayel	0.0	1.8	70.8	56.1
		Jafar	2.9	0.0	65.7	62.5
		Murigha	0.0	1.2	26.4	61.9
		Athrooh	0.0	2.8	56.6	54.4
		Petra	0.0	0.0	21.8	43.7
		AL Shwaik	0.0	0.0	18.4	34.4
		AL Husainieh	0.0	0.0	49.4	62.5
	<b>Aqaba</b>	Qasbet AL Aaqba	0.0	2.7	58.6	19.0
		Aarabah Valley	3.3	10.5	91.0	86.9
		AL Quairah	0.0	2.1	89.2	68.3
		AL Deeseh	0.0	2.4	96.2	89.5
	<b>The Kingdom</b>			<b>0.3</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>29.4</b>

### 3.7. Household Characteristics of Poverty Pockets 2008

The Food Security Survey of Poverty Pockets<sup>22</sup> compiled in 2008 profiled the families living in poverty allowing a comparison with the national average. The survey found 8% of families in poverty pockets were food insecure while another 20% were vulnerable. Rural food insecurity (11%) was more than double that of urban (4.5%). About 70% of the food insecure lived in rural areas. The average household size in the poverty pockets was 6.6 compared to the national average 5.4 (DOS 2007). While national literacy was 91%, the survey revealed an illiteracy rate of 24.5% among the household heads in the pockets. Disability was high with 10% families having a disabled member. About 60% of disabilities were physical and the rest mental. About 8% of households had a family member as a migrant worker. About 30% of these workers were family heads but only 2.5% of the immigration cases were attributed to lack of food.

About 70% of families had government employment as their dominant source of income. About 11% of families rely on gifts and hand-outs as their main source of income. Agriculture related activities utilized only 2.8% of the workforce. This is significant as landholding statistics indicate most households owning land. The average monthly income per family was JD 291 which is below the poverty line of JD 556 (HIES 2006). About 60% of households in the pockets were below the poverty line.

<sup>22</sup> Jordan Food Security Survey of Poverty Pockets 2008, WFP/Jordanian Alliance Against Hunger

### 3.8. Social Characteristics of the head of household, HIES 2010

The HIES 2010 generated the following profile of food insecure households:

**Gender:** The gender difference between food insecure households was insignificant (0.3% male and 0.4% female). However, vulnerability of female headed households (3.6%) was double that of male headed households (1.8%).

**Age:** The highest percentage of food insecure households were by headed by individuals within the age group (15-29) years, where they reached a percentage of 1.2% versus 0.3% of households headed by all the other age groups. There was no direct link between vulnerability and age of household head.

**Family size:** The percentage of the food insecure households increased with the increased family size, where 0.4% households had the family size of (1-2) individuals, versus 1% households that had the family size of 13 or more individuals, however the percentage of vulnerable households increased with reduced family size, where the percentage of family size (1-2) individuals reached 4%, and none for the households of family size 13 or more individuals. This would suggest that beyond a certain threshold, very large extended families tend to be able to meet their needs.

**Education:** Food insecurity was found to be highly related to the head of household's education level. Households headed by illiterate individuals were the most susceptible to food insecurity and vulnerability than those headed by individuals who completed a certain level of education. About 5.3% of the households headed by individuals who were illiterate were food insecure/vulnerable whereas the percentage of households headed by individuals who have completed their medium diploma (or above) did not exceed 0.5%. This supports the findings of the 2008 food security survey of poverty pockets.

### 3.9. Coping strategies, HIES 2010

The coping strategies are defined as the steps taken by households at a times when enough money was not available for them to sustain their basic needs, (food, medicine, fuel, education), where the behavioral responses in combating food insecurity are measured, they are divided into two strategies, as follows:

**Coping strategies related to food:** it includes a group of food precautions such as resorting to less preferred foods or less expensive foods, depending on food assistance or food borrowing, buying food by debt, meal skipping or reducing meal size, adults saving their share of food to be consumed by children, avoid food consumption all day.

**Other coping strategies:** include a group of steps at the household level, such as consuming the agricultural stock of the next season, reducing expenditure related to agricultural costs, selling of house assets (TV, radio, furniture), selling of production supplies or income resources, selling a number of livestock that is larger than usual, reducing treatment expenses, taking children out of school, looking for work alternatives, immigration of household individuals.

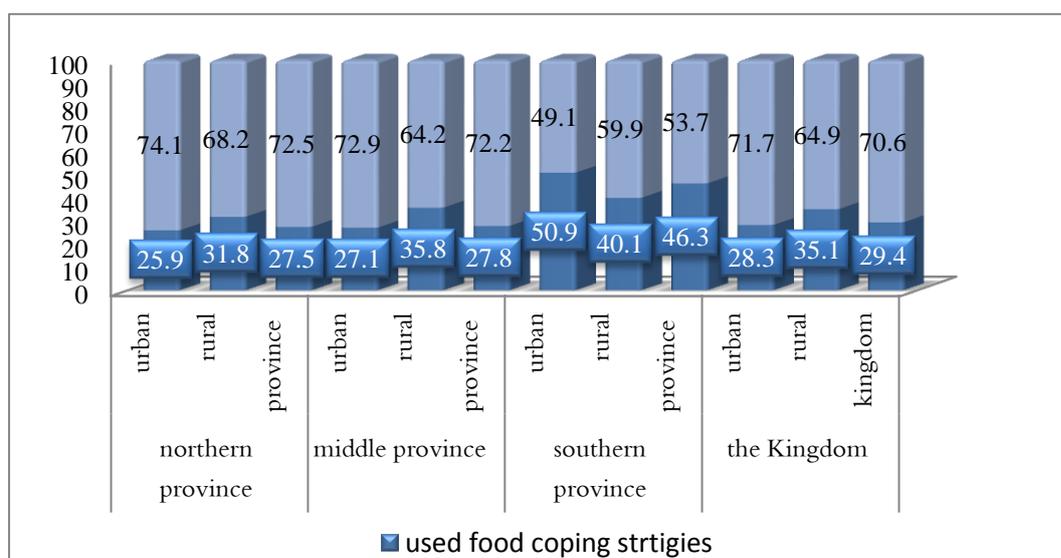
The survey indicates that 21% of the households used food coping strategies only, while 8.2% of the households used other coping strategies. There is a direct correlation between the use of coping strategies and the family size, and an inverse correlation between the use of coping strategies and the educational level of the household head. 29% of the Jordanian households employed food coping strategies. More than half of the households that lie below the poverty line employed food coping strategies. 45% of the insecure households employed food coping strategies to a very high degree. At the subnational level, more than half of the households in the governorates of Tafilah, Aqaba and Zarqa employed food coping strategies during the survey year. More than 90% of households in the sub-districts of Deesah, Azraq, Rowaished and Arabah Valley employed food coping strategies.

**Table 6: Use of Coping Strategies HIES 2010**

Coping Strategy	Percentage of Households
Used food coping strategies only	21.1
Used other coping strategies.	0.3
Used both coping strategies.	8.2
Did not use any coping strategy	70.4

It is noticeable that the households in the southern province showed higher usage of food coping strategies in comparison with the middle and Northern provinces, where it reached a percentage of 46.3% from the provinces households. The percentage of rural households using food coping strategies was higher than the households in the urban set up in all provinces of the middle and north while the reverse was evident in the south where the percentage of urban households using food coping strategies was higher than the rural households.

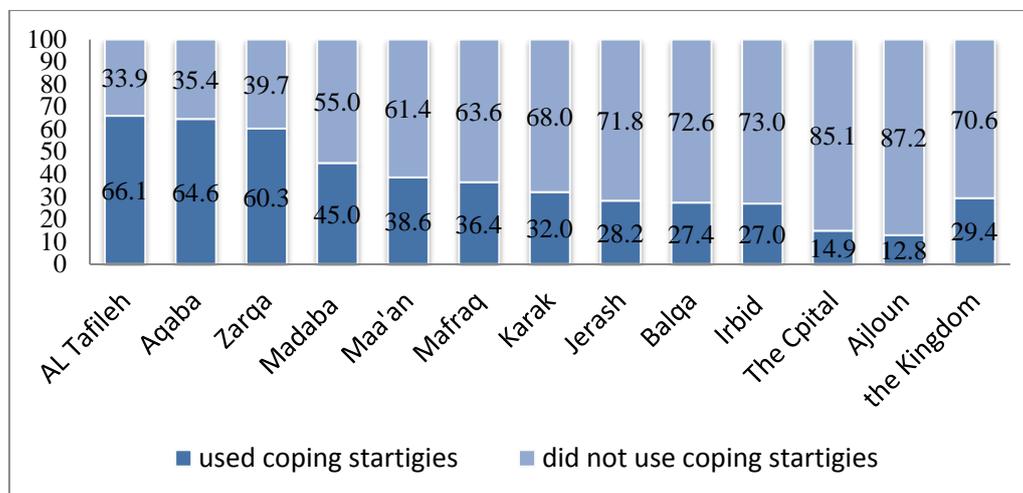
**Figure 1: Urban and Rural Household Adopting Food Coping Strategies by Province 2010**



Reference: DOS/household income & expenditure Survey, Food security survey

The percentage of households that used food coping strategies varied over the different governorates, where it exceeded 60% from Al Tafilah, Aqaba and Zarqa governorates, while they did were less than 15% in the Capital and Ajloun governorates. Households Adopting Food Coping Strategies by Governorate, Jordan 2010

Figure 2: Households Adopting Food Coping Strategies by Governorate, Jordan 2012



Reference: DOS/Household Income & Expenditure Survey, Food Security Survey

Table 7: Households Adopting Food coping strategies by Sub-district HIES 2010

Governorate	Sub-district	Household percentage
Aqaba	Deeseh	96.2
Zarqa	Azraq	93.1
Mafraq	AL rewashd	91.2
Aqaba	Wadi Aarba	91.0
Aqaba	AL Quirah	89.2
Zarqa	Bairain	86.8
Tafilah	Busairah	78.0
Zarqa	Rasifeh	76.5
Ma'aan	Ayel	70.8
Karak	Ghoor Al Safee	69.1
Zarqa	Al Dlail	67.6
Karak	Al Qatraneh	66.3
Ma'aan	Al Jafer	65.7
AL Tafilah	Qasbet Al Tafileh	64.4
Irbid	Al Korah	64.3
The kingdom		29.4

Reference: DOS/Household Income & Expenditure Survey, Food Security Survey

The survey indicated that 55.8% of the households that received assistance from the National Aids Fund or from NGOs (Zakat funds owned by charity organizations, mosques, churches, charities, orphan funds) used food coping strategies, versus 66.6% households that received assistance from other government agencies, such as (the Zakat fund of the Ministry of Religious Affairs or the Royal Court).

### 3.10. Impact of Fuel Subsidy Withdrawal

It is anticipated that the recent fuel subsidy withdrawal will raise food prices. It would be useful to revisit the impact of the food price hike on poverty pockets in 2008. During the 2008 period, 44% households in the poverty pockets experienced an income rise while 18% reported a decrease in their incomes. The income rise was attributed to families with a member in government employment benefiting from the government salary raises. The decrease in incomes was experienced by those involved in livestock, handicrafts, trade and family businesses. It should be fair to conclude that the same scenario would repeat itself. Most families relying on the private sector would experience a decrease in incomes and an increase in their food expenditures. Households in the poverty pockets spend about the same percentage (37%) of their incomes on food as is the national average. However, in absolute terms, while the national average expenditure on foods is JD 41 per capita per month (HIES 2006), the households in poverty pockets spend JD 17. Almost 56% of households were in debt and 29% of households incurred debt to pay for food. This analysis will be updated once complete HIES 2010 report is available.

The coping strategies adopted in response to the high food prices in 2008 could be indicative of how families in the poverty pockets may respond to the anticipated rise in food prices as a result of the fuel subsidy withdrawal. About 71% of the households in the poverty pockets changed to less expensive or less favourable foods. This usually translates to less consumption of meat, dairy and fruits. About 62% purchased food on credit. A third of the families reported that adults reduced their food consumption in favour of children and about half of the families had to skip a meal or reduce the portion size. Every tenth household had to spend the whole day without food and the same number sold assets to cover basic needs.

### 3.11. Agro-ecological Zoning

Zoning by agro-ecological factors allows a categorization of issues and solutions applicable to households across each zone. The classification is based on mean annual precipitation. Table 8 below indicates the food insecurity and vulnerability in each zone. Both food insecurity and vulnerability increase with decrease in precipitation.

Table 8: Agro-ecological Zones, Poverty Pockets Survey 2008

Mean annual precipitation (mm)	Food insecurity (%)	Vulnerability (%)
Zone 1 (<100)	14	30
Zone 2 (100-200)	12	19
Zone 3 (>200)	3	15

Agriculture activities were limited by water scarcity while livestock herding was limited by fodder prices. The combined efforts of water harvesting, fodder production (alfalfa grass) would be suitable investments across the zones.

### 3.12. Trend Analysis

The universal sample of the Food Security Survey of Poverty Pockets in 2008 was the population living in the 20 poverty pockets. It did not cover the entire country whereas the HEIS 2010 coverage was national. From a methodological standpoint, the 2008 food security was calculated as a cross-tabulation between access (poverty) and food consumption score (dietary diversity). The HIES 2010 calculation of food insecurity was exclusively determined by the Food Consumption Score. As the definition and subsequent calculation of the poverty line includes a minimum food basket, the difference is not high but direct comparisons require consideration of the different methodologies. Comparing the poverty pockets of 2008 and 2010, there has been a noticeable shift. Once the finalized list of poverty pockets 2010 is made available by the government, the trend may be summarised as:

- a) The increase in the number of poverty pockets
- b) The districts that have graduated out of the poverty classification
- c) The districts that have been added to the poverty pockets.

### 3.13. Targeting

Programme implementation would require a targeting regime that ensures selection of deserving beneficiaries and would geographic selection as well as household selection criteria. The number of food insecure/vulnerable people considered for programme support is 155,000 (Table 1).

- a) Geographic Targeting: HIES 2010 provides statistics on food security and vulnerability by district. For geographic targeting, the sum of food insecure and vulnerable should be combined and the result used to rank districts. Programme should consider implementation in the district with highest rank, followed by the next highest ranking and continue depending upon resource availability. Some households with low food consumption have incomes above the poverty line (Table 4). For such households the issue is more related to awareness than economic access. The WFP school feeding programme for Jordan should include a nutrition awareness component with take-home messages for parents and caretakers.
- b) Household Selection: The food insecure and vulnerable people are a subset of the National Aid Fund beneficiaries. There is a very close relation as NAF targeting<sup>23</sup> is primarily for the extremely poor and vulnerable. It is therefore recommended that NAF targeting be used as programme targeting. Inclusion and exclusion errors in NAF targeting and the existence of other vulnerable people not targeted by NAF, should be addressed by a second tier screening process through the NGO TUA (Tkiyet Um Ali: Food for life). Their screening criteria would provide an independent verification of the NAF targeting and identify other vulnerable people not targeted by NAF. It is recommended that a monitoring regime be initiated that would collect food consumption score on a periodic basis. The TUA household questionnaire should be modified to include:

- a) Food consumption and
- b) Coping strategies.

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<sup>23</sup> For NAF targeting criteria, see Instructions on Financial Assistance for the Care and Protection of Needy Families #2 for the Year 2012 pursuant to provisions of Article 8/G of the National Aid Fund No 36/1986.

## 4.0 MARKETS

Over 90% of cereal requirements are imported, thus Jordan is highly vulnerable to external shocks and market volatility. For details, see WFP Supply Chain Analysis of Wheat Flour in Jordan (August 2010). Jordan was among the countries affected the most by the food price increases<sup>24</sup>. Inflation averaged 13.9% in 2008 with food the major contributor.<sup>25</sup> The thin cereal market, inelasticity of demand and limited storage give no space to maneuver around fluctuating prices and impose high budgetary strains on the government.

Based on preliminary data, the Regional VAM Officer's back-to-office report of March 2012 suggested the markets in Jordan are integrated and competitive. A subsequent market analysis confirmed this conclusion. Jordan is a small country with well paved roads connecting producers and consumers to the markets. Food price data is collected periodically for the quarterly Market Monitor report published by WFP Rome. The National Aid Fund recommendation to the Royal Court against the in-kind transfer modality based on

- a) Cost. As Jordan is a fuel importer, the international fuel price rises impact transportation costs. This added cost was borne by the government as it heavily subsidized fuel. In the new scenario, where costs are transferred to the consumer, the transport of goods by the government would continue to depend on government spending thus offset the anticipated savings to be rendered from this policy shift.
- b) Efficiency. Storage, packaging and delivery of the food parcel require staff, management and logistics. Time delays in delivery caused beneficiary dissatisfaction
- c) Consumer preference. Feedback from the beneficiaries indicated their desire for flexibility in selecting their food basket. The ability to decide for themselves what food items to consume was a major factor.
- d) Monitoring. Keeping track of money delivered through the post office requires simple accounting procedures readily adopted by NAF and the postal system. Spot checks of stocks in warehouses is also not required.

The government's transfer modality of choice is cash through the post offices. The postal system is extensive with every citizen in close proximity with an outlet. The relative costs of operations are low. In case of NAF, the post office charges a fee of half a JD per family per month. Such low transaction costs render the choice of this modality favorable. In 1999 NAF approached the banks to consider taking up these transactions but received little interest from the banks.

The recent withdrawal of the fuel subsidy will impact on all households, especially the poor. Price monitoring results in January 2013 would be a measure of the extent of food price fluctuation due to the fuel price hike. To date the government supports the subsidy on bread through bakeries. Consequently the consumer has access to low prices of bread which is the main staple throughout the country.

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24 FAO

25 Central Bank of Jordan 2008

## 5.0 PARTNERS

### 5.1. NAJMAH

The National Alliance Against Hunger and Malnutrition (NAJMAH) was established under the leadership of Her Royal Highness Princess Basma in 2004 to support government programmes in combating hunger and enhancing food security in Jordan. Najmah spans a wide national partnership among government, civil society and private sector organizations and is the first hunger alliance body from an Arab country to join the International Alliance Against Hunger (IAH) which aims to contribute towards the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goal of halving the rate of hunger and poverty worldwide by 2015. The alliance has worked closely with WFP in the past collaborating on food-for-work tree planting programmes. NAJMAH has worked on a variety of rural projects including home gardens, water harvesting, livestock and tree planting. Over 18 million trees in Jordan were planted by the WFP food-for-work programme for which NAJMAH, with its nationwide presence, was the implementing partner. NAJMAH partnered with WFP in 2008 and produced the Food Security Survey of Poverty Pockets in Jordan. This was the first study of the poverty pockets and offers a baseline for food security analysis.

### 5.2. Tkiyet Um Ali

Established in 2006, Tkiyet Um Ali (TUA) is a Jordanian NGO established in 2003 by HRH Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein, providing hot meals (soup kitchen) to an approximate 300 people per day and food packages or e-voucher to more than 4,500 families per month. TUA is sustained by a core fund from the Royal Family of Dubai. TUA partnered with WFP in providing hot meals at the Zaatari Camp for refugees. TUA has registered 6,000 Jordanian families in need of food. Screening for registration involves a detailed household verification process. Incomes and assets of the household are verified from various government departments (Social Security, Land, Vehicle) and the National Aid Fund. Screening includes a household questionnaire which records age, gender, family assets, debts etc. This verification process could support WFP targeting of food insecure households. Reviews of the NAF targeting admit to some inclusion and exclusion errors. Engaging the TUA screening methodology would improve programme targeting. The questionnaire could be reinforced with food consumption and coping strategies indicators to introduce a direct link to national figures generated by the HIES report. TUA also maintains an electronic voucher system as a transfer modality since 2007. The e-voucher system, with slight modification, may be considered for the WFP project.

### 5.3. MoSD

The Poverty Reduction Strategy has been produced by Ministry of Social Development with technical assistance from UNDP. The Strategy is based on five pillars: a) social welfare b) health and education c) production and employment for the poor d) Agricultural development in rural areas and environmental protection e) infrastructure development. The MoSD:

- a) Supports the creation of assets for rural households.
- b) asserts the presence of poverty in urban areas
- c) Considers unsuitable the temporary unconditional transfers by an international organisation.

#### 5.4. UN Agencies

In addition to direct assistance for Syrian refugees, UNHCR has introduced a series of Quick-Impact-Projects and Community-Impact-Projects such as garbage collection, street lamps and water supply through groundwater pumping. These projects are aimed at assisting Jordanian communities in vicinity of Syrian refugee concentrations.

In Nov/Dec 2012 UNDP fielded a mission to design a programme for the poor in Jordan. WFP and UNDP may collaborate by dividing the caseload into rural and urban poor respectively.

FAO Jordan has extensive experience and a good track record in establishing home gardens for food insecure families in rural areas through the *Al Hakoora* project. WFP response options should be based on tried and tested programmes that have a proven track record in Jordan. FAO presence has been limited due to budgetary constraints and the ongoing corporate reorganization. WFP could draw on FAO experience by funding<sup>26</sup> the work of a FAO expert from (FAO Regional office in Cairo or FAO HQ in Rome) in this field to provide technical inputs, especially on cash/food-for-training projects aimed at teaching food insecure households with land on how to improve their food security and nutrition by planting and maintaining a home garden. Such a coordinated effort would a) ensure programmes with a good record are implemented b) high level of expert advice is transferred to the garden tenders and c) the food security mandate of both agencies could be forwarded.

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<sup>26</sup> Partnering with FAO was emphasized at the ODC CD Meeting 11-13 Dec in Dubai. Considering FAO financial situation, it was emphasized that, where necessary, WFP include line items in WFP project budgets to fund FAO.

## 6.0 RESPONSE ANALYSIS

Food insecurity in Jordan is a result of chronic poverty. Response options must be tailored to address the underlying causes of food insecurity. Response options must also consider the strategic strengths and weaknesses offered by topography, landuse, cultural norms and track record of previous interventions. Creating assets that support sustainable livelihoods would constitute the most appropriate response. The food insecure family profile is often that of a large dependency ration, limited income opportunities, low education and lack of capital for investment. However, each family invariably owns small land parcels ranging from 4 to 6 dunnums. These land parcels are unproductive or marginally productive due to high rock content.

### 6.1. Rural Households

Traditionally, rural households are familiar with olive tree planting, harvesting, oil extraction and marketing. Olive is an important part of traditional diets and contributes to good cholesterol. The tree requires minimal maintenance except for harvest time when low skill casual labour is required. Often women and children contribute in the harvest process. A limiting factor in appropriate landuse of the available land is the high density of rocks. The process of de-rocking would allow families to introduce:

- a) Home gardens
- b) Alfalfa grass and
- c) Olive trees.

Home gardens would offer immediate improvement in the food consumption. A key element here would be cash/food for training where expert advice in the selection of vegetables considering nutrient value and market value is required. Alfalfa grass is an alternative to the expensive fodder bought by livestock herders. The government offers fodder on subsidized rates to selected families. Others much purchase on the open market. Food insecure households could use alfalfa grass as a cash crop by harvesting and selling in the market or by allowing herders grazing rights on their land. The olive tree has a long maturation period. It takes five years before the first fruit is produced. However, the plantation of olive provides collateral to the food insecure household to secure credit from the agricultural development bank.

### 6.2. Home labour

Activities such as de-rocking, vegetable garden, alfalfa grass and olive harvesting require low skills and are suitable for families with relatively high number of unemployed members, especially women (only 19 percent of the workforce is women). However, the household requires external support to realize these initiatives. While most de-rocking is simple labour, often clearing of a land parcel requires some amount of mechanization. This activity could be provided by the NAJMAH support. Technical expertise on gardens could be provided by FAO. NAJMAH has confirmed that small loans may be secured from the agricultural development bank to support the planting of olive trees. Households could also benefit from the MoA tree planting incentive scheme. The MoA reimburses 40 JD/dunnum planted to participating households. Reimbursement is made in two tranches (after one year and after 2 years). This is to make sure that the households protect their plantation and land.

On average 16 olive trees are planted per dunnum (up to 30 trees per dunnum on slopes). Harvest levels depend on several factors such as variety and season (every second harvest is high volume), a major contributing factor is water. The resulting olive oil sells for JD 3 per liter<sup>27</sup>. However, most families with small landholdings would use the oil for self-consumption. Five dunnums of olive trees would produce a cash crop of JD 1200 per season<sup>28</sup>.

### 6.3. Casual Labour

The undulating terrain of northern and middle governorates supports terracing and forestry. The Director of Agriculture of Jerash has identified reforestation and forest pruning as labour intensive works that could be achieved through combining WFP's food/cash-for-work and the government's supply of equipment and machinery. The Ministry of Agriculture has identified tree planting as a labour intensive programme with results of soil conservation, environmental protection and cash transfer to poor families. On average the casual labour wage is JD 15 per day, but 6 to 8 JD/day is paid under MoA forestry projects. A F/CFA programme offering less than the norm could establish a self-targeting regime whereby only the poorest people participate. Casual labour invariably comes from the vicinity and F/CFA activities in poverty pockets where more than 25 percent of the population is below the poverty line would ensure targeting of the poor.

### 6.4. Rain Water Harvesting

Jordan is among the world's five most water-deficit countries. The agricultural sector, which represents a source of income for more than 15 percent of the population, continues to grapple with the challenges of scarce water, recurrent droughts, urbanization and desertification. Even in the best of seasons, producing no more than 8-10 percent of its cereal requirements. The major limiting factor being water. Yet the annual precipitation in northern and central governorates is about 300 mm. This precipitation coupled with the incredibly undulating landscape offer excellent potential for rainwater harvesting. The labour intensive parts of creating check-dams and reservoirs could be funded under food/cash-for-asset programmes. Rainwater is being used for home gardens and olive trees through drip irrigation systems which ensure optimal use of water. Current MoA practice is to subcontract water harvesting projects to private companies therefore including a labour component would require further discussion and design efforts.

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<sup>27</sup> Source: Field interviews of olive growers in Jerash governorate Dec 2012.

<sup>28</sup> 5 litres per tree.



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