

The VAF 2019 Population study

Report launch presentation

April 2019

TO HAVE a shared and consistent profile of vulnerability for Syrian refugee households, which enables monitoring of changes in vulnerability over time.

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SO THAT we can **strengthen coordination and decision-making** of the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

42 organizations can currently access VAF data



caritas



ICRC



MERCY CORPS



JPS

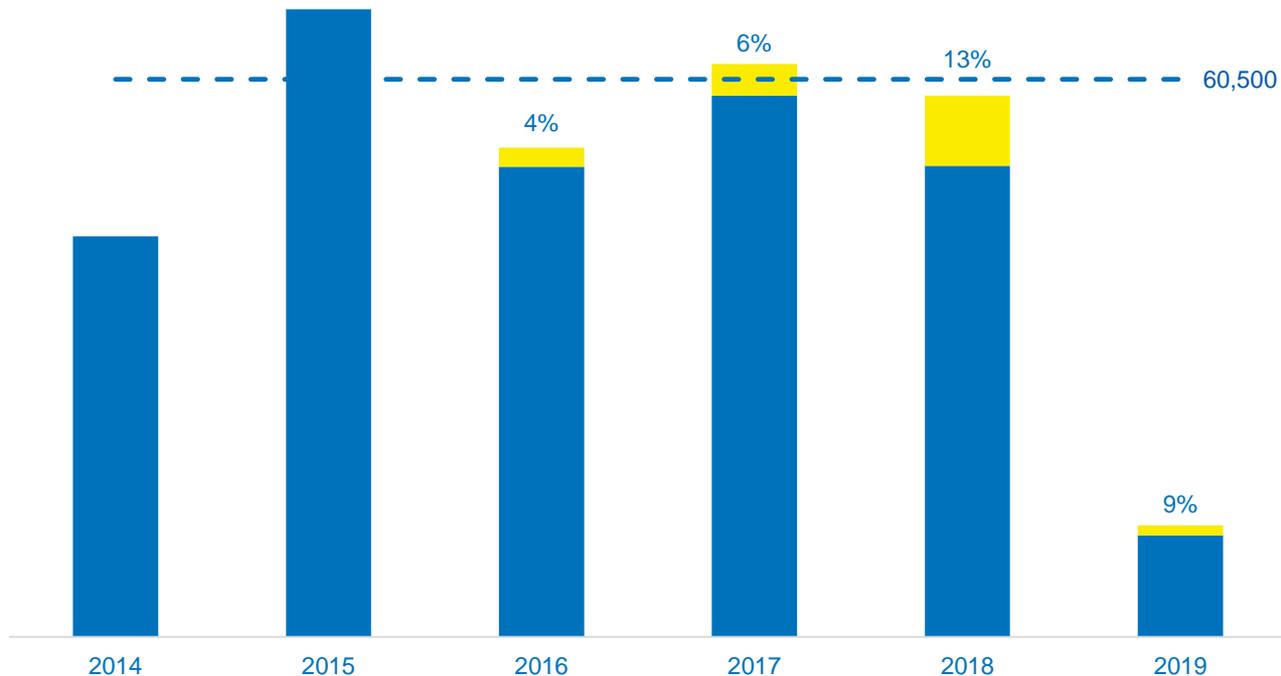


VAF data collecting organisations



Around 60,000 VAF assessments completed every year

VAF data collecting partners making significant contributions to the data pool



UNHCR Partners Average

Present members of the VAF Advisory board



European Union
Civil Protection and
Humanitarian Aid



جمعية الصحة الطبية الأردنية
Jordan Health Aid Society (JHAS)



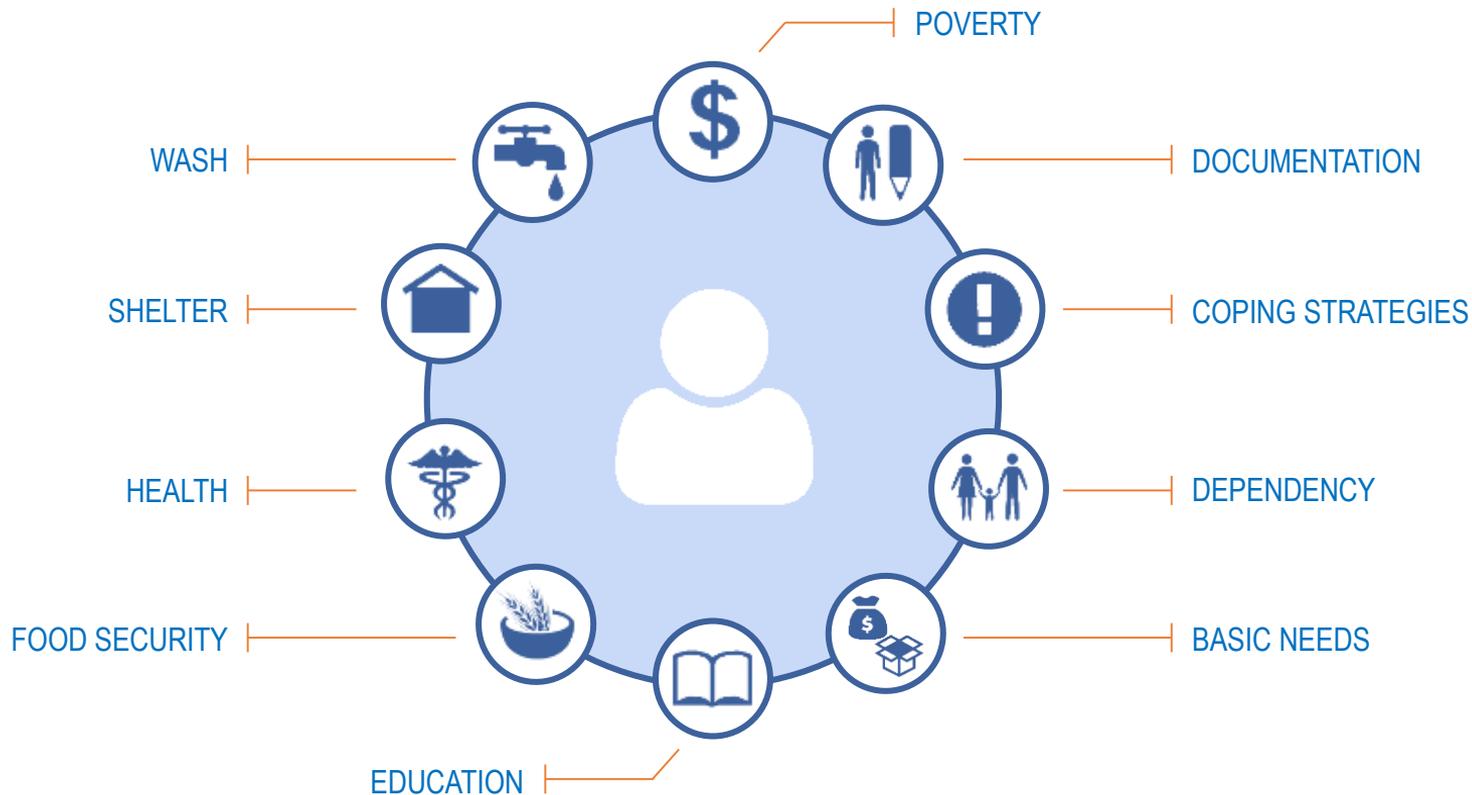
Islamic Relief
Worldwide



Finn Church Aid



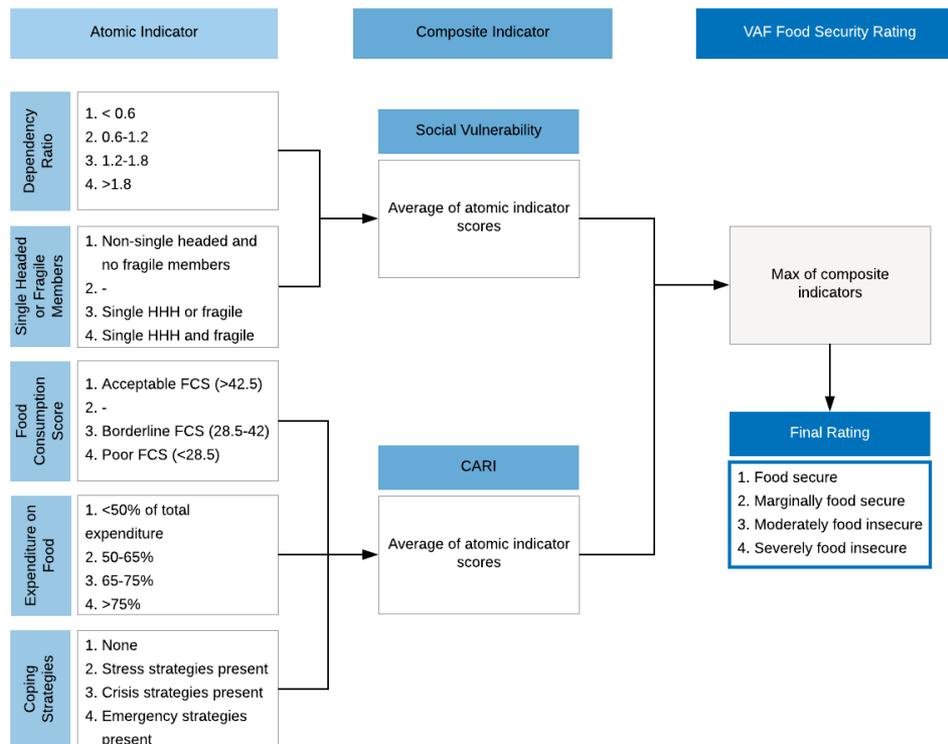
The VAF creates a multi-sectoral vulnerability profile



Sixty five indicators provide a broad picture of vulnerability

	Top-line	Composite	Atomic	Total
SECTORS				
Basic needs	1	1	2	4
Education	1	3	6	10
Food security	1	2	5	8
Health	1	4	7	12
Shelter	1	2	6	9
WASH	1	4	7	12
UNIVERSAL INICATORS				
Predicted welfare	1	-	-	1
Documentation status	1	2	4	7
Coping strategies	1	-	-	1
Dependency ratio	1	-	-	1
Total	10	18	37	65

Often using established vulnerability indicators



The VAF is a comprehensive framework

Components of the framework

Common set of indicators



Standardized data collection tool



Agreed thresholds of vulnerability



Central database



Governance structure



Core outputs

VAF Home Visits (Ongoing)

VAF Population Study

VAF Population Survey 2018

Indicator Library

Jordan

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10K **3,692** **2,248**

Individuals

Cases

Households

What is the VAF?

The VAF establishes an observation and reporting system that supports the humanitarian community:

- **TO HAVE** a shared and consistent profile of vulnerability for Syrian refugee households, which enables monitoring of changes in vulnerability over time.
- **IN ORDER** to target assistance in a more efficient and equitable manner based on the application of common vulnerability criteria.
- **SO THAT** we can strengthen coordination and decision-making of the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

What is the VAF Indicator Library?

- Use this resource to get more detailed information about specific VAF indicators, from the top-level down to the atomic.
- Drill down to each individual indicator to get detailed information about how the indicators are formulated, and any changes to them over time.
- View and download the information about each indicator including and geographic or case size variances, and see how the indicators are tracking over time.

How to use the tool

- Use the buttons to select a sector or theme of your choice.
- The report will drill down to the next level providing you with increasing information about each individual indicator.
- A selection of common filters are available throughout the report that enables you to select specific case sizes or geographic regions.

Interactive report

PDF report

Raw Data (Excel)

Joint vulnerability assessment

UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP three year plan

- Working together on vulnerability assessments
- Harmonization of VAF indicators to the HEIS data-set
- 2020 and 2021: rapid assessments for marginalized populations and geographic areas
- 2022: Joint Vulnerability Assessment
- Ensuring representative sampling for refugee populations



VAF 2019 Population study

Report launch presentation

- In partnership with ACF UK
- Additional analysis from ILO



About the research population



Households
2,248

Avg. size = 5.9



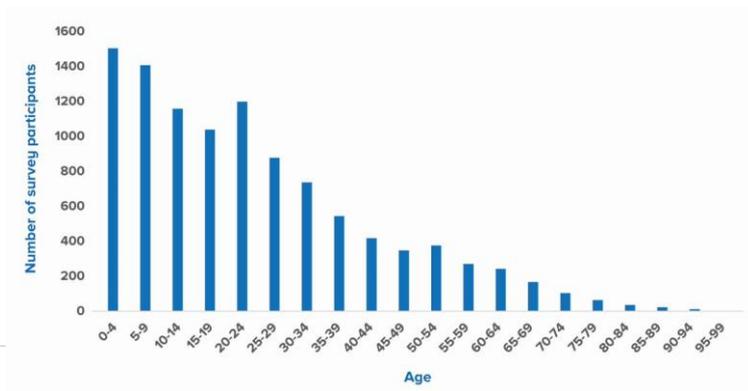
Cases
3,712

Avg. size = 3

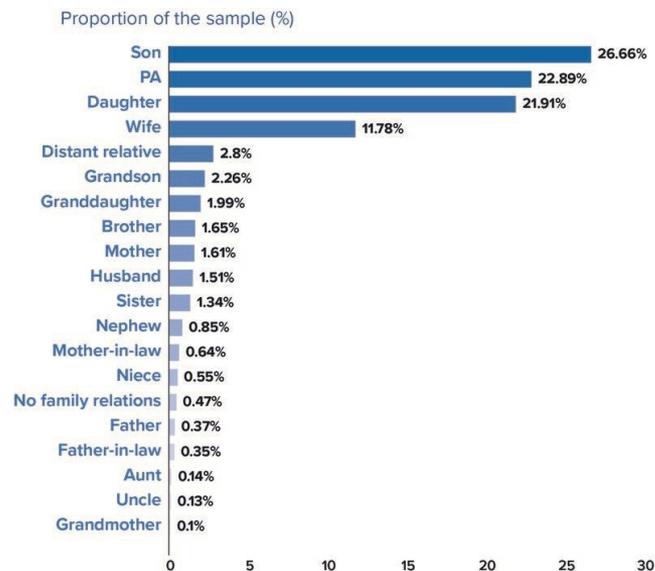


Individuals
10,400

- Median age of sample is 21



- Around two thirds of households are a single case
- Only 2.5 per cent of multi-case households consist of unrelated cases

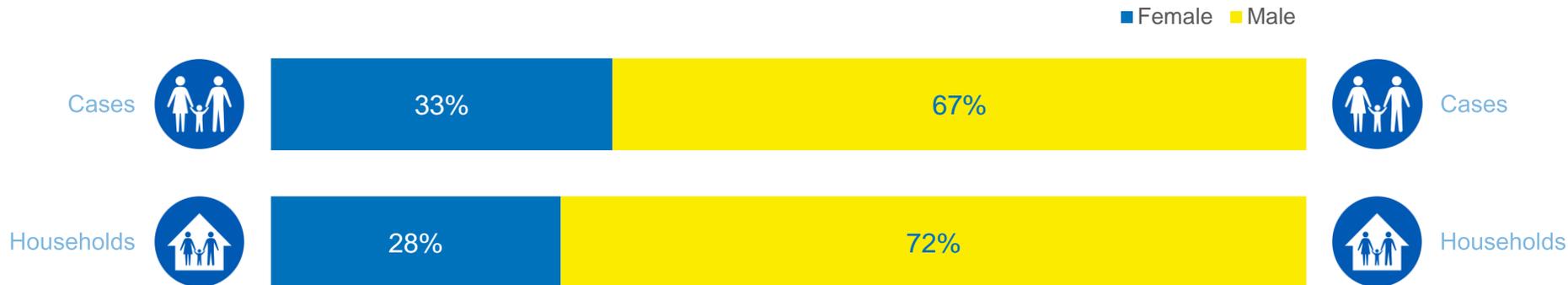


Gender ratios change depending on the house / case lens

Since one-third of households are multi-case it is important to adjust core gender variables

Gender control variables created

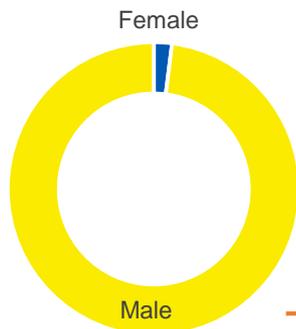
- Sex of head of case
- Sex of head of household
- Percentage of sexes in household and case



The importance of transforming variables

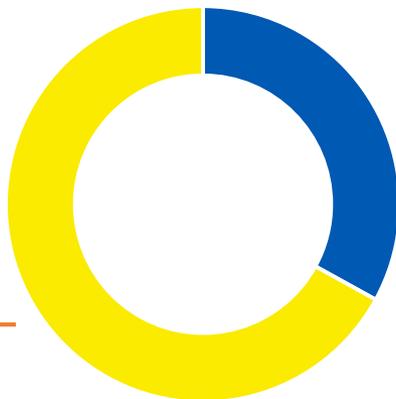
Female-headed cases are more likely to live in male-headed household

Male headed cases in female headed households



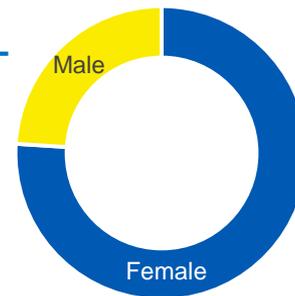
Less than 5% of male-headed are in female-headed households

Sex of head of case



■ Female ■ Male

Female headed cases in male headed households

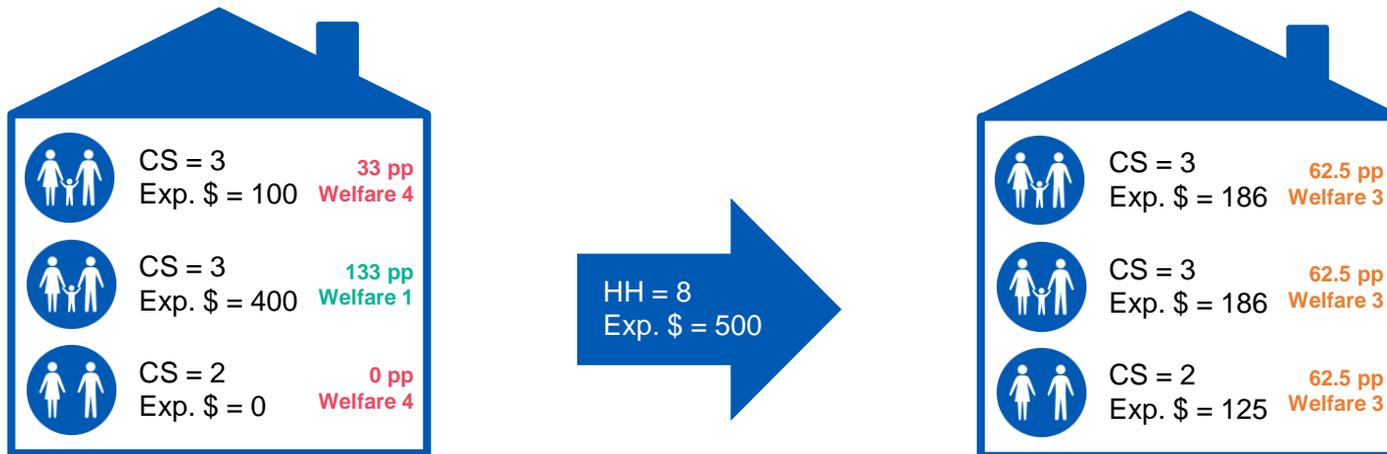


Nearly a quarter of female-headed are in male-headed households

Finance variables were also adjusted to living situation

It is important to accurately calculate expenditures to reflect the financial wellbeing of the household

- Over 500 cases reported zero expenditure (13.5% of the sample)
- The majority were valid due to living with other cases
- Expenditures were redistributed among cases based on the number of people in the household

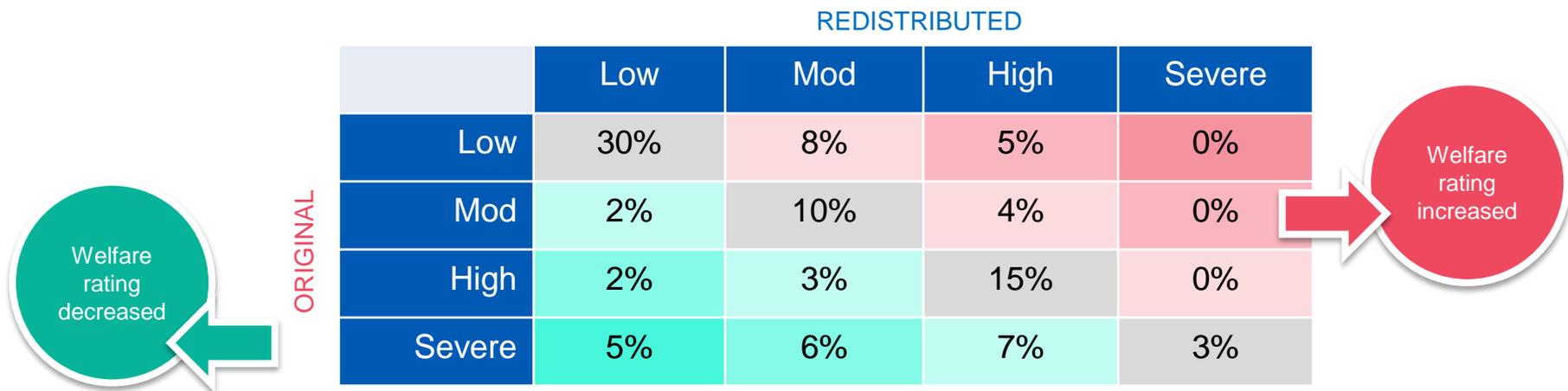


The net impact of sharing expenditures lowered welfare vulnerability

Nearly 500 cases that declared zero expenditures were part of multi-case households

Distribution of financial variables from case to household

- 58% of all cases retain the original rating
- 17% of all cases receive a higher vulnerability rating
- 25% of cases receive a lower vulnerability rating



KEY FINDINGS



Key findings summary

- Vulnerability is **multi-dimensional**
- The **proportion of genders** in a household is important
- **Geographic variation** exists but is a weak indicator of vulnerabilities
- **Household structure and size** plays a more important role
- **Cultural and social norms** can play a significant role
- The inter-play between **income**, **expenditures** and **debt** is complex

Key findings

Welfare

- Distribution of expenditure shows majority of households spends less than the poverty line
- A cohort within the sample increases the overall average expenditure by over 50% than the median value
- Small cases tend to have higher expenditures per capita than larger cases
- Relationship between expenditure and income intensifies for higher reported amounts

Key findings

Coping Strategies

- Buying food on credit is the most frequently adopted negative coping strategy
- An average of 2.5 negative coping strategies are adopted per respondent
- Correlation between children withdrawn from school, early marriage and child labor

Key findings

Dependency Ratio

- Almost half of all respondents reported a high dependency ratio (1.8 dependents)
- Reported disabilities is significantly higher than diagnosed medical conditions

Key findings

Education

- Coping strategies is a stronger determinant to explain education expenditures than direct costs associated with accessing services
- Cultural and normative factors influence the decision to send children to school

Key findings

Food Security

- Limited negative food insecurity in the sample but still high application of coping strategies
- Female headed households achieve similar food consumption with less resources

Key findings

Health

- Over 20% of the population reported a disability and 50% are vulnerable in health
- Affected households incur into higher financial pressures due to medical expenditures
- Households with a higher income incur into less medical expenditures

Key findings

Shelter

- Most respondents live in finished building, which quality varies geographically
- Written rental agreement is strongly correlated with quality of shelters
- Households with a higher proportion of females reside in higher quality buildings

Key findings

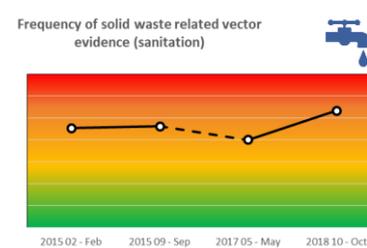
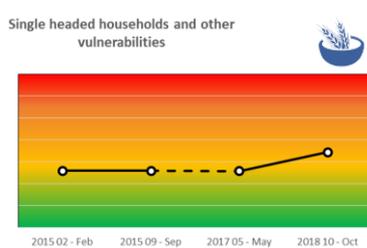
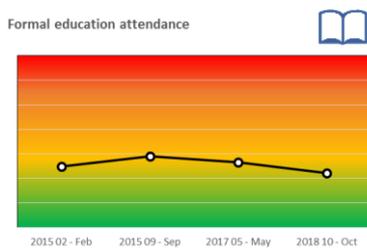
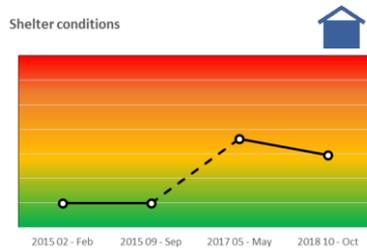
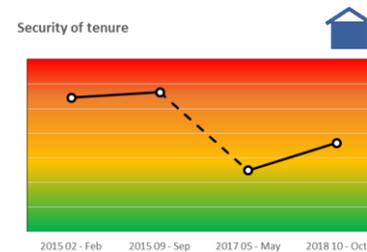
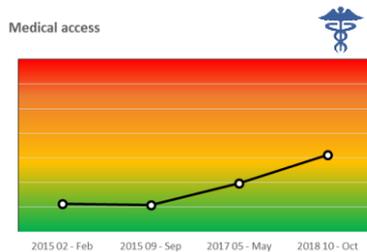
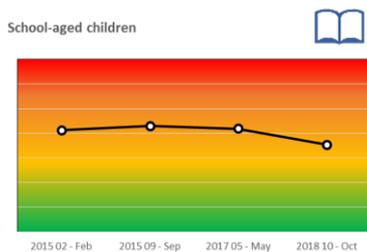
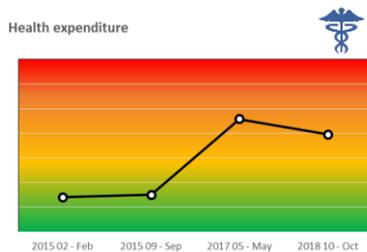
WASH

- Around 40% respondents reported they cannot afford basic hygiene items
- Expenditure on WASH is an important component of overall expenditure

VAF indicators record minimal fluctuations over time

Only a few indicators have shown change since 2017

Indicators improving since 2017



Low recorded change does not mean low vulnerability

30% of all VAF indicators show that about half of the population are highly or severely vulnerable





SECTOR FINDINGS

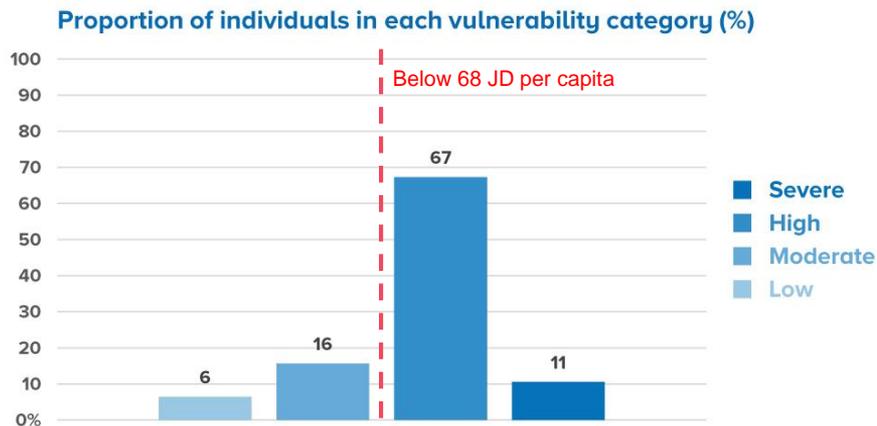


WELFARE



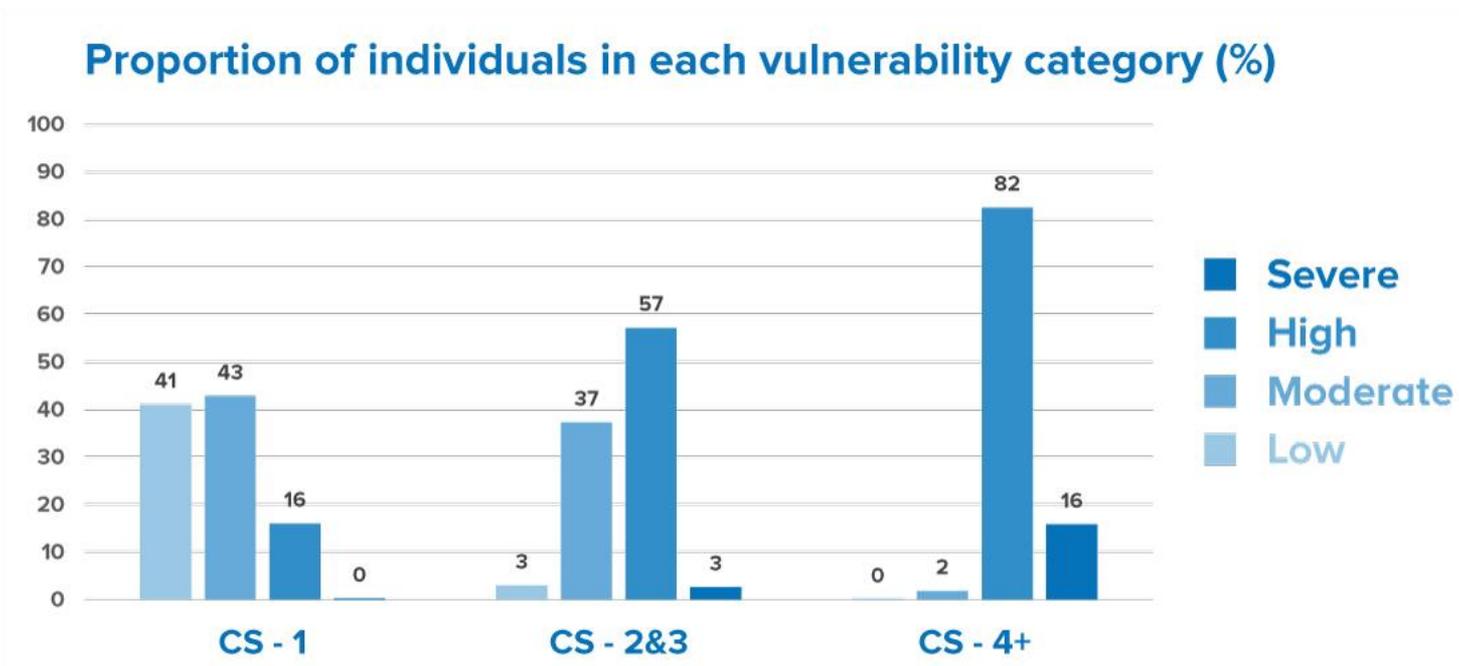
The distribution of welfare has remained constant over time

78% of the population live below the Jordanian poverty line



Larger cases have a far lower expenditure per capita

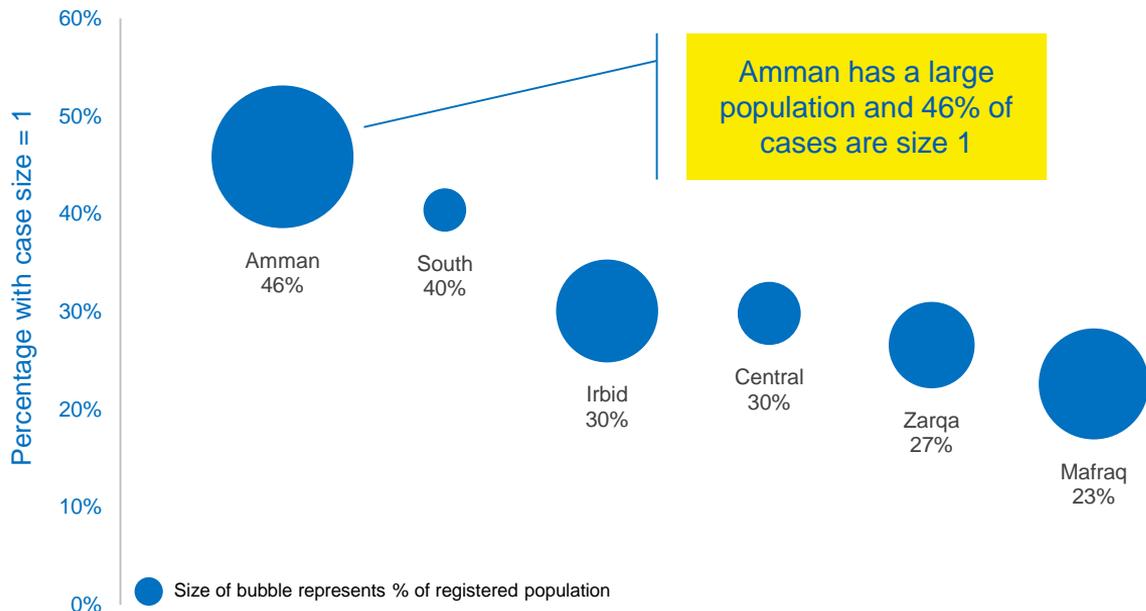
For every additional person in a case, spending per head declines by 7.5 JOD



Throughout the study, Amman often appears less vulnerable

Amman has the largest population and the highest proportion of case size one

Proportion cases in geographic regions that are case size = one



Distribution of expenditure per capita

The median is less than the mean because averages are skewed by fewer cases with high values

	Mean	Median
Welfare as expressed by vulnerability rating (1-4)	2.4	3
Expenditure per capita (JOD)	135.3	85.5
Debt per capita (JOD)	244.4	71.4
Income per capita (JOD)	91.9	67.0



The means are consistently higher than the median



A dimly lit room, possibly a shelter or a small apartment. A person wearing a grey hoodie is leaning over a person lying on a cot. The person on the cot is wearing a dark beanie and a dark shirt. In the foreground, the back of a child's head and shoulders is visible, wearing a red shirt. A window with a red and white plaid curtain is visible in the upper left. Clothes are hanging on the wall to the right. The overall atmosphere is somber and cramped.

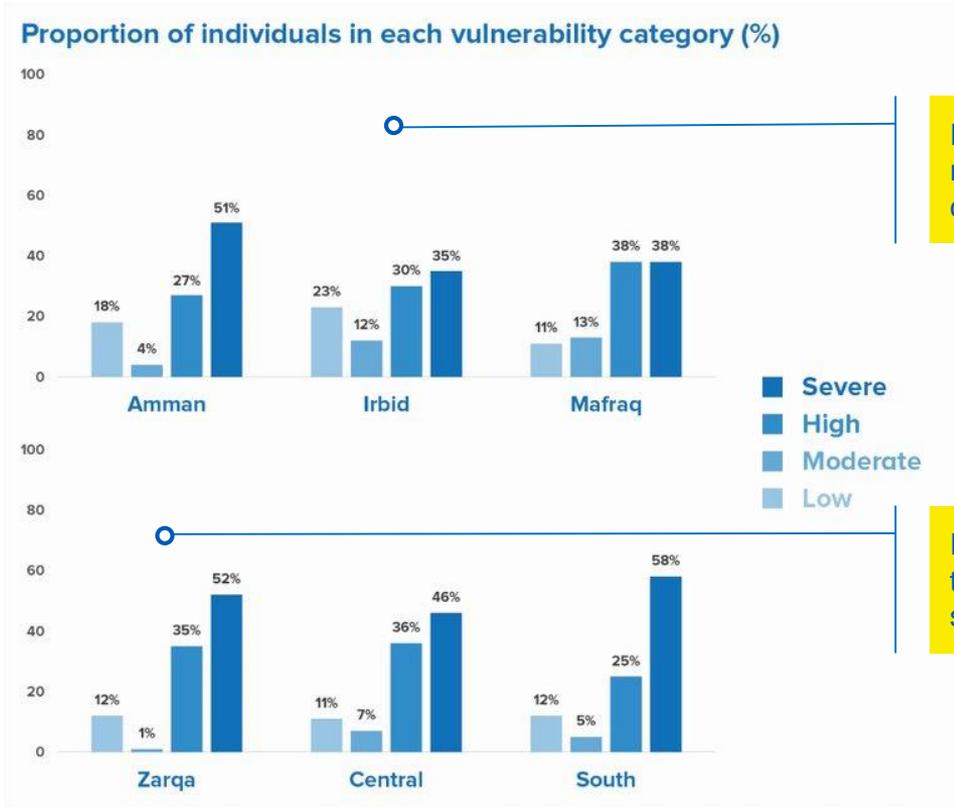
COPING STRATEGIES

Livelihood Coping Strategy Index (LSCI)

The VAF incorporates globally recognised indicators

Level	Indicator
Stress	Spent savings
	Bought food on credit or borrowed money to purchase food from non-relatives/friends
	Sell household assets/goods (jewellery, phone, furniture, electronics, domestics, etc.)
Crisis	Reduced essential non-food expenditure such as education/health
	Sell productive assets or means of transport (sewing machine, car, wheelbarrow, bicycle, motorbike, etc.)
Emergency	Adult members of the household accepted socially degrading, exploitative, high risk or illegal temporary jobs
	Sent adult family members to beg
	Sent children (under 18) family members to beg

Coping strategies across regions



In Irbid, a third of respondents use emergency coping strategies

In Zarqa, over a half resort to emergency coping strategies



Emergency coping strategies and expenditure per capita

- **Expenditure per capita** is a poor predictor of child begging
- Children that beg are most likely to live in household with a **high proportion of non-autonomous adults**
- There is a **correlation** between children being withdrawn from school, early marriage and begging
- The incidence of child begging is also unrelated to **food consumption**
- **Qualitative methods**, may compliment a survey approach to explain the socio-cultural drivers of emergency coping strategies

A photograph of a family of nine people sitting on a patterned rug in a room. The family consists of a man, a woman, and seven children of various ages. They are dressed in traditional Middle Eastern attire. The room has white walls, a window with white curtains, and a small potted plant in the top left corner. The text "DEPENDENCY RATIO" is overlaid in large white letters across the center of the image.

DEPENDENCY RATIO

Dependency ratio VAF ratings

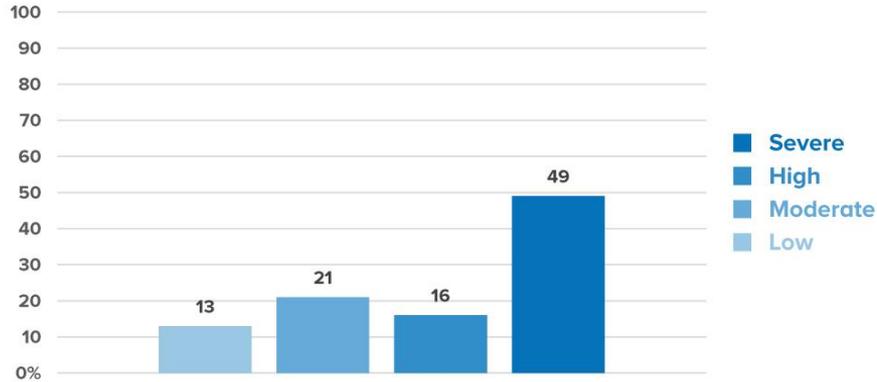
Dependents (non-autonomous adults, children and the elderly) to non-dependents (able-bodied, working-age members)

Low	Less than 0.6 dependents per non-dependent
Moderate	0.6 to 1.2
High	1.2 to 1.8
Severe	More than 1.8 dependents per non-dependent

Approximately 50 per cent have more than 1.8 dependents per non-dependents

The dependency ratio rating has remained constant over time

Proportion of individuals in each vulnerability category (%)

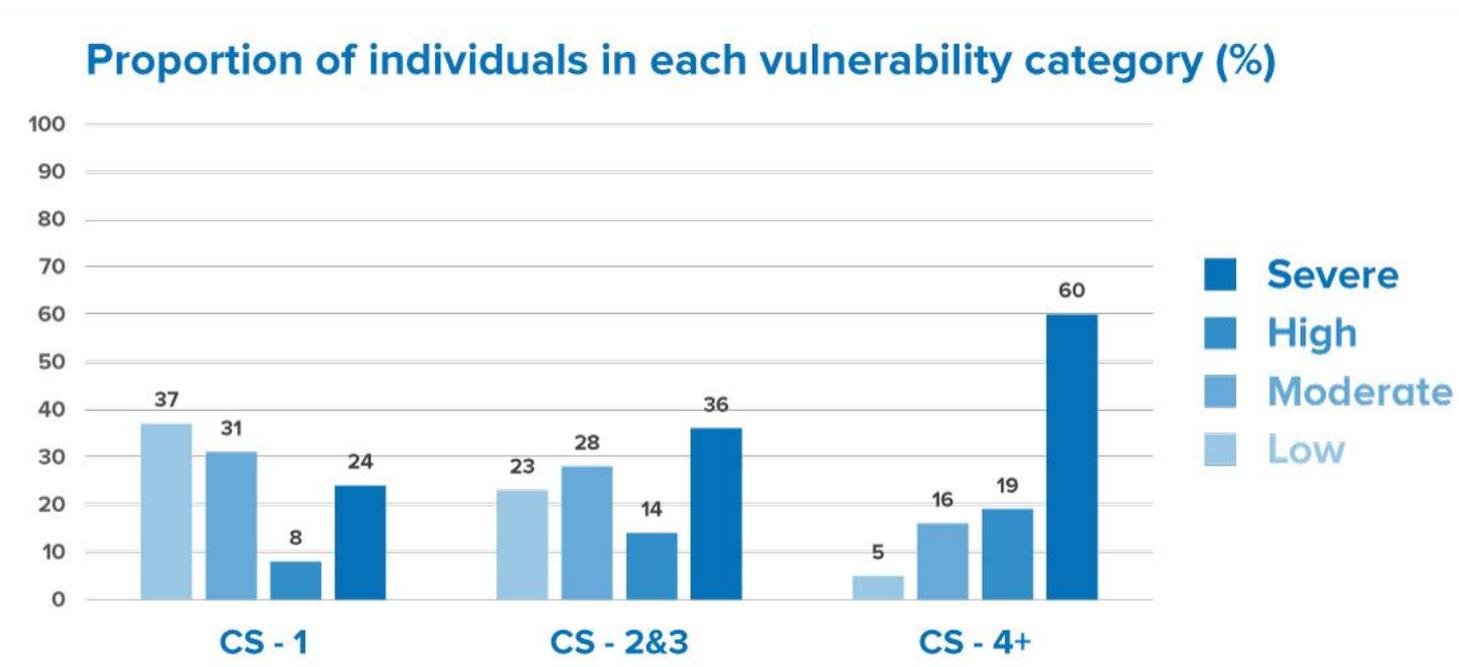


Trend



The dependency ratio increases as case size increases

Unsurprisingly, large cases also have a high proportion of dependents



The method of identifying disabilities changed in 2016

Washington Group questions are now used within the VAF home visit surveys



- This led to an increased identification from 11% to 24% of cases from 2015 to 2017

Do you have difficulty:

- Seeing
- Hearing
- Walking or climbing
- Remembering or concentrating
- Self-care
- Communicating

It is also important to note how disabilities are reported

Depending on the level of analysis, instances can range from one-fifth to nearly a half



- This led to an increased identification from 11% to 24% of cases from 2015 to 2017

	Percentage of ...
Individuals reporting a disability	21%
Cases with at least one individual who reported to have a disability	37%
Households with at least one individual who reported to have a disability	45%



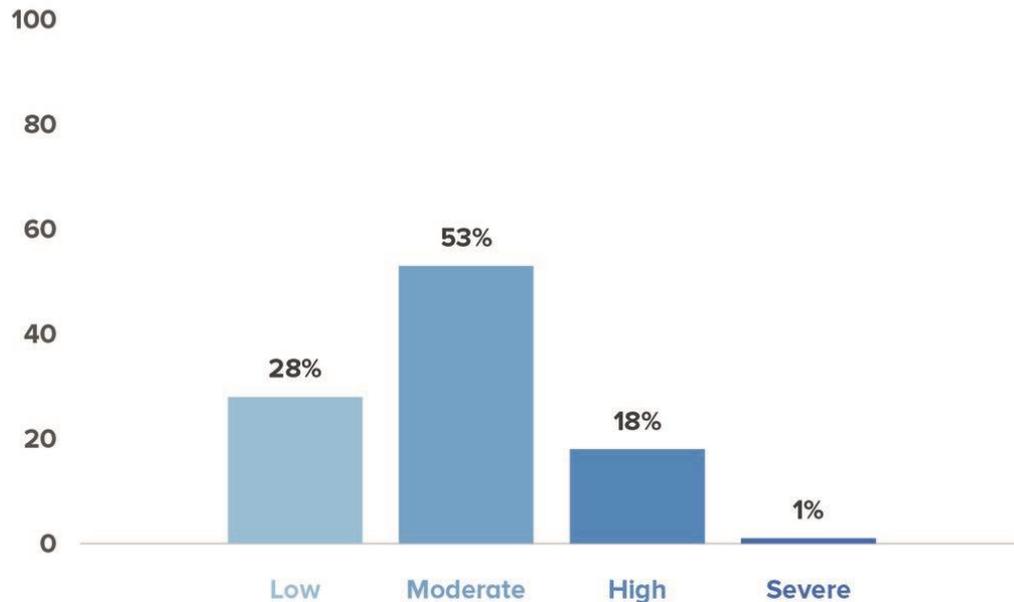
EDUCATION



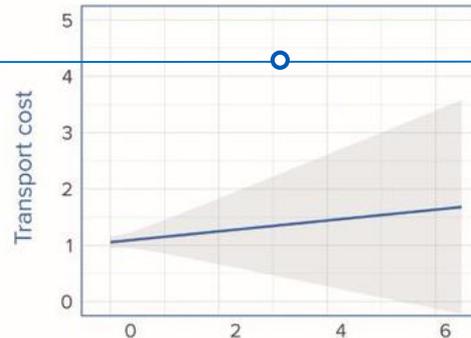
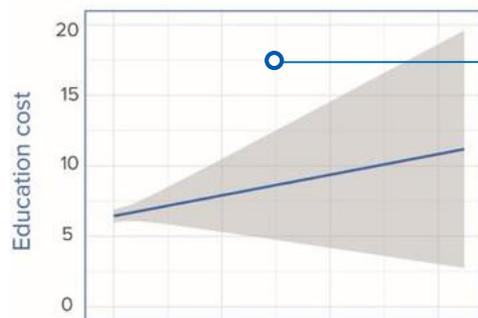
Education VAF ratings

A relatively small proportion of the sample with school-aged children (19%) are classified as vulnerable

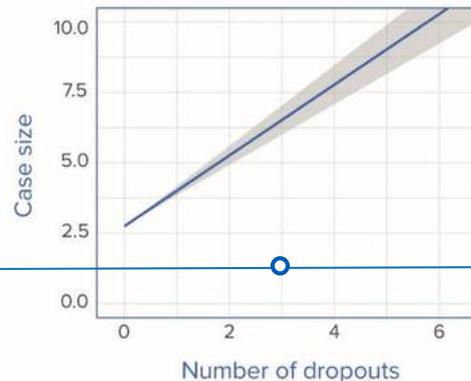
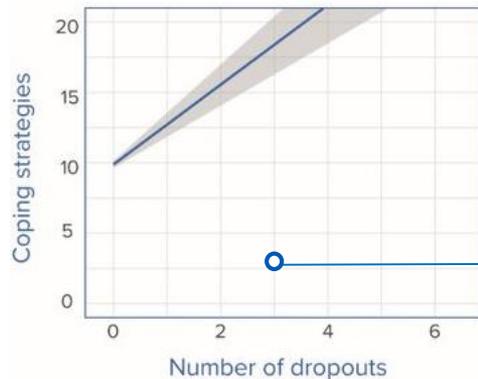
Proportion of individuals in each vulnerability category (%)



Education dropouts



Education and transport costs are only weakly associated with dropouts

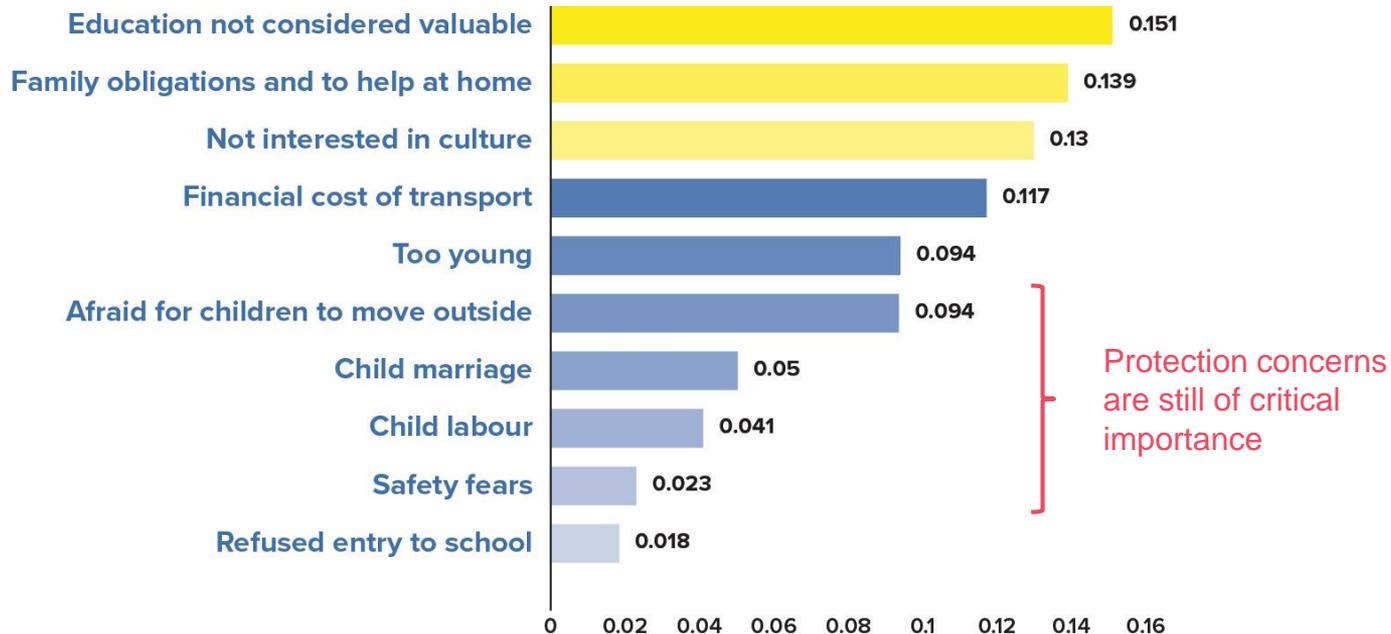


The use of coping strategies and case size are strongly associated with dropouts



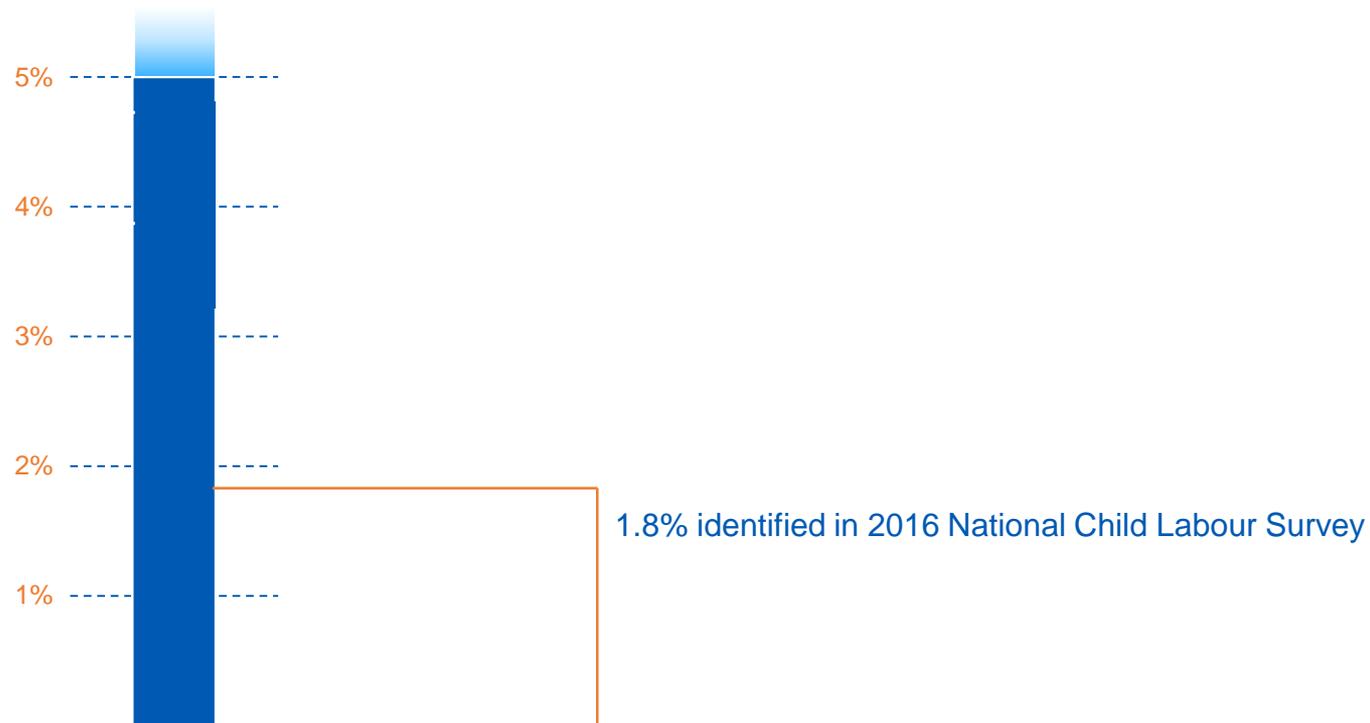
Reasons for not attending school

The top three reasons for non-school attendance were cultural, rather than economic or protection related



5% of child population identified as working children

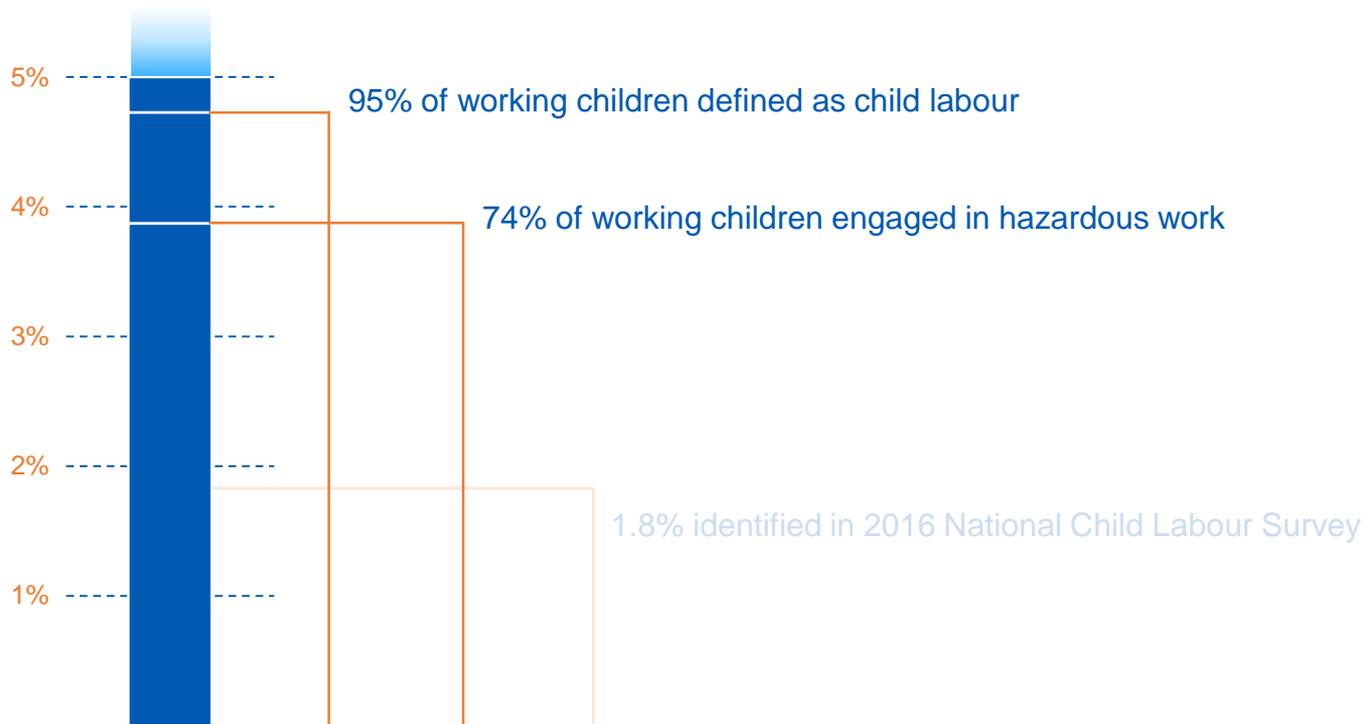
Prevalence of working children might be higher among Syrian refugees than local population



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Extremely high prevalence of child labour among working children

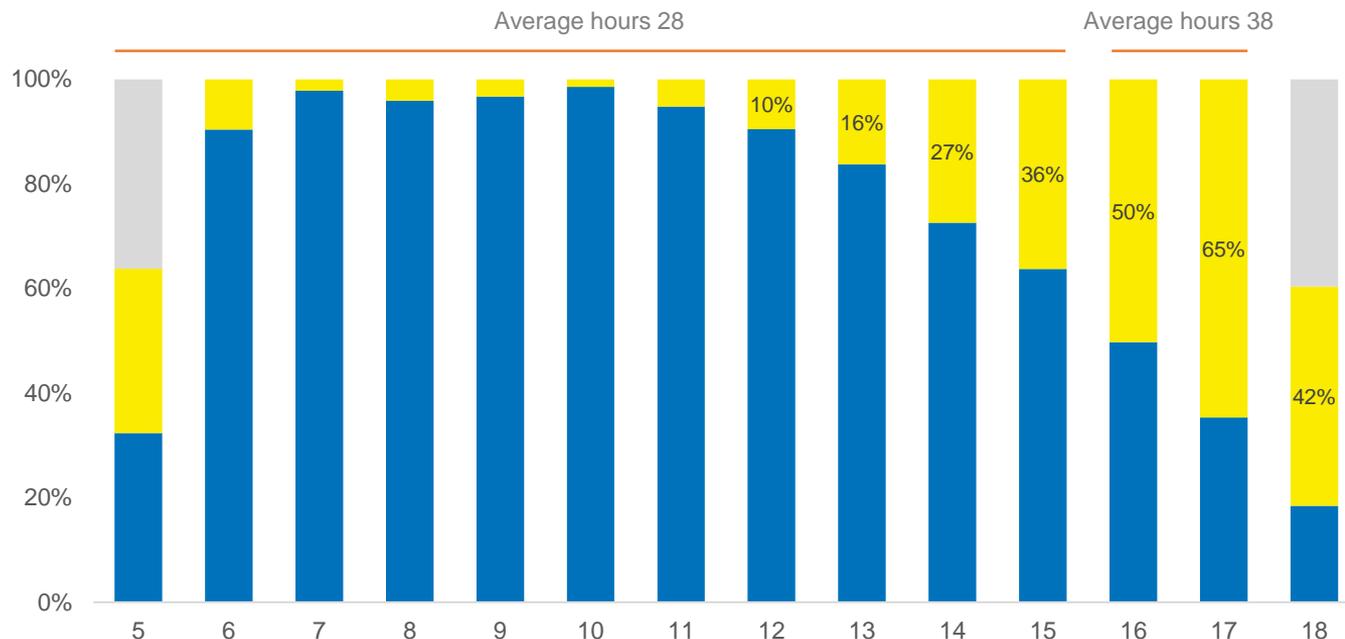
A high risk of negative impact on development due to non-school attendance



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Working children at risk of non-school attendance

Long working hours are a key driver for child labour identification, increasing risk of non-school attendance

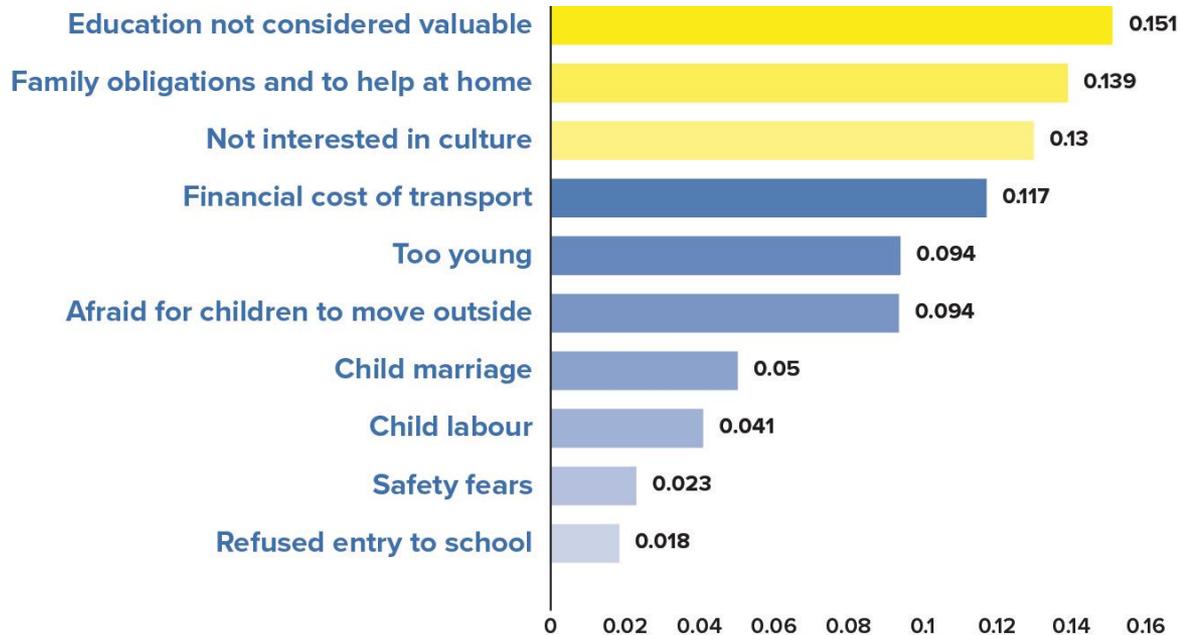


■ Yes ■ No ■ Not applicable



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Again, this could be viewed in relation to the cultural norms

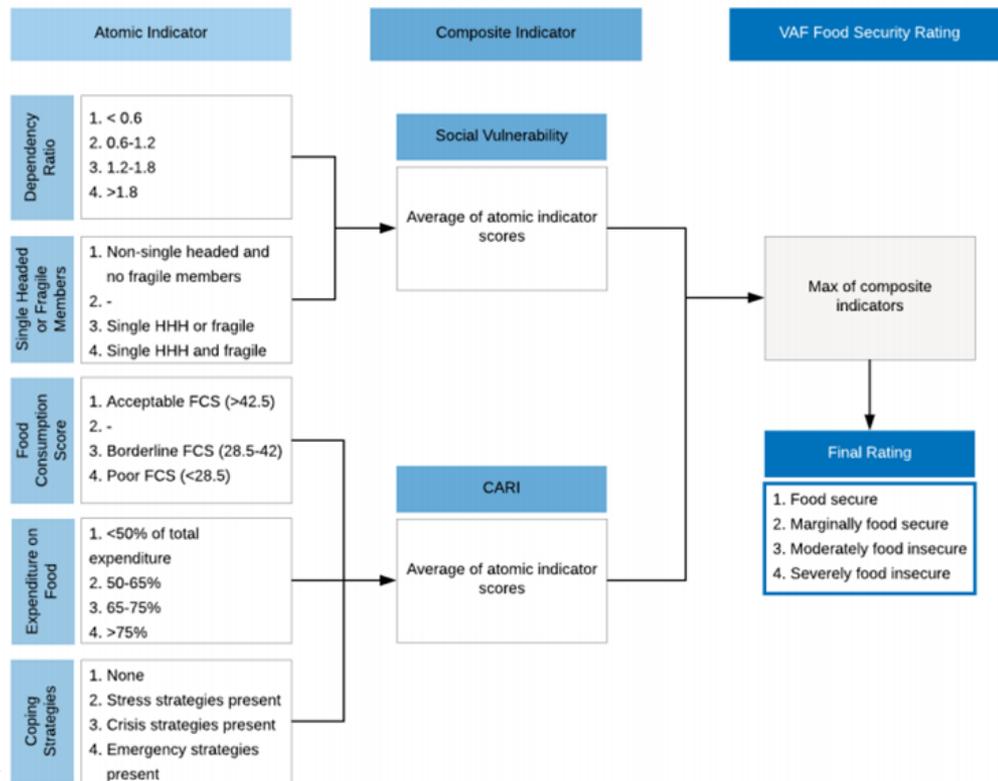




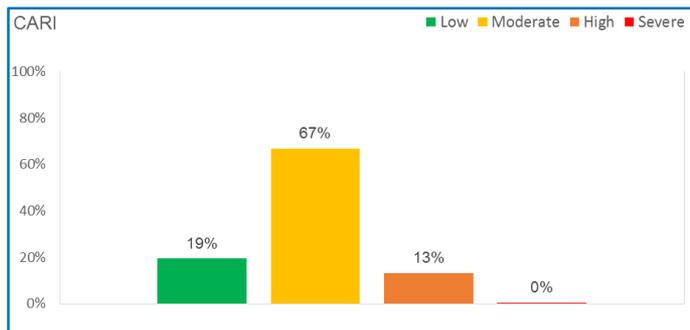
FOOD SECURITY

Food security VAF ratings

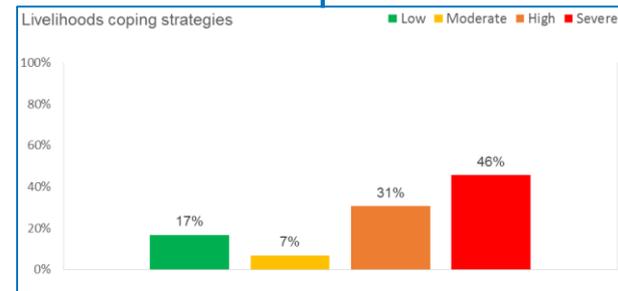
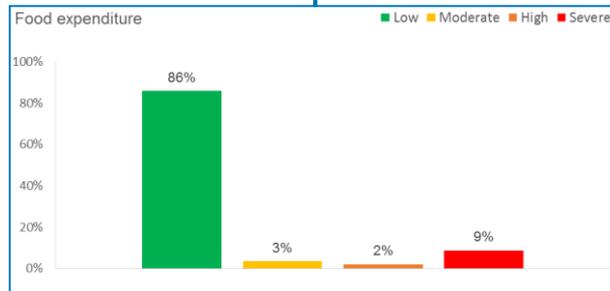
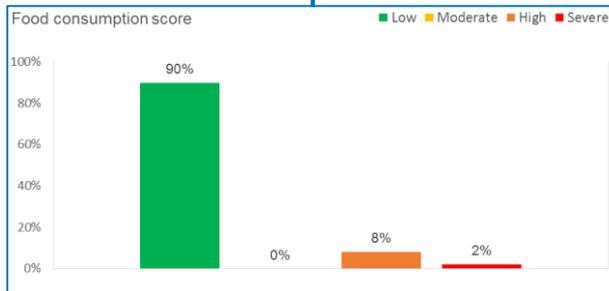
A combination of social vulnerability and the CARI



Atomic and composite indicators build up a comprehensive picture

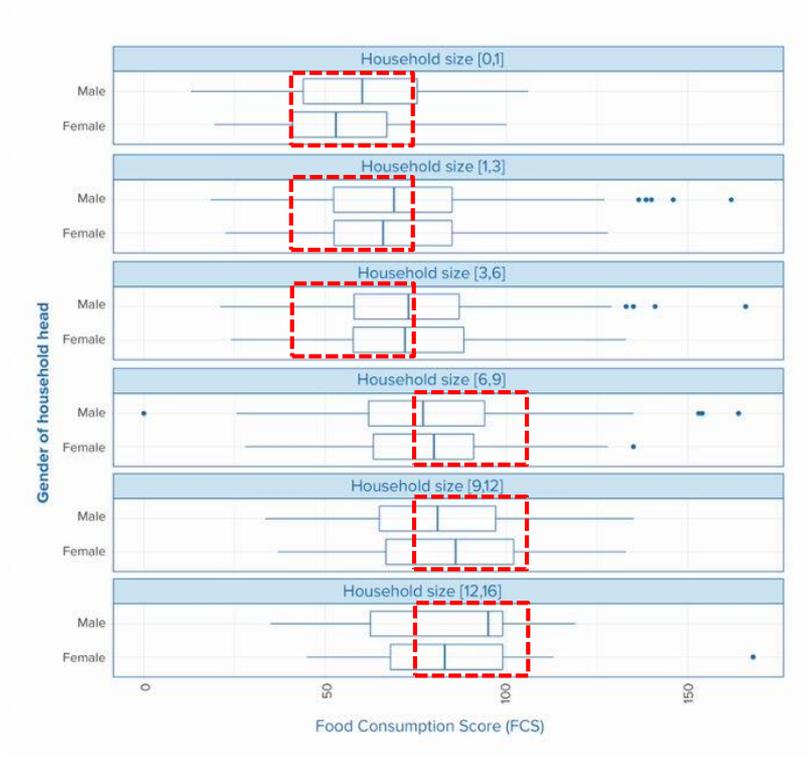


Despite high Food Consumption Scores and good levels of expenditure on food, many cases resort to negative coping mechanisms in order to meet their food needs



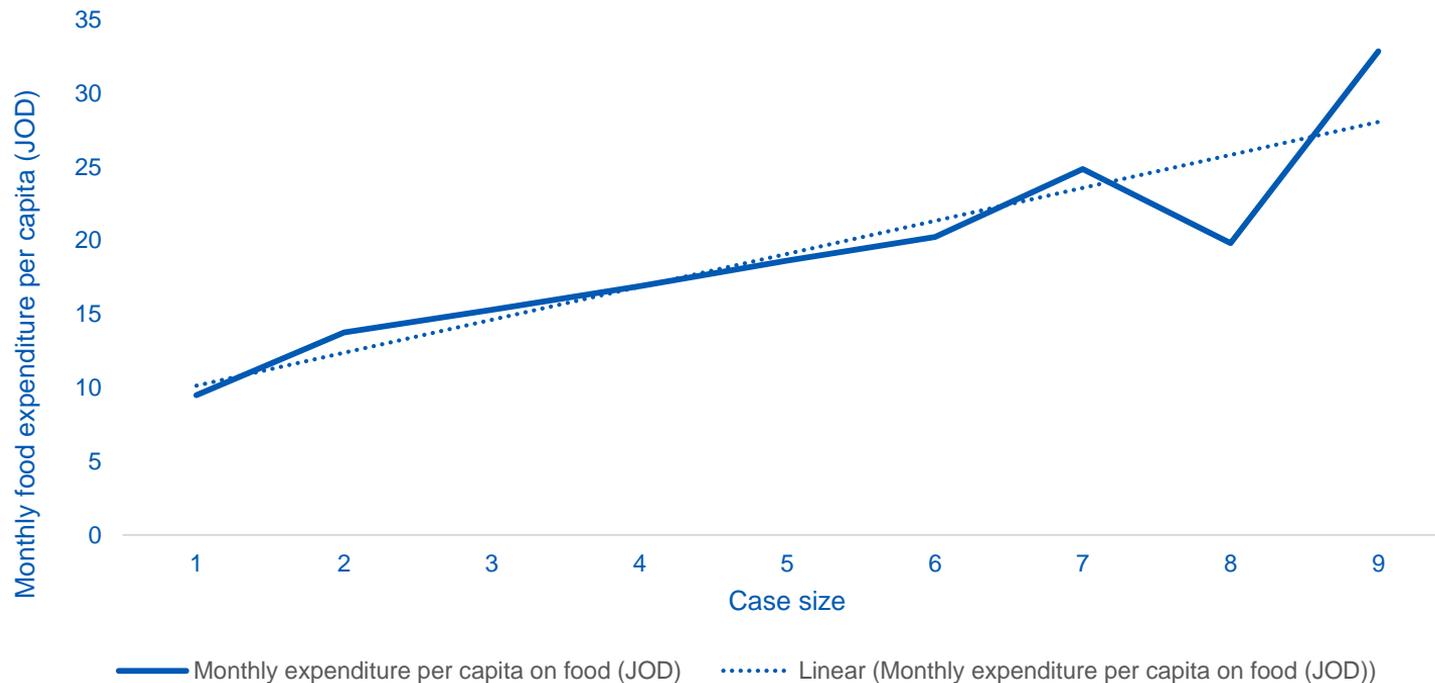
Food consumption score increases with household size

Food consumption score taking into account frequency and diversity of diet



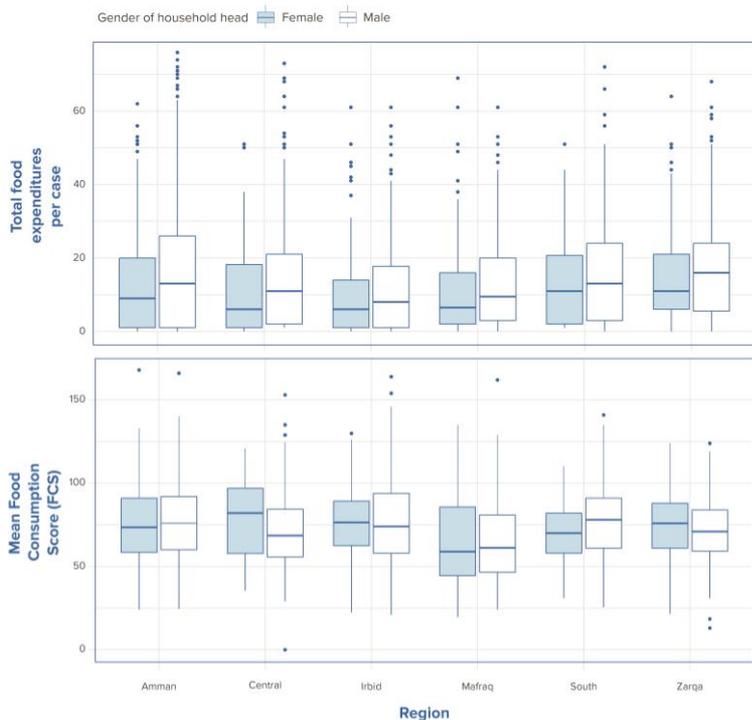
Smaller households (between 1 and 6), lead by males have consistently higher median FCS than their female lead counterparts

Case size drives up food expenditure per capita



Gender, FCS and food expenditure

Female headed-households achieved similar or better food consumption scores with lower expenditures



Total food expenditures per case are generally higher for male HH

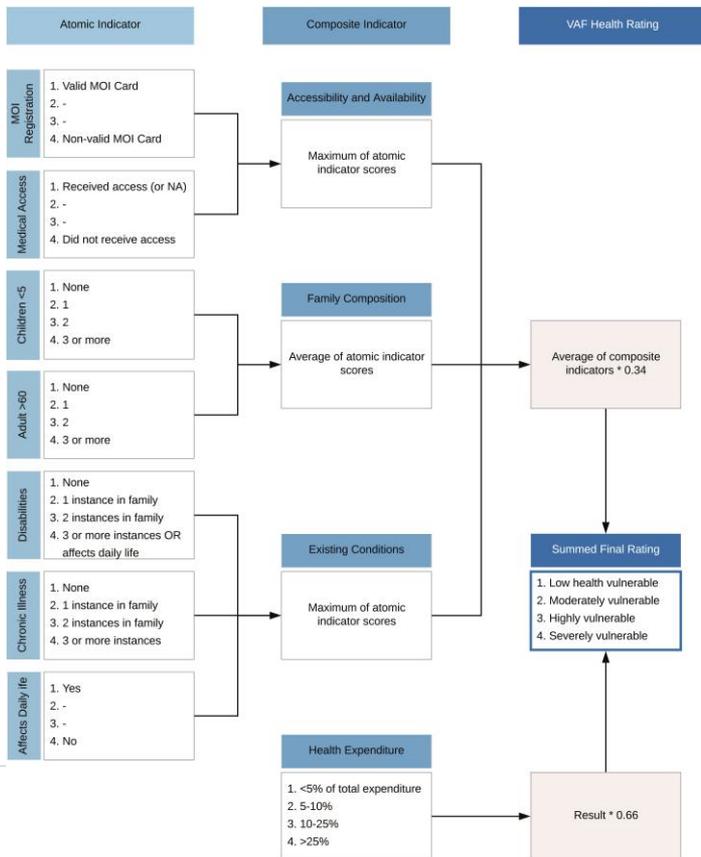
Mean FCS per case are generally equal to or higher for female HH

HEALTH



Health vulnerability rating

A combination of health access and availability, family composition, existing conditions and health expenditure

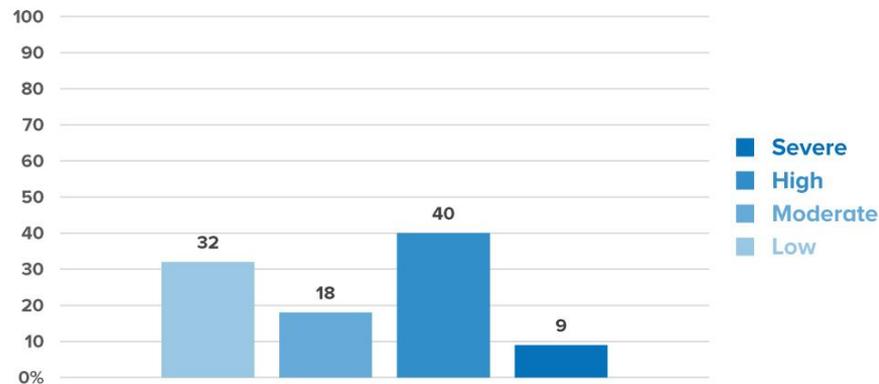


The health sector vulnerability indicator focuses on factors that influence an individual's ability to mitigate health risks, rather than aiming to assess the extent of medical issues

Overall a small reduction in health vulnerability

Nearly half of the population in 2018 are classified as vulnerable compared to just over half in 2017

Proportion of individuals in each vulnerability category (%)

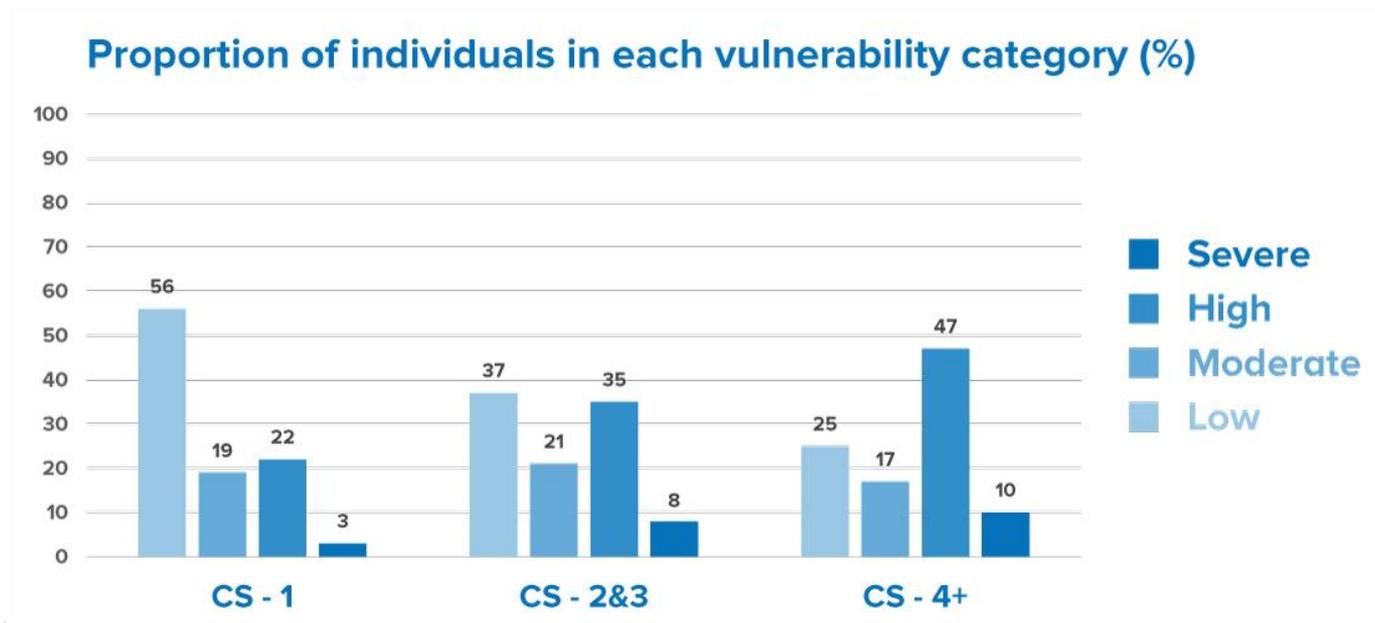


Trend



Larger cases are more vulnerable from a health perspective

For case size one, only 25% of individuals are rated as highly or severely vulnerable

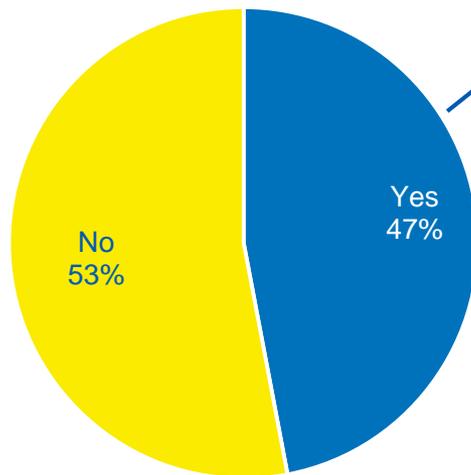


There is a high incidence of trauma

Question	Proportion of adults in the sample (%)
Feeling so severely upset about the war, that you tried to avoid places, people, conversations or activities that reminded you of such event	35
Feeling so angry that you felt out of control	24
Feeling so hopeless that you did not want to carry on living	20
Feeling so uninterested in things that you used to like, that you did not want to do anything at all	18
Feeling you were unable to carry out essential activities for daily living	18
Feeling so afraid that nothing could calm you down	16

Health policy changes relating to costs

Nearly 50% of cases noticed an increase in health costs over the last six months



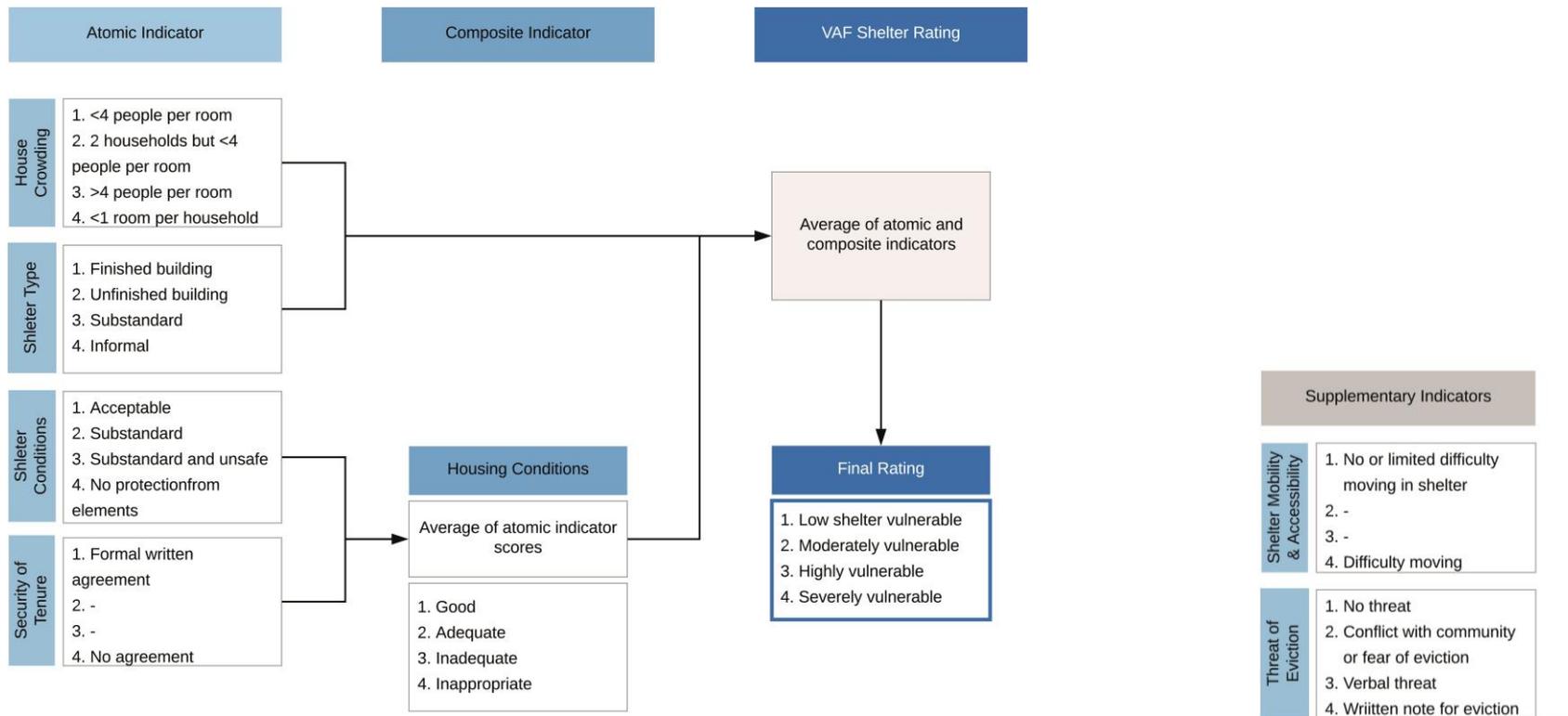
What was the impact of that increase?

- 79%** Can't afford medication
- 72%** Can't visit the medical center
- 54%** Can't afford the procedure
- 7%** No impact
- 1%** Other

SHELTER



Shelter vulnerability rating



Shelter quality varies across regions

Mafrq tends to have comparatively worse shelter than any other region

- **Mafrq** has a high proportion of households residing in substandard buildings or informal settlements and has the most substandard housing
- **Zarqa** and **Amman** have the highest proportion of households living in finished buildings with the least living in informal settlements
- **Irbid** and the **South** have the best shelter conditions

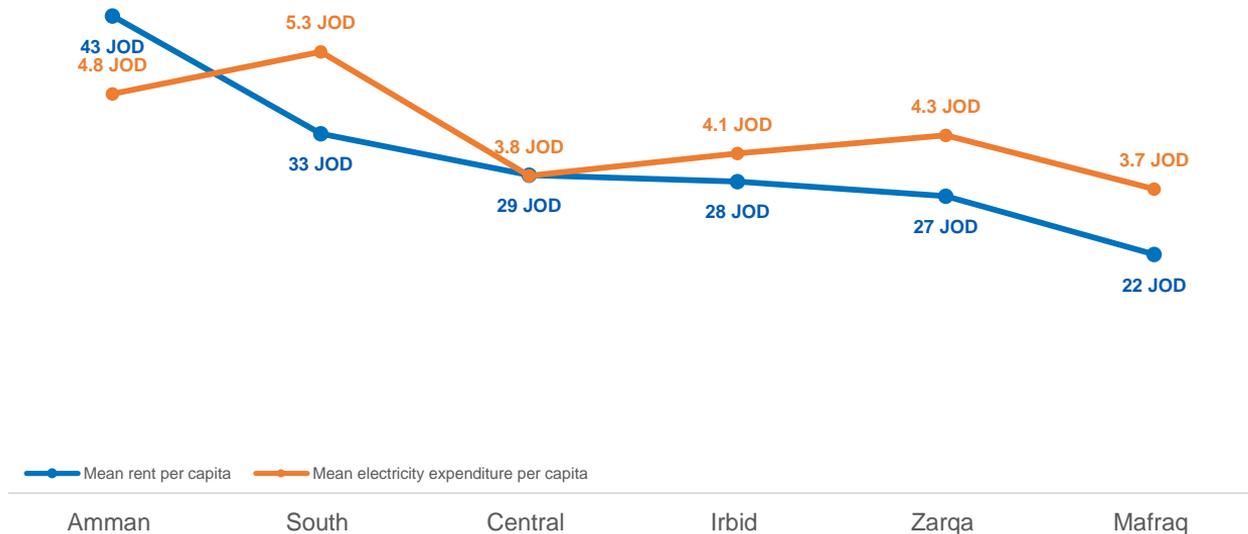
Tenancy agreement type

The key determining factor for shelter vulnerability relates to tenancy agreement type

- Having a **written rental contract** improves the shelter score whereas the lack of any agreement increases the vulnerability
- The difference between having a written agreement as opposed to other more informal arrangements is associated with on average one **additional substandard shelter feature**
- The relationship between tenancy conditions remains strong for different levels of rent and income: while holding rent per capita and income per capita constant, the effect of having a written contract still improves housing conditions

Housing and electricity costs vary across the regions

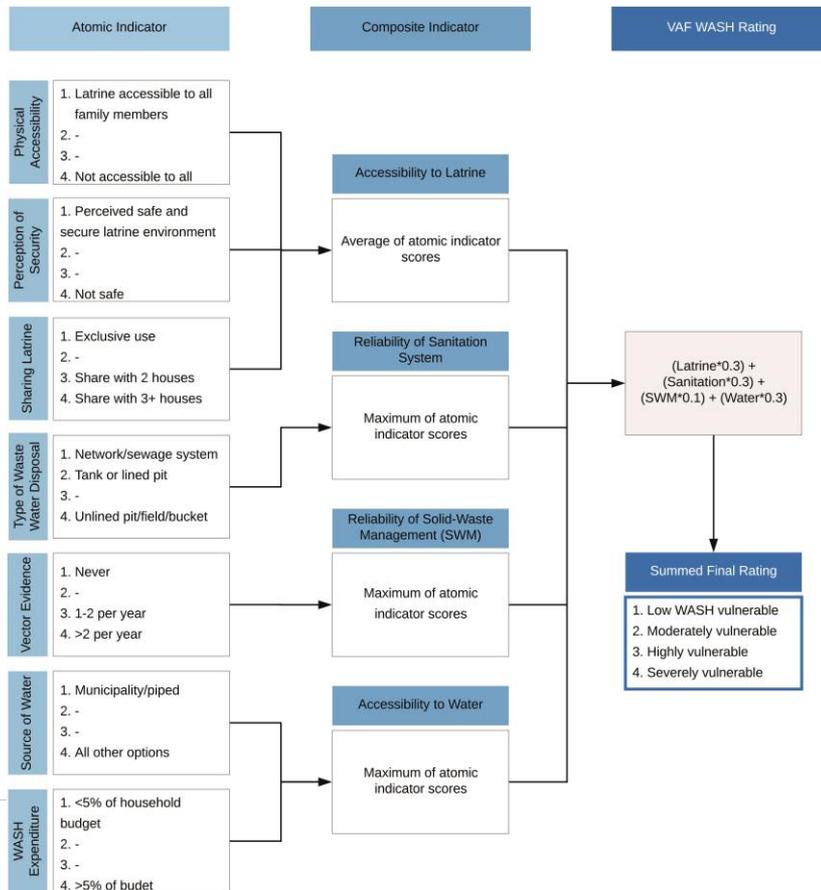
Rent in Amman is over double rent in Mafraq



WASH



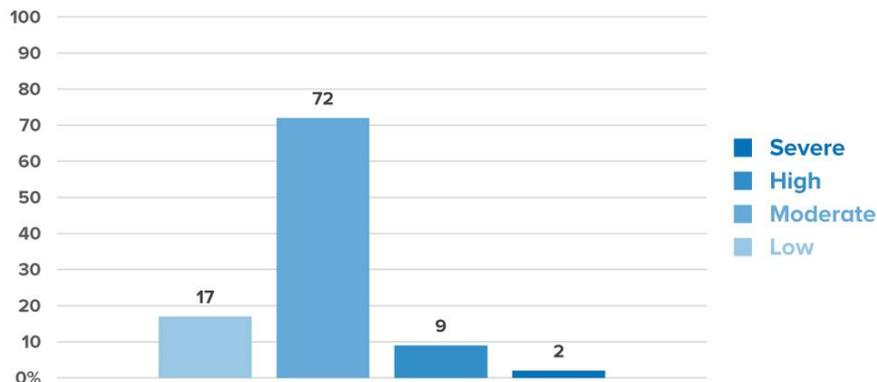
WASH vulnerability rating



Overall 11% have high or severe WASH vulnerability ratings

WASH expenditure per capita is consistent determinant of overall expenditure per capita

Proportion of individuals in each vulnerability category (%)



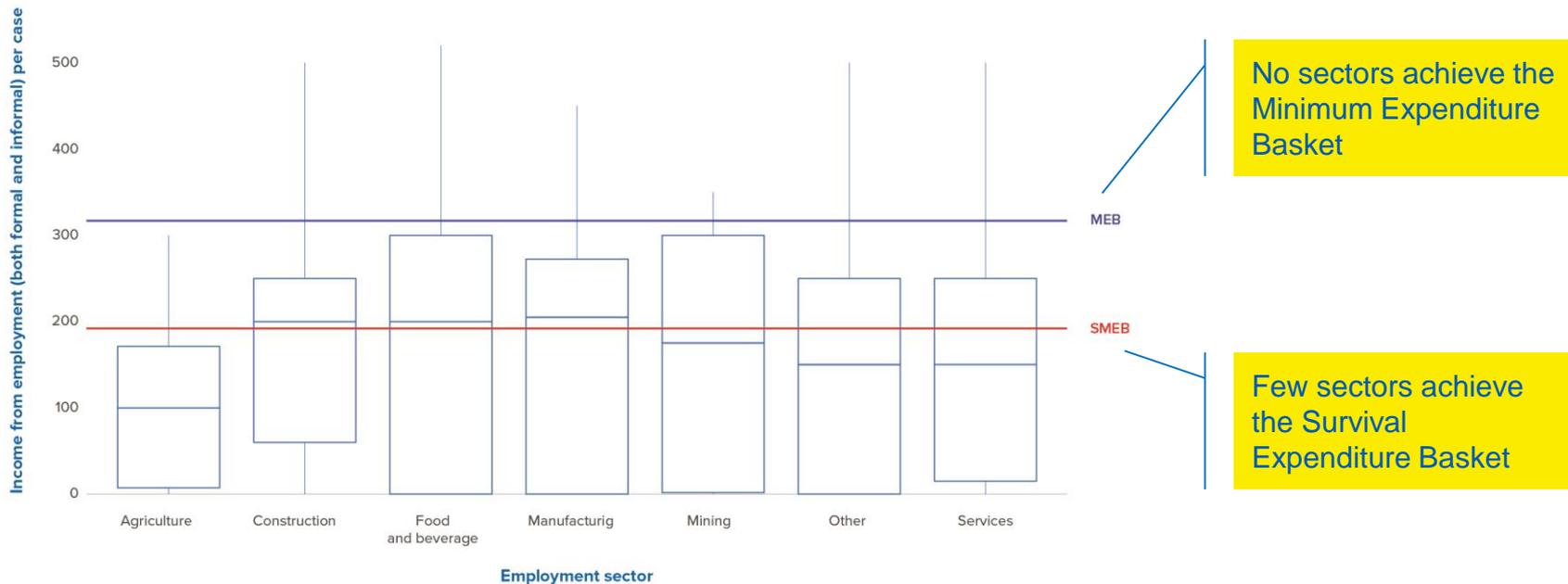
- Several sub-indicators reveal much higher levels of vulnerability:
 - Expenditure on WASH items (58%)
 - Accessibility to safe drinking water (64%)
 - Solid waste management (82%)



LIVELIHOODS, DEBT, INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

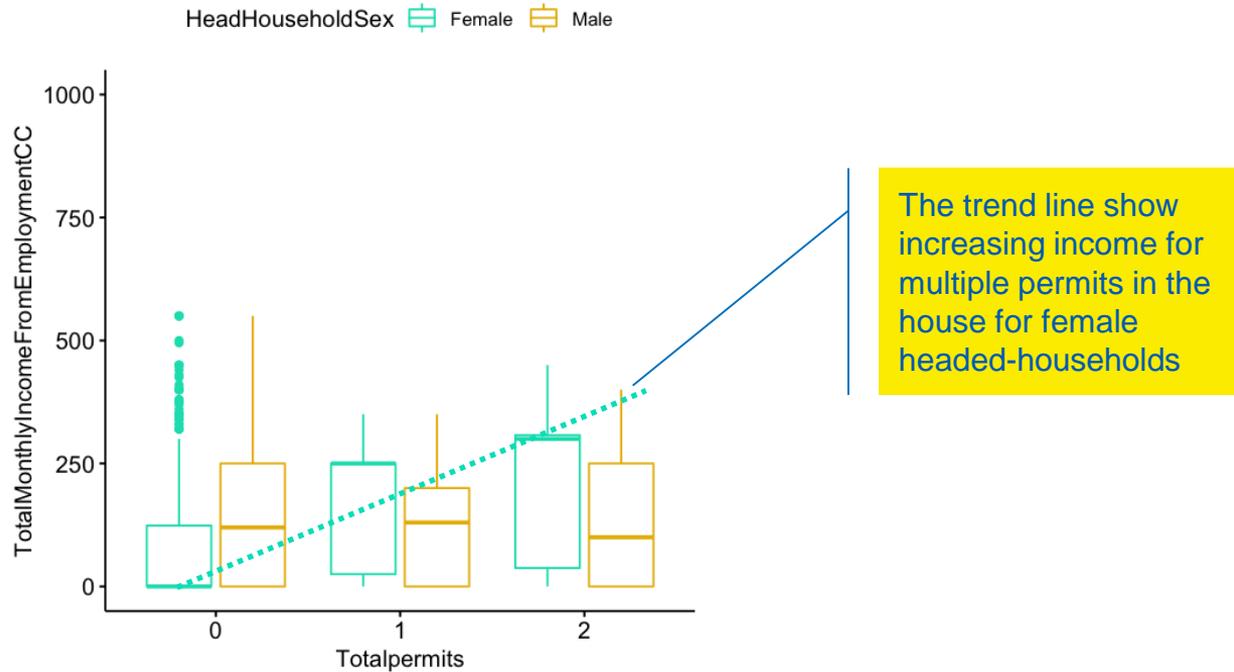
Income from employment is insufficient to lift cases from poverty

Median income come from work (both formal and informal) is always lower than MEB often lower than the SMEB



Work permits could drive income up faster for FHH

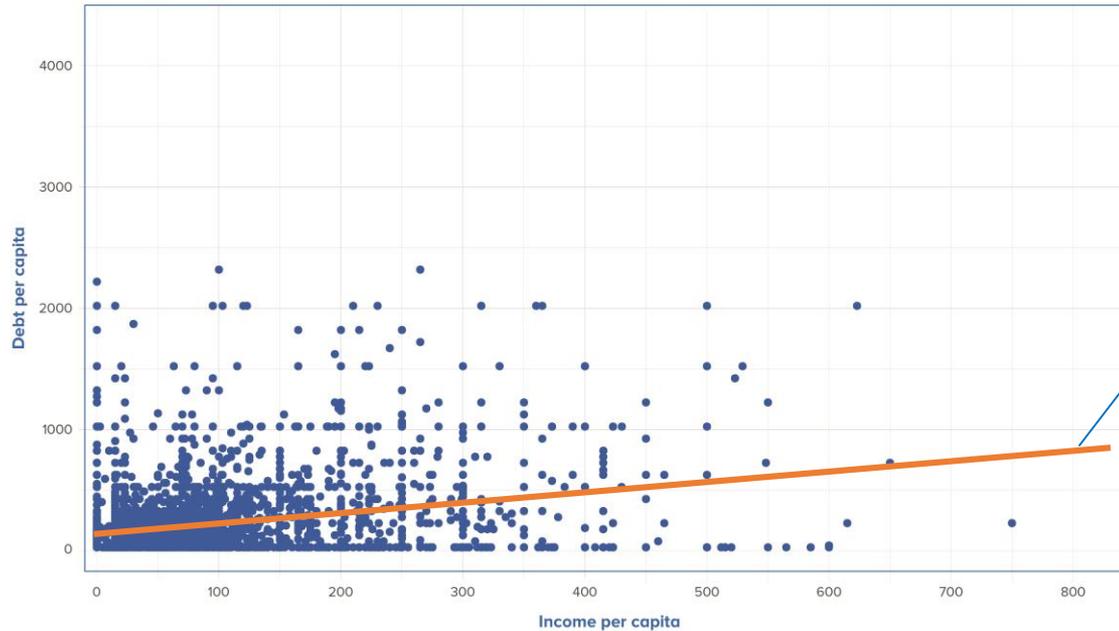
Indicative results show that the impact of work permits in female headed households is highly positive



Income per capita and debt per capita

Business-related borrowing? Or access to credit?

$$y = 99 + 0.882x$$
$$R^2 = 0.078$$



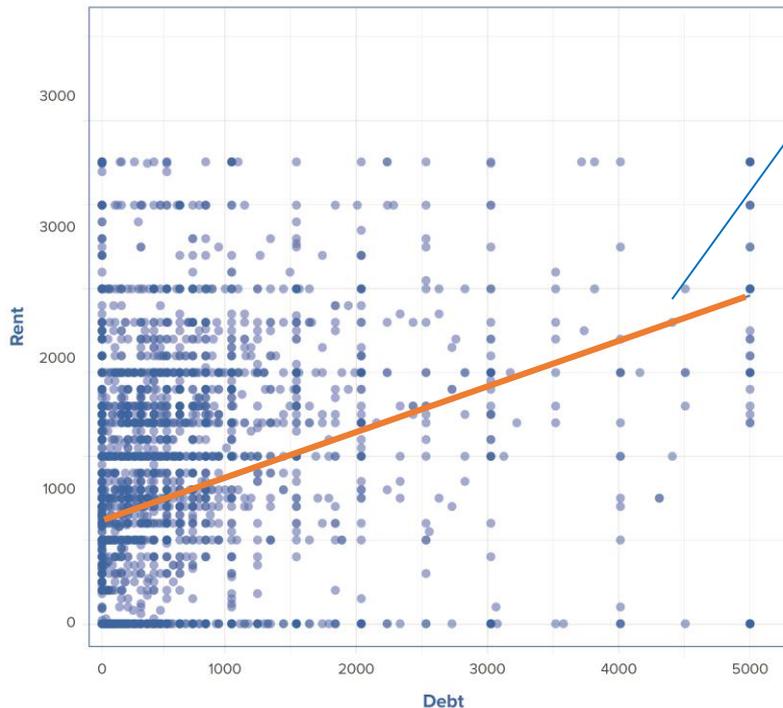
As income increases
debt also increases by
a small amount

Rent is a key driver of indebtedness

There is a strong positive relationship between debt per capita and rent per capita

- Rent is the most common reason why respondents borrow money
- 27% of the sample become indebted to pay for housing

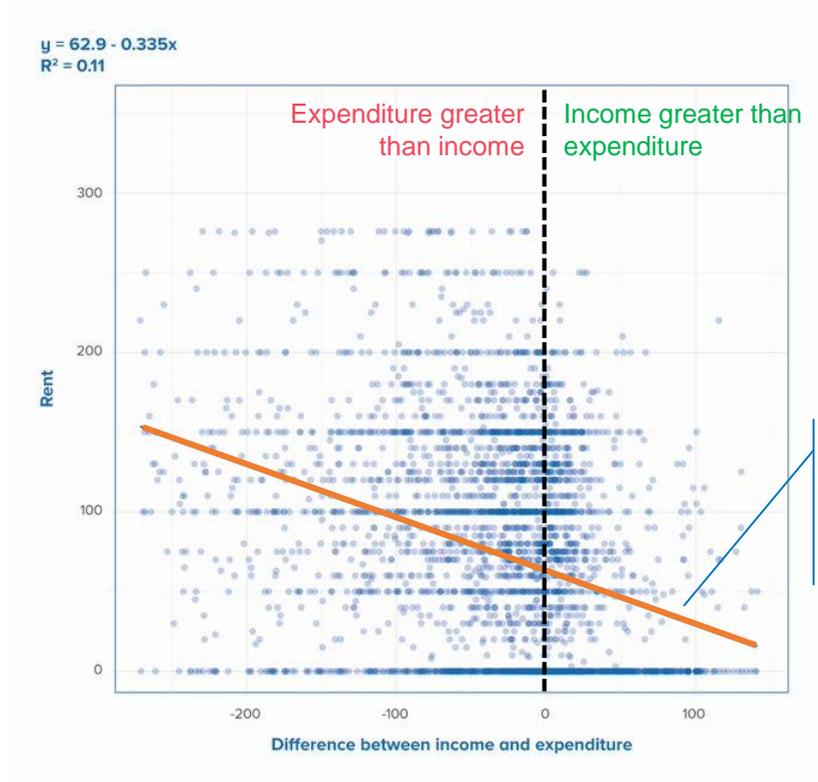
$$y = 60.6 + 0.00271x$$
$$R^2 = 0.11$$



As debt per person increases, rent per person also increases (11% of the variation in rent is explained by debt alone)

Rent is a key driver of expenditures

- On average, respondents report less income than expenditure.
- The difference between earning and spending is driven by rent, especially for single headed households.
- The median value for this difference is approximately –26 JOD per month for each case.



The difference between earnings and spending falls as rent decreases

A photograph of a family sitting on the floor in a room. In the foreground, a large, black, metal mesh heater is visible on the right side. In the background, a man with a mustache is sitting cross-legged, reading a book. A woman is sitting next to him, and two young children are sitting in front of them. The room has a simple, plain wall and a window with a white frame at the top. The overall atmosphere is warm and intimate.

SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS

Conclusions and recommendations

Triangulation strategies and explaining the welfare beyond expenditures to be considered

- Build on the livelihood focus as the population settles
- Expenditure can explain both vulnerability and income acceleration
- Focus on socio-cultural norms
- Utilise the welfare model to shape programme integration
- Continue the study of cross-cutting dimensions in explaining use of resources
- Utilise theories of change in a multi-agency way

Cross-cutting considerations

The emergence of cross-cutting variables is an evolution to the model

- The proportion of genders in a household has an important explanatory power to inform several dimensions of vulnerability
- Households with more women whilst using less resources are achieving similar results in basic needs and food consumption.
- Some geographic variation exists but it is a weak indicator of vulnerabilities while household structure and size has a more important role
- Cultural and normative factors affect access to education and negative coping strategies in a significant way
- The inter-play between income, expenditures and debt is complex and inter-twined. Higher expenditures describes vulnerability but can also higher income patterns.

Conclusions and recommendations

Triangulation strategies and explaining the welfare beyond expenditures to be considered

- **Build on the livelihood focus as the population settles**
 - Explore the barriers to achieve livelihood solutions that can be sustained
 - Assess pathways to income generation linked to micro-entrepreneurship
 - Recognise that female-headed households prefer formal employment
 - Match existing skills with market demand to integrate interventions
- **Expenditure can explain both vulnerability and income acceleration**
 - Frame the protection to explore how expenditures describe vulnerabilities but also depends on income generation
 - Continue to analyse sub-groups of respondents to identify different inc-exp patterns
- **Focus on socio-cultural norms**
 - Use qualitative methods to describe decision-making power and the incentives to keep children in education and reduction of negative coping strategies (begging)

Conclusions and recommendations

Triangulation strategies and explaining the welfare beyond expenditures to be considered

- **Utilise the welfare model to shape programme integration**
 - Defining a modality for multi-agency programme integration based on the key vulnerabilities and their evolution
 - Framing the causal pathway along a protection continuum provides entry points for linkages between interventions aimed at individual or multiple sectors
- **Continue the study of cross-cutting dimensions in explaining use of resources**
 - Define and test variables (e.g. proportion of women in a household, length of stay, skill sets, etc.) that can add value to the model
 - Use cross-cutting variables to explain expenditure patterns and vulnerabilities
- **Utilise theories of change in a multi-agency way**
 - The sequence of results and evolution of needs requires a model leveraging on multi-sectorial assessments such as the reported one to inform multiple projects

The VAF fits well with the theory of change framing the protection continuum

The importance to link changes and cash programmes relates to recognition of evolving needs

