

Food Security Monitoring: Refugee hosting areas and Karamoja

Key points



WFP Uganda expanded its food security monitoring to cover refugee hosting areas and Karamoja to monitor the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on some of the most impacted populations. Starting from May 2020, data was collected continuously from 13 refugee settlements and hosting districts, and all the 9 districts of Karamoja.



In June 2020, 54 percent of refugees living in settlements, 23 percent of refugees living in Kampala, and 26 percent of Ugandan nationals in host communities proportion were found to have insufficient food consumption. The proportion of refugee households in settlements with insufficient food consumption was similar to March 2020 (56 percent).



In Karamoja, 46 percent of households had insufficient (poor or borderline) food consumption, a significant improvement from May 2019 (85 percent).



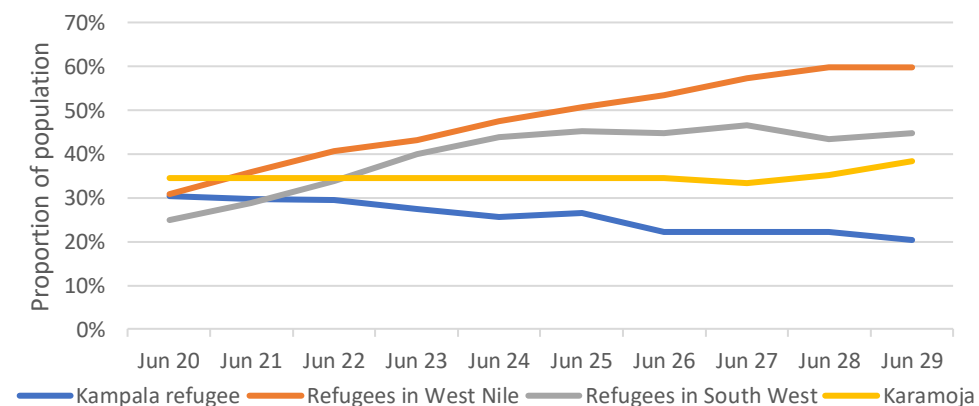
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Situation update

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the government of Uganda imposed restrictions to economic activity and physical movement from the 18th of March 2020. To monitor the impact on some of the most impacted populations, WFP Uganda expanded its remote monitoring system (mVAM) to provide near-real time updates on the food security situation in refugee settlements, refugee hosting communities, urban centres across the country and in Karamoja.

In June 2020, 54 percent of refugee households in settlements had insufficient food consumption, a level similar to March 2020 (56 percent). West Nile settlements had a larger proportion of households with insufficient food consumption at the end of June (60 percent vs 44 percent for South West Settlements) as indicated in Figure 1. Refugees in Kampala had better food consumption than refugees in settlements. There were no significant differences in food consumption between male and female headed households for both refugees in settlements and Kampala. Compared to May 2019, the proportion of refugee households in settlements with insufficient food consumption was lower in June 2020 (62 percent vs 54 percent).

Fig. 1: Proportion of households with insufficient (poor or borderline) food consumption



Source: WFP Uganda, mVAM, June 2020



Food consumption

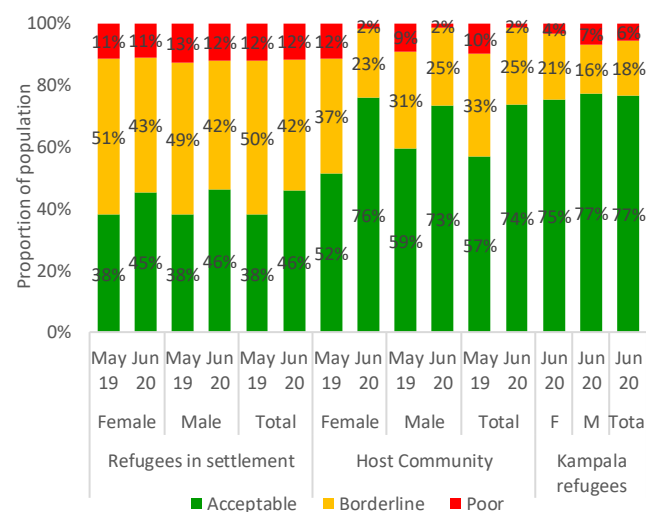
Overall, 54 percent of refugee households in settlement had insufficient food consumption in June 2020. Refugees in Kampala had a better food consumption than refugees in settlements. 23 percent of refugee households in Kampala had insufficient food consumption (vs 23 percent for settlements). The highest proportion of refugee households with inadequate food consumption was observed in Kyaka II (83 percent) and the lowest in Lobule (27 percent). The proportion of refugee households with insufficient food consumption decreased from 62 percent in May 2019 to 54 percent in June 2020.

Nationals in host communities had a better food consumption than refugees. Overall, 26 percent of host community households had insufficient food consumption. Palabek and Kiryadongo had the worst and best food consumption among hosts respectively (90 percent vs 30 percent). The proportion of national households with insufficient food consumption decreased from 43 percent in May 2019 to 26 percent in June 2020.

46 percent of households in Karamoja had insufficient food consumption in June 2020. There were no significant differences in food consumption outcomes between male and female headed households in the sub region. Nakapiripirit, Karenga and Kaabong had the highest proportion of household with insufficient food consumption, while Abim and Kotido had the least proportion. The proportion of households with insufficient food consumption decreased from 85 percent in May 2019 to 46 percent in June 2020. Over the same period, Nabilatuk, Amudat, Abim and Kotido halved the proportion of households with insufficient food consumption.

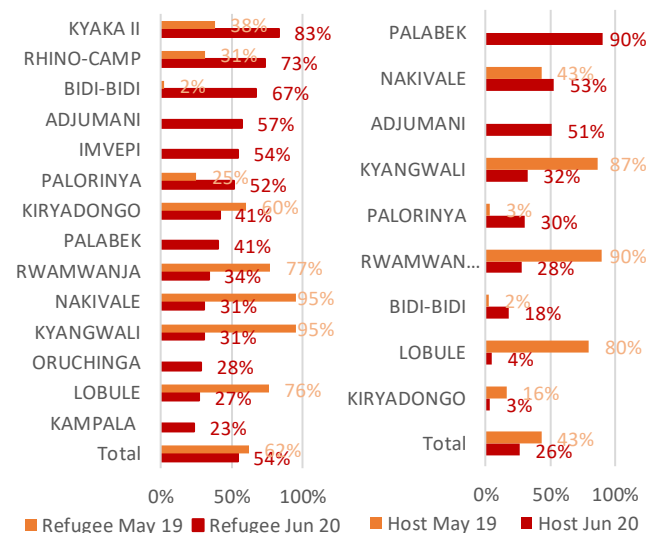
Improvement in food consumption could be as a result of the start of first season harvests and government lifting of the COVID-19 lockdown which has allowed gradual resumption of economic activity and enhanced access to markets.

Fig. 2: Proportion of households under each food consumption category



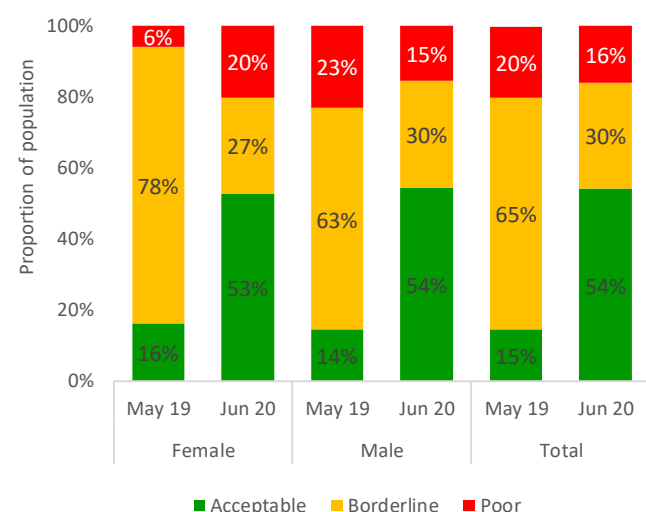
Source: WFP Uganda, mVAM, June 2020

Fig. 3: Proportion of households under poor and borderline food consumption by settlement



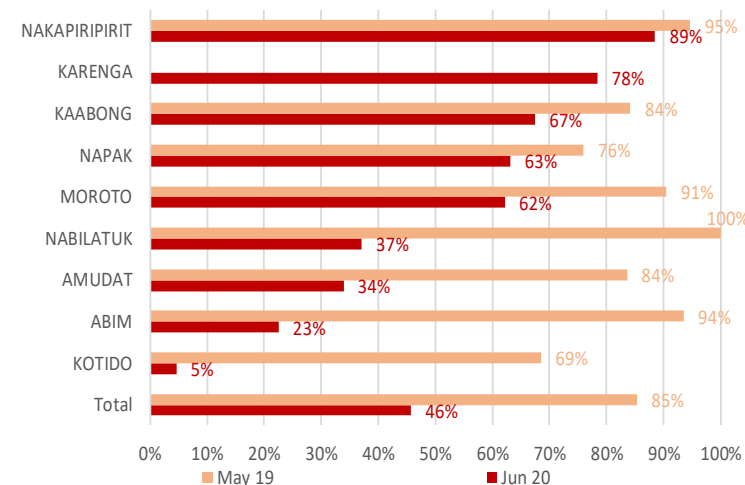
Source: WFP Uganda, mVAM, June 2020

Fig. 4: Proportion of households under each food consumption category



Source: WFP Uganda, mVAM, June 2020

Fig. 5: Proportion of households under poor and borderline food consumption by district



Source: WFP Uganda, mVAM, June 2020



Food based coping strategies

Overall, 48 percent of refugee households in settlements resorted to the use of medium or high coping strategies in June 2020 due to inadequate food. Kampala had a higher proportion (63 percent) of refugee households applying medium or high food based coping strategies compared to refugees in settlements. Rhino camp had the largest proportion of refugee households employing medium or high food based coping while Nakivale had the smallest proportion. The proportion of refugee households applying medium or high food based coping strategies increased from 21 percent in May 2019 to 48 percent in June 2020.

Among host community nationals, 27 percent of households applied medium or high food based coping strategies, which was better than refugees in settlements. Palabek and Nakivale had the largest and smallest food based coping outcomes respectively. The proportion of households applying medium or high food based coping strategies increased from 12 percent in May 2019 to 27 percent in June 2020.

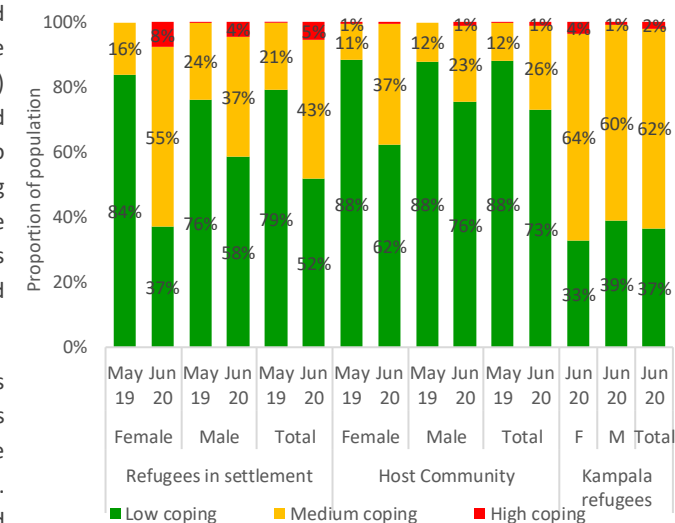
In Karamoja, 55 percent of national households applied medium or high food based coping strategies in June 2020.

Karenga, Moroto and Kaabong had the highest proportion of households applying medium or high coping strategies, while Nakapiripirit and Abim had less than 20 percent of households employing the strategies.

The proportion of households applying medium or high food based coping strategies in June 2020 was similar to that in May 2019. However, whereas no household used high coping strategies in May 2019, 14 percent of households resorted to their use in June 2020.

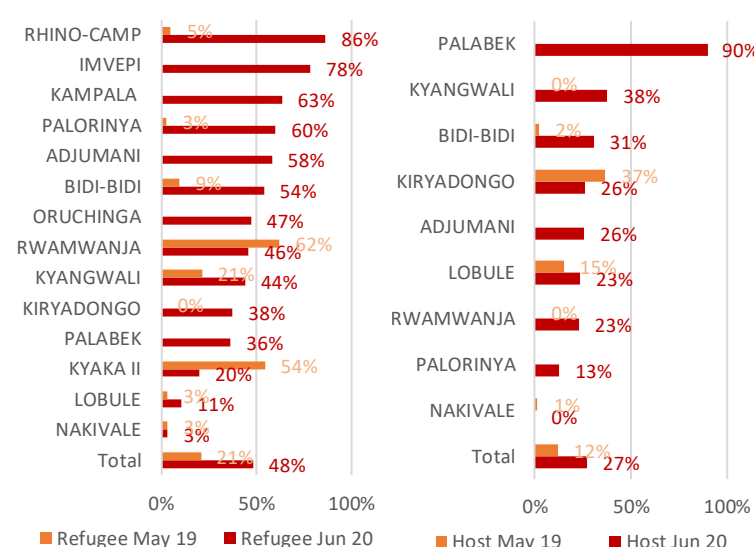
In June 2020, the use of medium and coping food strategies levelled off between female and male headed households in comparison to May where women were more likely cope.

Fig. 6: Proportion of households employed food based coping



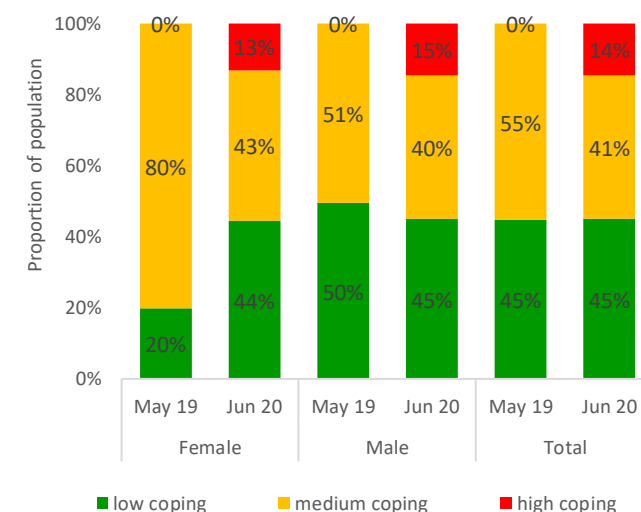
Source: WFP Uganda, mVAM, June 2020

Fig. 7: Proportion of households under high or medium food-based coping by settlement



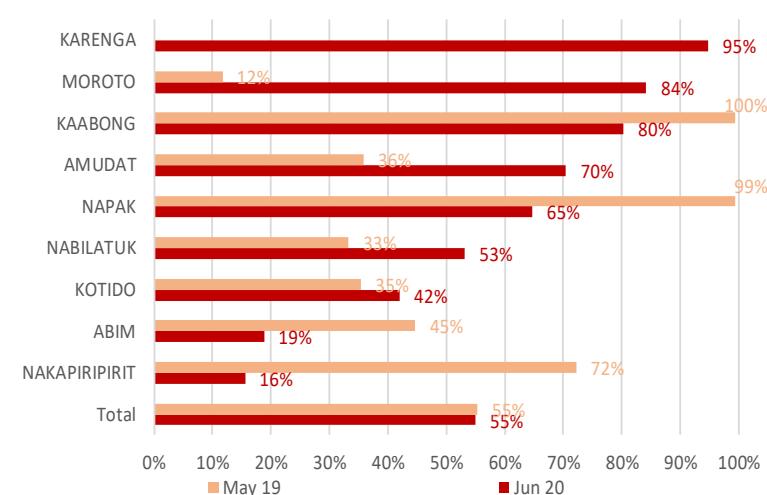
Source: WFP Uganda, mVAM, June 2020

Fig. 8: Proportion of households employed food based coping



Source: WFP Uganda, mVAM, June 2020

Fig. 9: Proportion of households under high or medium food-based coping by district



Source: WFP Uganda, mVAM, June 2020



Livelihood based coping strategies — Refugee hosting areas

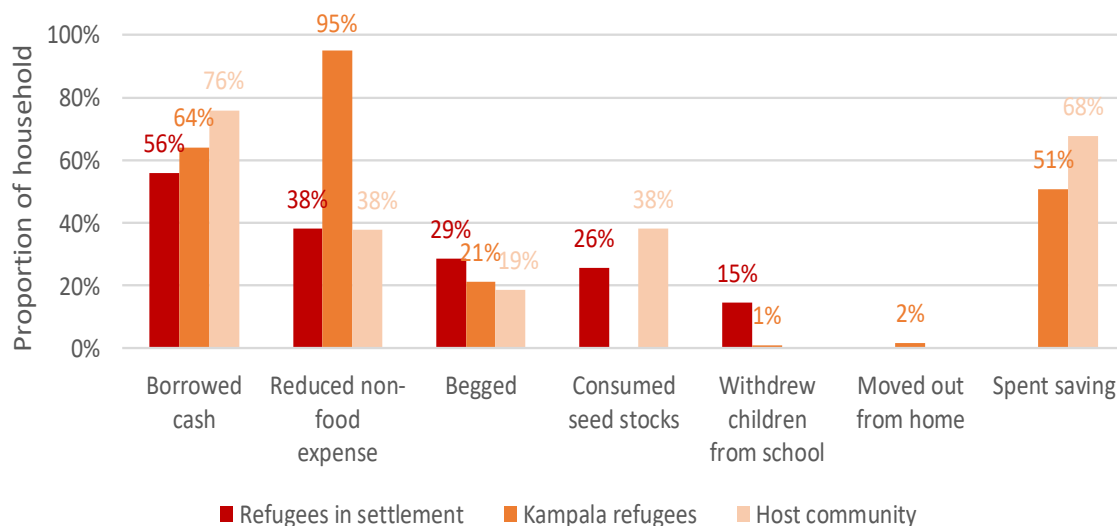
Overall, one out of two refugee households employed crisis or emergency livelihood coping strategies to meet their food needs and other essential needs. A relatively higher percentage of refugees (92 percent) in Kampala employed crisis or emergency livelihood coping strategies to meet their food needs.

Oruchinga and Kampala refugees had the highest proportion of households applying crisis or emergency livelihood coping strategies while Lobule had the lowest (16 percent). The proportion of refugee households employing crisis or emergency livelihood coping strategies decreased from 72 percent in May 2019 to 50 percent in June 2020.

71 percent of host community households applied crisis or emergency livelihood coping strategies. This was worse than for refugees in settlements. Nakivale and Adjumani had the highest proportion of nationals using crisis or emergency livelihood coping strategies, while Kyangwali had the lowest (41 percent). The proportion of households applying medium or high food based coping strategies increased from 51 percent in May 2019 to 71 percent in June 2020.

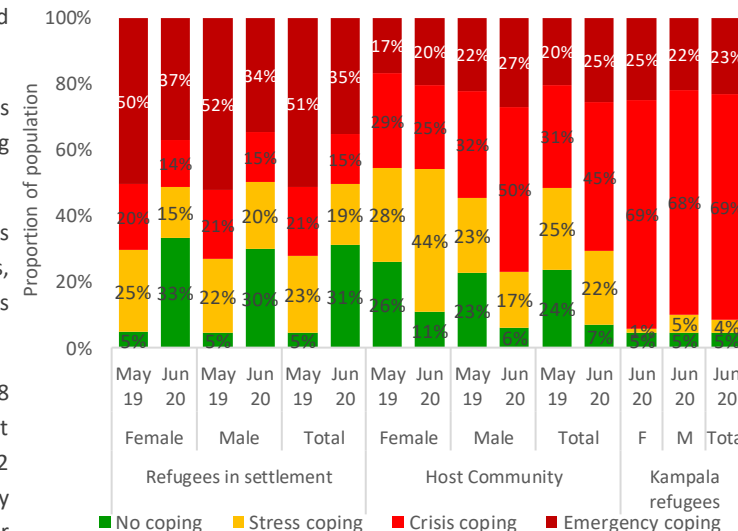
In June 2020, the most commonly employed strategies were borrowing cash (56 percent) and reducing non-food expense (38 percent) among refugees in settlements. Borrowing cash (76 percent) and spending saving (68 percent) among nationals in host communities. Reducing non-food expenses (95 percent), and borrowing cash (64 percent) amongst Kampala refugees. About 2 percent of Kampala refugees had to move out of their homes in the last 30 days prior to the survey to cope with their food security needs. These negative coping strategies eroded assets and wealth and undermined the long-term ability of households to meet their food and essential needs.

Fig. 8: Top 5 livelihood coping strategies used



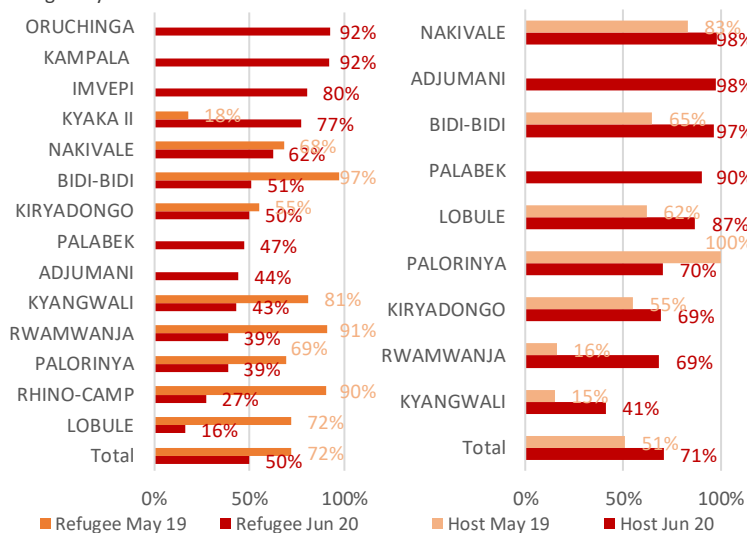
Source: WFP Uganda, mVAM, June 2020

Fig. 10: Proportion of households employing livelihood based coping strategies



Source: WFP Uganda, mVAM, June 2020

Fig. 11: Proportion of households employing crisis or emergency livelihood coping strategies by settlement



Source: WFP Uganda, mVAM, June 2020



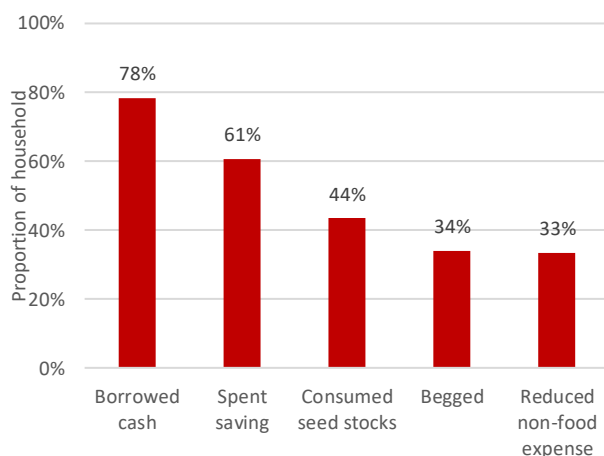
Livelihood based coping strategies – Karamoja region

Overall, nearly 4 out of 5 households (79 percent) employed crisis or emergency livelihood coping strategies to meet their food needs and other essential requirements. Karenga, Moroto and Abim had the highest proportion of households employing crisis or emergency coping strategies (96 percent, 94 percent, and 93 percent respectively), while Kaabong had the lowest (31 percent). The proportion of households employing crisis or emergency livelihood coping strategies decreased from 97 percent in May 2019 to 79 percent in June 2020 most notably in Kaabong, Amudat, Napak and Nakapiripirit. In particular, Kaabong reduced the proportion of households employing crisis or emergency coping strategies by two-thirds.

To cope with inadequate food, households in Karamoja region commonly employed strategies of Borrowing cash (78 percent), spending saving (61 percent), consuming seed stocks (44 percent), begging (34 percent), and reducing non-food expense (33 percent) in June 2020. These negative coping strategies erode assets and wealth and undermine the long-term ability of households to meet their food and essential needs.

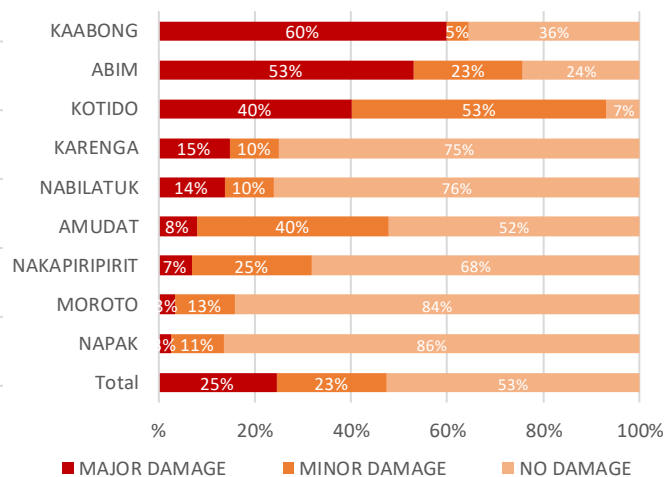
About 85 percent of households in Karamoja indicated that they planted crops in the first this season. Nabilatuk had the highest proportion of households (100 percent) that planted crops while Napak had the lowest proportion of households (74 percent). Overall, 25 percent of households in Karamoja region reported that they suffered major damage from desert locusts while 23 percent reported minor damage. Most major damage was recorded in Kaabong (60 percent), followed by Abim (53 percent) and Kotido (40 percent). More than 90 percent of the households in Kotido reported major or minor damage, the highest in Karamoja.

Fig. 13: Top 5 livelihood coping strategies used



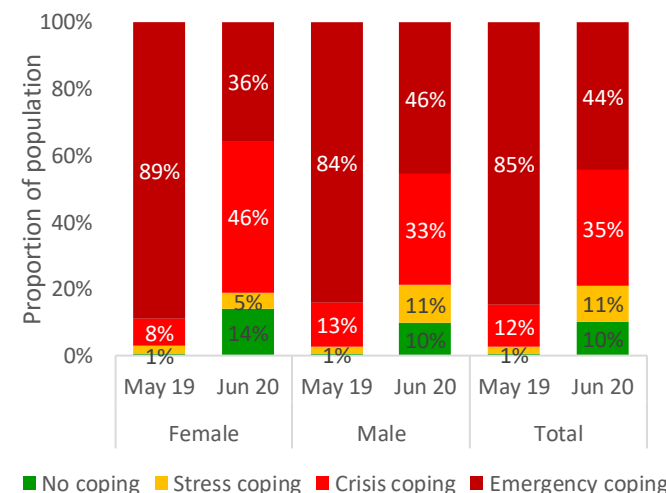
Source: WFP Uganda, mVAM, June 2020

Fig. 14: Locust damage to agricultural activities



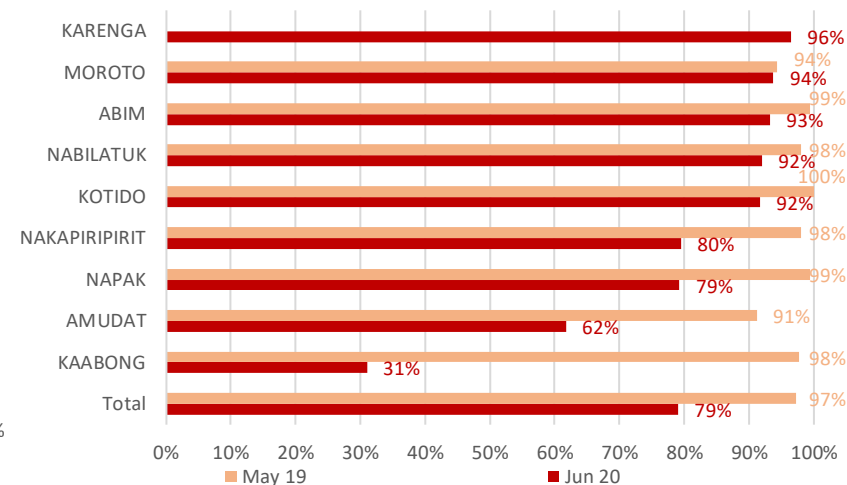
Source: WFP Uganda, mVAM, June 2020

Fig. 12: Proportion of households employing livelihood based coping strategies



Source: WFP Uganda, mVAM, June 2020

Fig. 15: Proportion of households employing crisis or emergency livelihood coping strategies by district



Source: WFP Uganda, mVAM, June 2020



Who are the most vulnerable — Refugee hosting areas

In June 2020, 33 percent of refugees in settlements, 21 percent of nationals in host communities and 64 percent of refugees in Kampala had access to markets (Figure 17). Among refugees in settlements, refugees in Palorinya had the most access to markets (51 percent) while those in Rhino camp had the least access (9%). All the national households in Isingiro-Nakivale reported that markets were accessible while only 3 percent of households in Lamwo-Palabek accessed markets. Reasons for limited access to markets among refugees in settlement were; movement restrictions (32 percent), high transport costs (10 percent), market closure (9 percent), COVID-19 concerns (5 percent) and insecurity (1 percent).

More than three quarters (84 percent) of refugee households had at least one income earner in the 30 days before the survey although this was lower than that reported for the host population (97 percent). Compared to March 2020, the percentage of households with at least once income earner has increased from 84 percent for national households and from 60 percent for refugee households. When comparing with May 2019, the trend indicates a significant increase of which only 65 percent of the host population and 57 percent of the refugee population had at least one income source. For Kampala refugees, 83 percent of refugee households did not have a household member earning income, a slight improvement compared to May 2020. Across the settlements, Oruchinga, Rwamwanja and Kiryandongo had the largest proportion of households with at least one household member earning income at 97 percent, 93 percent and 93 percent respectively.

Among the refugees, the majority of the main income earners (62 percent) worked less than 7 days, which was significantly worse compared to that of nationals in host community (14 percent). Households engaged in agriculture were least affected by COVID-19 compared to households engaged in other livelihood activities (Figure 18). A similar proportion of refugees and nationals were majorly impacted by the coronavirus and the government restrictions. Households with a chronically ill and disabled member were more affected by them compared to nationals in host community (Figure 16).

Fig. 16: Proportions of households with specific demography affected by the coronavirus and the government restrictions

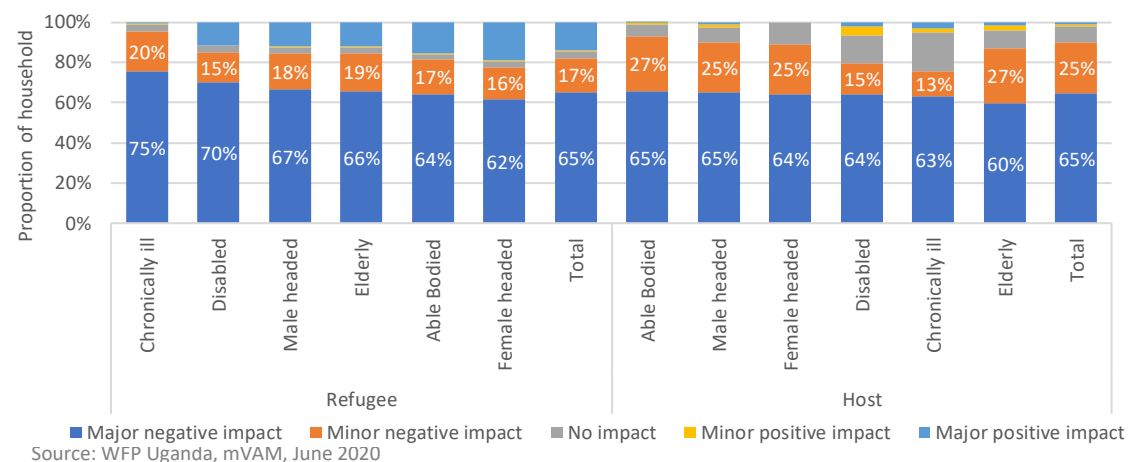
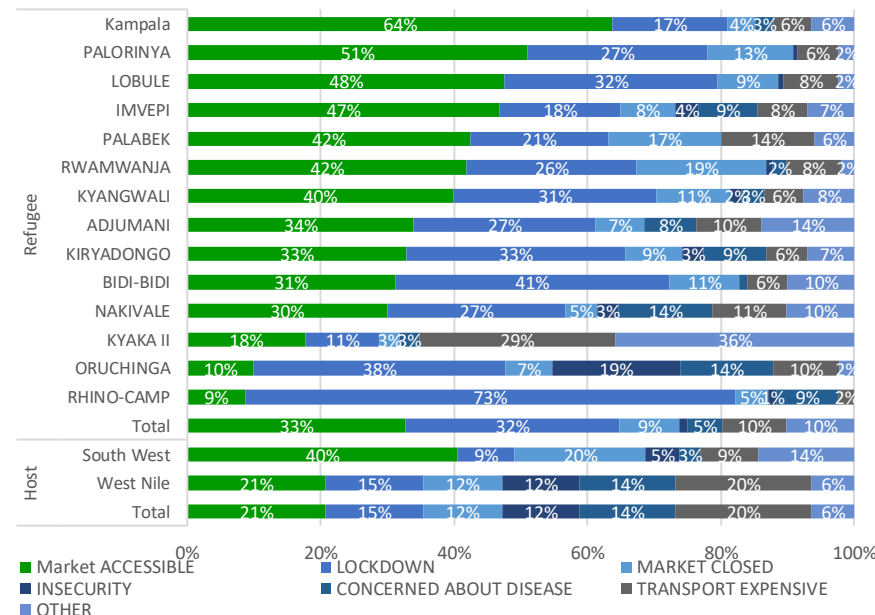
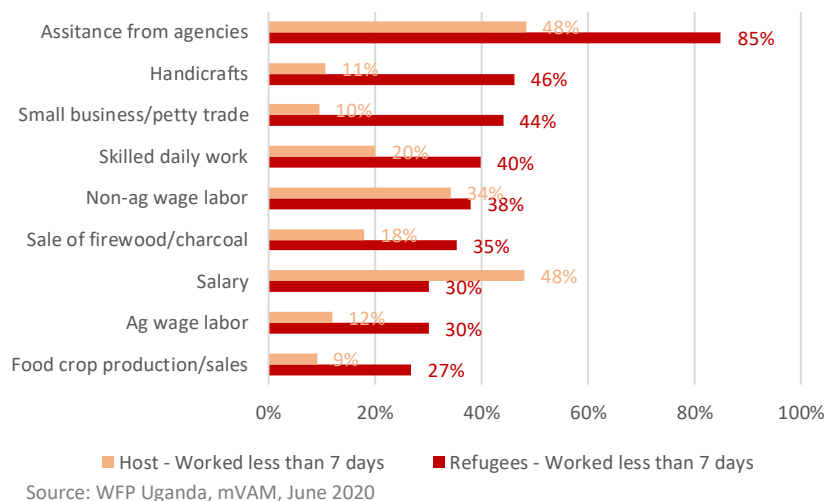


Fig. 17: Market access and reasons for not being able to access to markets



Source: WFP Uganda, mVAM, June 2020

Fig. 18: Proportions of refugee households whose livelihoods have been affected by COVID 19





Who are the most vulnerable — Karamoja region

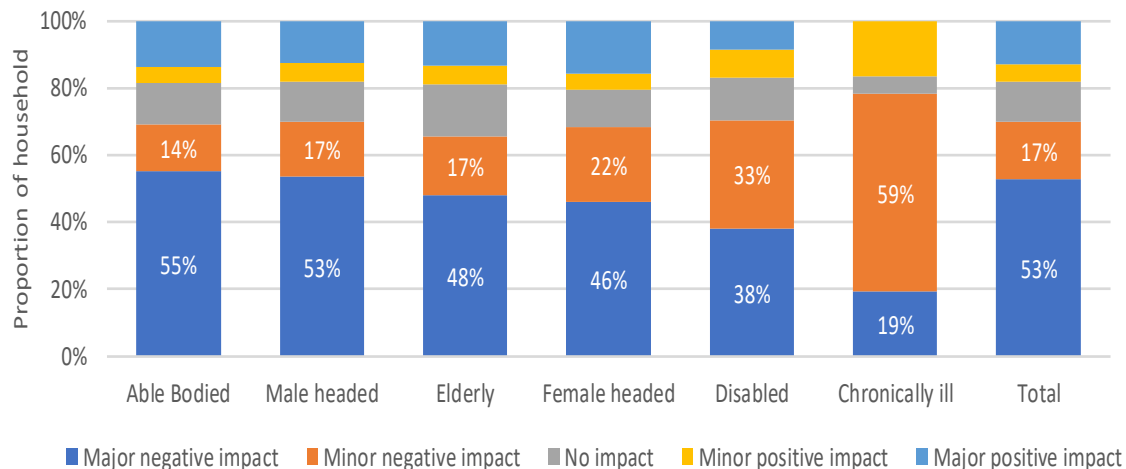
Half of the households reported that the coronavirus and the government restrictions (including banning public transport) affected their main livelihoods in the past 30 days. In June 2020, 25 percent of households in Karamoja had access to markets (Figure 20). About 57 percent of households reported the market was accessible in Nakapiripirit while 11 percent in Karenga reported access. Reasons of limited access to markets among households in Karamoja were; movement restrictions (25 percent), market closure (21 percent), COVID-19 concerns (12 percent), insecurity (8 percent), and high transport costs (4 percent).

Despite the fact almost all households across the demographic divide were affected by COVID 19, households with a chronically ill and disabled reported a higher major or minor negative impact compared to other groups (Figure 19). Also persons depending on begging, sale of livestock/products or firewood/charcoal were highly affected due to market closures, loss of income, and depletion of coping strategies (Figure 21).

One third of the main income earners (34 percent) worked less than 7 days. Households engaged in agriculture and small business owners were least affected by COVID-19 compared to households engaged in other livelihood activities (Figure 21).

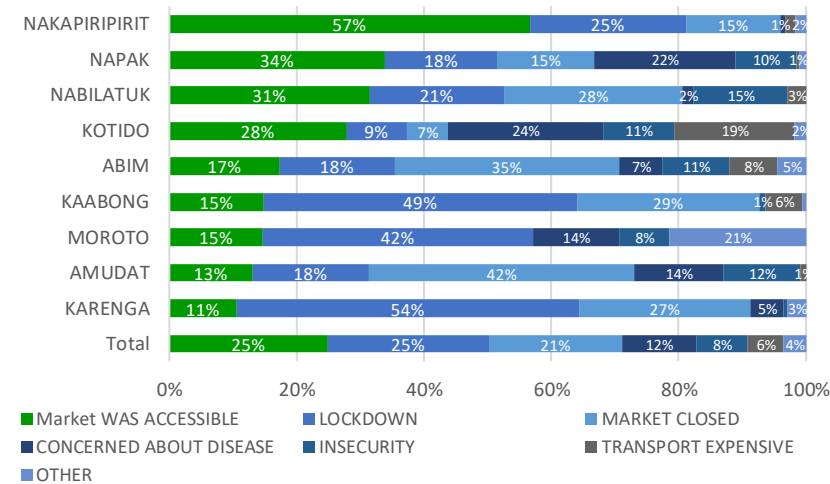
More than three quarters (94 percent) of households reported to have had at least one income earner in the 30 days before the survey. When compared with May 2019, this reflects a significant increase (only 72 percent of households had at least once income earner in May 2019). Across Karamoja, Amudat, Karenga, Nabilatuk, Napak, and Moroto had about 99 percent of households with at least one household member earning income, while only 60 percent of households in Kaabong had at least one household member earning income.

Fig. 19: Proportions of households with specific demography affected by COVID 19



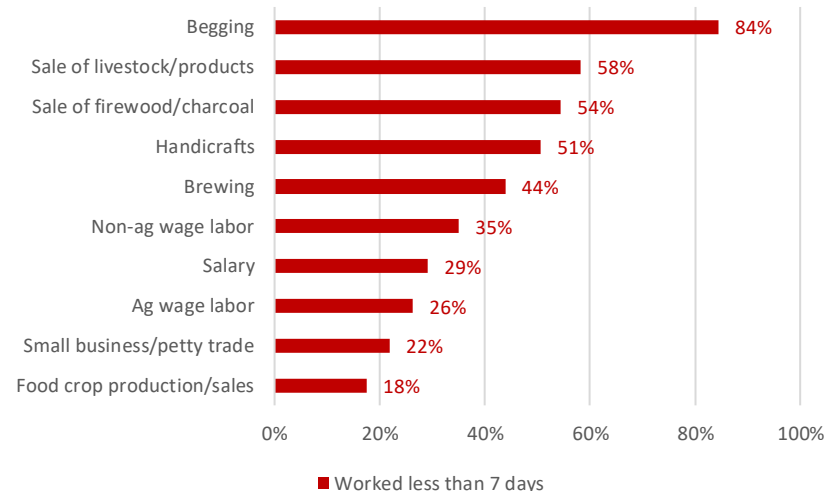
Source: WFP Uganda, mVAM, June 2020

Fig. 20: No or limited access to markets and reasons for not being able to access to markets



Source: WFP Uganda, mVAM, June 2020

Fig. 21: Proportions of households whose livelihoods have been affected by COVID 19



Source: WFP Uganda, mVAM, June 2020



Where are the food insecure located— Refugee hosting areas

In June 2020, **729,409** refugees had poor or borderline food consumption, **683,573** refugees were using negative food based coping strategies while **729,750** refugees resorted to the use of crisis and emergency strategies to access food and meet household essential needs. The corresponding figures for nationals in refugee hosting districts were **858,290**, **814,762**, and **2,354,131** respectively.

In regard to food consumption, Bidi bidi, Adjumani, and Kyaka II, had the largest population of refugees with poor and borderline food consumption as indicated in *Figure 13*. For the Ugandans households in the host districts, Nakivale, Rwamwanja, and Palabek had the largest population of refugees with poor and borderline food consumption.

Concerning the food based coping strategies, Bidi Bidi, Adjumani, and Rhino camp had the largest refugee population using medium or high food based coping strategies. Among the Ugandans households in the surrounding districts hosting refugees, Bidi Bidi, Kyangwali, and Palabek had the largest population using medium or high food based coping strategies.

In terms of the livelihood coping strategies, Bidi Bidi, Adjumani, and Kyaka II had the largest refugee population using crisis or emergency livelihood coping strategies. Bidi Bidi, Rwamwanja, and Nakivale had the largest Ugandan populations using crisis or emergency livelihood coping strategies.

Limitation

The samples for host community turned out to be lower than planned, hence the results for the national households in refugee hosting districts of Imvepi, Kyaka II, Oruchinga, Rhino camp are not shown in this report.

Due to the smaller area coverage in the mVAM round of May 2019 (before the scale up of coverage last year), some of the settlements/districts (Adjumani, Imvepi, Palabek, Oruchinga) are not able to have comparison over time.

Fig. 22: Summary population table for each indicator

Area	Refugee			Host community		
	Poor and Borderline Food Consumption	Medium and High Food Based Coping	Crisis and Emergency Livelihood Coping	Poor and Borderline Food Consumption	Medium and High Food Based Coping	Crisis and Emergency Livelihood Coping
ADJUMANI	121,180	123,759	94,108	120,781	60,390	230,238
BIDI-BIDI	155,549	124,696	118,269	117,735	203,361	642,194
IMVEPI	35,071	50,533	51,664			
KYAKA II	100,447	24,221	93,323			
KIRYADONGO	26,822	24,291	32,389	10,460	81,588	217,568
KYANGWALI	36,012	52,018	51,017	120,672	141,478	153,961
LOBULE	1,459	575	884	11,217	60,574	224,348
NAKIVALE	38,237	3,922	77,454	157,871	-	292,353
ORUCHINGA	2,243	3,707	7,277			
PALABEK	21,337	19,108	24,840	130,011	130,011	130,011
PALORINYA	62,994	73,493	47,245	48,027	20,104	111,690
RHINO-CAMP	85,485	100,570	31,608			
RWAMWANJA	24,146	32,927	27,805	141,516	117,256	351,768
KAMPALA REFUGEE	18,427	49,754	71,867			
Total	729,409	683,573	729,750	858,290	814,762	2,354,131

Source: WFP Uganda, mVAM, June 2020



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Where are the food insecure located—Karamoja region

In June 2020, **534,652** people in Karamoja region had poor or borderline food consumption, **642,285** people were using negative food based coping strategies while **924,047** people resorted to the use of crisis and emergency strategies to access food and meet essential needs.

Nakapiripirit, Napak, Kaabong had the largest population with poor and borderline food consumption as indicated in *Figure 25*. Kaabong, Napak, Amudat had the largest population using medium or high food based coping strategies. Kotido, Abim, and Napak had the largest population using crisis or emergency livelihood coping strategies.

Above normal rainfall in April and May 2020 led to crop damage, water logging, flash floods in districts including Napak and Nakapiripirit. Covid-19 restrictions and other anticipated challenges caused reduced demand for agricultural and non-agricultural casual labour. Average seasonal incomes following COVID-19 measures are expected to be below average due to low demand and wages for seasonal agricultural labor during the second half of the year.

Poor households are unlikely to expand income earned through the sale of firewood and charcoal or wage labor in urban areas since purchasing power in urban areas has significantly reduced.

Fig. 23: Summary population table for each indicator

Area	Poor and Borderline Food Consumption	Medium and High Food Based Coping	Crisis and Emergency Livelihood Coping
ABIM	34,624	28,853	143,113
AMUDAT	45,749	95,017	83,286
KAABONG	90,838	108,078	41,772
KARENGA	46,469	56,179	57,219
KOTIDO	9,775	86,754	189,393
MOROTO	73,644	99,754	111,136
NABILATUK	33,317	47,669	82,524
NAKAPIRIPIRIT	100,298	17,645	90,083
NAPAK	99,937	102,335	125,521
Total	534,652	642,285	924,047

Source: WFP Uganda, mVAM, June 2020

Methodology

The coronavirus pandemic and the strategies employed by governments to control its spread have had far reaching effects on food security and livelihoods globally. In Uganda, restrictions put in place by the Government of Uganda from the 18th of March 2020 to protect the population has disrupted livelihoods and food access for large segment of Ugandans. The increased risk of shocks to food security and essential needs coincided with increased difficulty of monitoring the situation through traditional in-person surveying and data collection. Because of the importance to maintain situational awareness, WFP Uganda scaled up its remote monitoring system to obtain near real time food security information of refugees and nationals in 13 refugee hosting areas as well as nationals in 9 districts of Karamoja region. Live telephone interviews started from 30th May and continues daily. During the reporting period of this bulletin, 1,941 refugee households and 1,289 national households randomly selected from 13 refugee hosting areas, 213 refugee households in Kampala as well as 1,463 national households from Karamoja region. Although the sample was drawn using a structured random selection technique, it may have been biased due to inequalities in mobile phone ownership along lines of wealth and gender. The sample size is statistically representative at each settlement/district at minimum with a margin of error of 10 percent at a 90 percent confidence level.



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