

**Joint Household Assessment – Food Voucher Project Bekaa  
Danish Refugee Council (DRC) & World Vision Lebanon (WVL)  
April-May 2012**

**Context**

As of the end of April 2012, the number of Syrian families displaced in the Bekaa has increased to 2,800 households. Families registered with local partners receive kits of dry food, but they have requested more variety and choice in food items. Given families' needs, the fact that markets are functioning in the area and that local authorities supported the idea, UNHCR and partners recommended to assess the possibility of implementing food vouchers instead of in-kind distributions. After WFP did a pre-assessment report for a potential food voucher project in the Bekaa, WFP identified WVL and DRC to be the potential partners for the assessments and the project implementation.

**Methodology**

The 4 agencies (WFP, UNHCR, WVL, and DRC) agreed on the assessments at 3 levels:

- **Household (completed in April 2012 – implemented by WVL and DRC)**
- Shops and markets (to commence May 2012 – implemented by WVL and DRC)
- Banks' capacities (to commence May 2012 – implemented by WFP)

The **household assessment** was conducted jointly by WVL and DRC, as outlined below:

- The objective was to look into the type of food families are consuming, in addition to the gaps and needs
- The questionnaire focused on general food consumption information, as well as targeted dietary questions, access to food, needs, and consumption coping mechanisms (please see the attached template – Annex 1)
- The agencies agreed to visit 3% of the total number of households; the total number of HH visited was 77
  - 5 teams (10 people total) from both WVL and DRC visited villages with the highest reported numbers of families (please see Annex 2)
- Data collection was completed in one day
  - Data entry took an additional two days, under the supervision of WVL
  - Data analysis was undertaken by DRC's Database Officer, who generated the statistical findings

**Main Findings**

*Please see Annex 2 for the full findings*

- Of the sample size of 77 households, nearly half are children
  - 37% of family members are under 16
  - 10% of family members are under 5
- **96% reported consuming more than one meal per day**
- Meal composition, ranked by highest to lowest percentage:
  - Breakfast composition: bread, dairy, oil and canned food
  - Lunch composition: bread, cereals/pulses, vegetables and fruits, meat, and canned food
  - Dinner composition: bread, canned food, dairy and cereals/pulses
- Consumption patterns per type of food:
  - Bread accounts for 21% to 35% of each meal
  - Cereals / pulses are used for both lunch (28% of the meal) and dinner (15% of food)
  - Dairy products are consumed mainly for breakfast (27% of the meal) and dinner (17%), not lunch
  - Meat is consumed mostly for lunch (10% of the meal)
- Main obstacles to accessing food:
  - Prices are too high (51% of families)
  - Shops are too far (19% of families) – highest concentration are those displaced in Aarsal
  - Lack of money (17% of families)
- Main consumption coping mechanisms:
  - Rely on less expensive or less preferred foods – 34% of families do this daily
  - Purchase food on credit – 27% of families surveyed do this "sometimes"
  - Limit portion size per meal – 23% of families do this daily
- When asked if aid put their family at risk:
  - **86% responded that assistance did not put their families at risk**
  - 13% believed that aid put their families at risk (1% did not know)
    - The main reason was the risk of revealing names (10% of the total number of families)
  - 6% said receiving assistance made them feel shame and humiliation
- 51% of families listed cash as their preferred way to receive assistance
  - 16% preferred vouchers and 16% preferred in-kind assistance