

## Syria Crisis Regional Response

# M&E Updates

April-June 2014



World Food Programme

Monitoring results from WFP Regional Emergency Operation 200433 "Food assistance to vulnerable Syrian populations in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Turkey, and Egypt affected by conflict in Syria"



Photo: WFP/Selly Muzammil

### Highlights

- As of June 2014, WFP's monthly caseload reached over **1.7 million Syrian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Egypt and Turkey**. Through its **voucher assistance**, WFP injected a total of approximately US\$ 283 million into the regional economy during the first half of 2014.
- WFP food assistance is contributing to the **improvement and stabilization of food security** conditions of assisted Syrian refugee households upon their arrival into one of Syria's neighboring countries, with **approximately 90 percent of households reporting an acceptable food consumption score** from January to June 2014.
- Despite the stabilization of food consumption levels, the **adoption of food consumption-based and asset depletion coping strategies are still frequent** among assisted refugees.

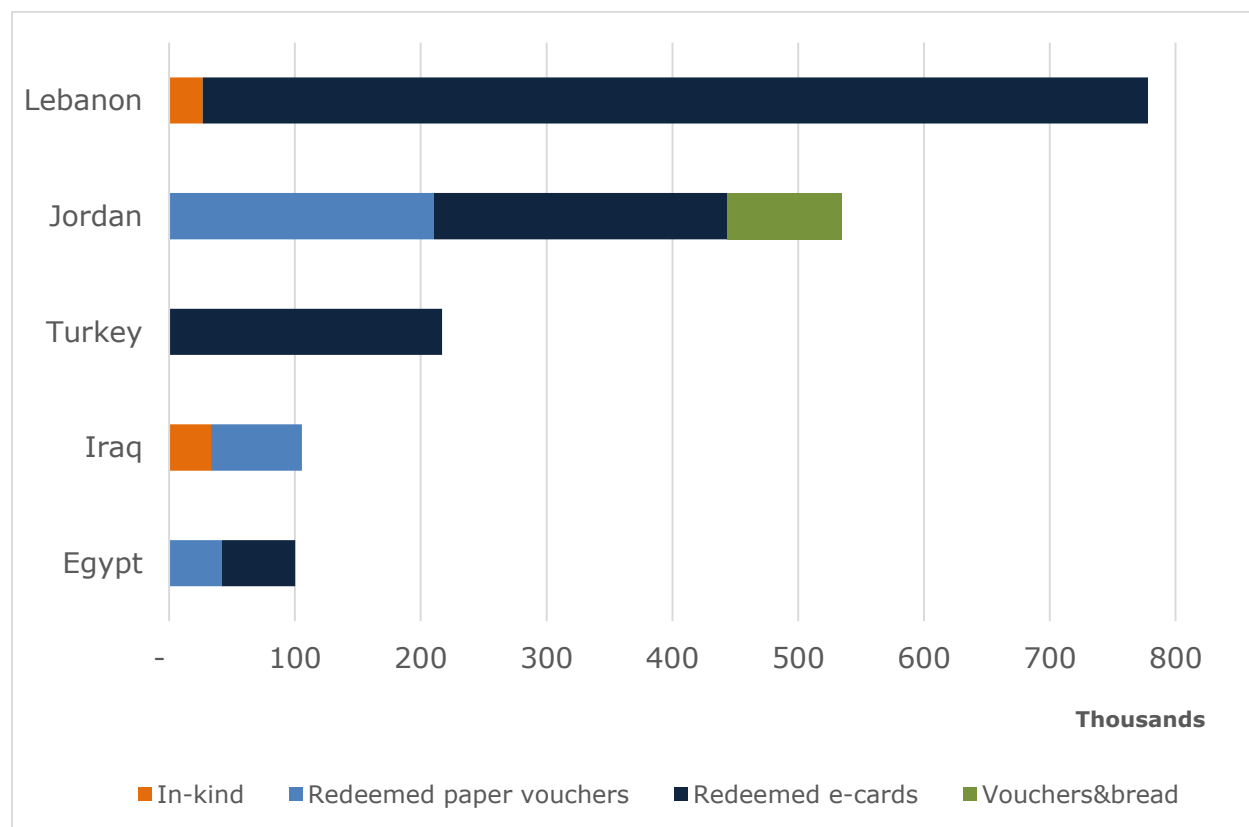
## Overview of WFP activities

As of June 2014, WFP is providing monthly food assistance to approximately **1,746,000 Syrian refugees in neighboring countries** (figure 1).

Assistance to Syrian refugees is provided mainly in the form of monthly distributions of **food vouchers**. In-kind assistance is also provided to Syrian refugees hosted in Iraqi camps (except Domiz camp, where vouchers are distributed), as well as to Syrian refugees hosted in Al Za'atari camp in Jordan (where they also receive additional in-kind bread).<sup>1</sup>

As of June 2014, **76 percent of WFP-assisted Syrian refugees were hosted in Lebanon and Jordan**. In particular, as Syrian refugees continue to seek refuge in neighboring countries, Lebanon's caseload increased by 31 percent since January 2014. Considerable increases in caseloads were also observed in Turkey and Egypt<sup>2</sup> (81 percent and 20 percent respectively). Figure 2 shows details in trend of refugee assistance.

**Figure 1 - Monthly WFP beneficiaries in Syria's neighboring countries (June 2014)**

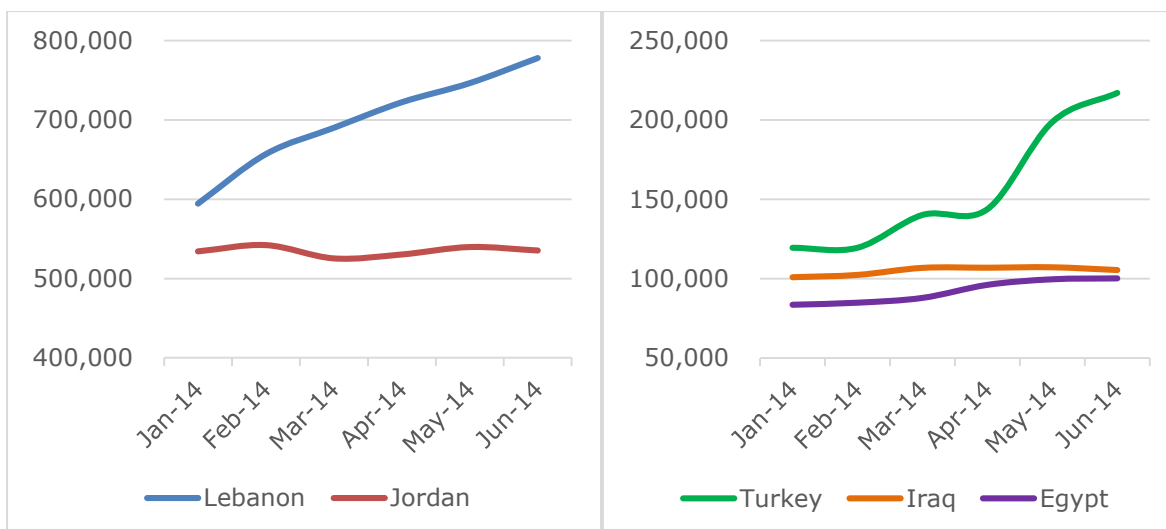


Source: Monthly distribution reports

<sup>1</sup> To avoid beneficiary double counting, the graph does not include recipients of welcome meals, school feeding, and nutrition activities in Jordan (caseloads of ~20,500, ~12,500, and ~3,000 respectively).

<sup>2</sup> Egypt caseload also includes 3,526 Palestinian refugees from Syria.

**Figure 2 – Syrian refugees: trends in monthly beneficiaries (redeemed vouchers/received food parcels)**

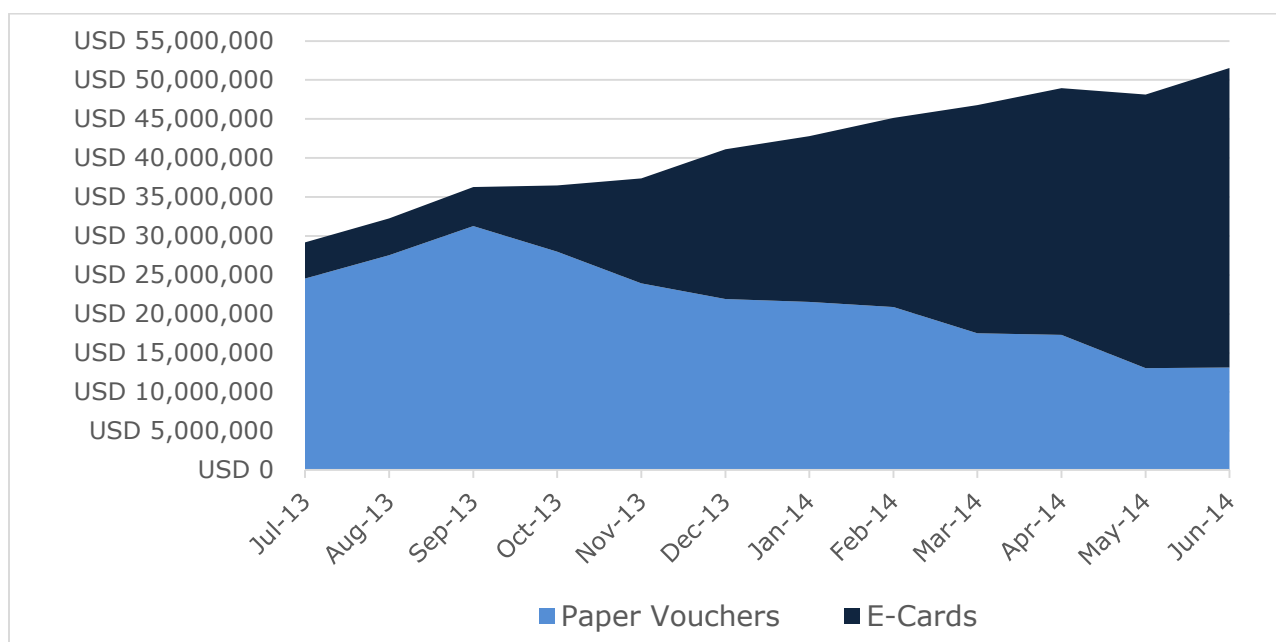


Source: Monthly distribution reports

As shown in figure 3, during the first half of 2014 WFP injected approximately **US\$283 million** into the regional economy through its paper voucher and e-card assistance programmes.

**The transition from paper vouchers to e-cards** is still ongoing in Jordan and is planned to be concluded by October 2014. In-kind daily distributions of bread in refugee camps complement the food vouchers assistance. In 2013, Turkey and Egypt were the only two countries implementing the e-card, whereas Lebanon fully transitioned to e-cards in December 2013.

**Figure 3 - Value injected in regional economies through vouchers**



Source: Monthly distribution reports

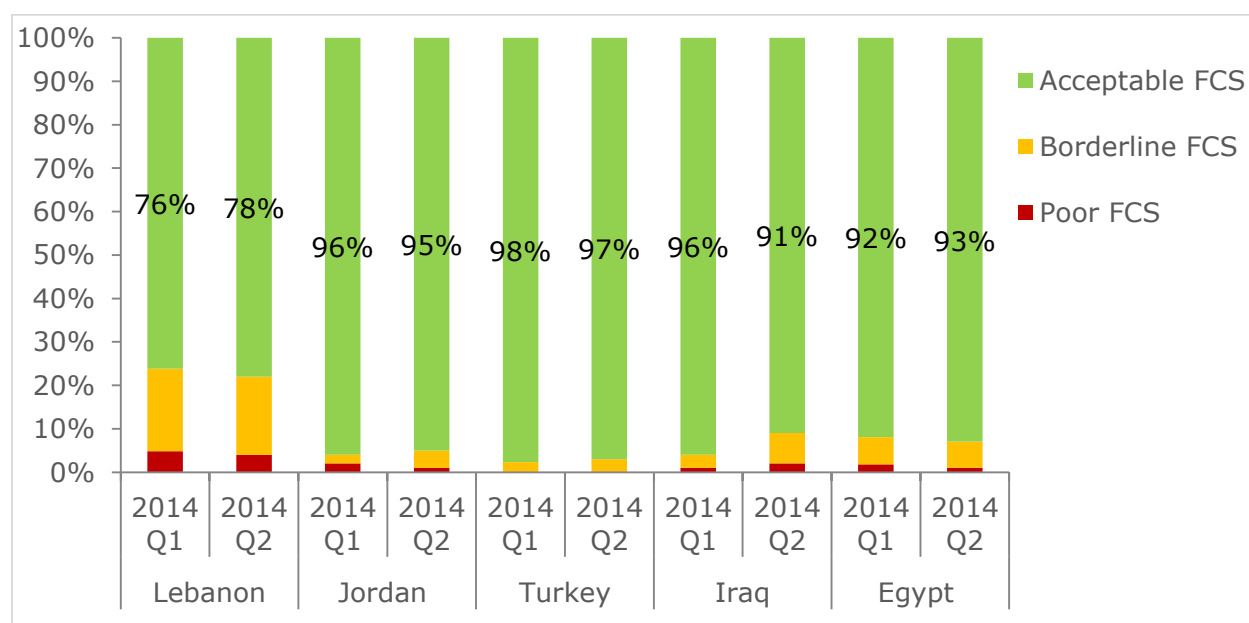
# Food security outcome trends

## Overall stabilization of food security results

Between the first and second quarter 2014, the **Post-distribution monitoring<sup>3</sup> (PDM)** exercise revealed that the proportion of assisted Syrian households with an acceptable Food Consumption Score (FCS) remained stable in each of the five countries hosting refugees.<sup>4</sup> The results presented in figure 4 are in line with WFP's corporate strategic outcome to improve/stabilize the food consumption of assisted population.

Very high scores (>90 percent) of assisted Syrian refugees with acceptable FCS were observed in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, and Turkey. In Lebanon, the lowest levels of acceptable food consumption were observed in the Beqaa Valley (67 percent) and in North Lebanon (75 percent) areas. In the same country, Syrian refugee households reporting WFP vouchers as their main source of income (3 out of 4) also showed relatively lower proportion of acceptable FCS (76 percent) compared to those reporting waged/casual labor as main source of income (87 percent acceptable FCS).

**Figure 4 - Food consumption levels among assisted Syrian refugees**



Source: WFP PDM (CFSME assessment for Jordan in q1)

## Effectiveness of food assistance in Lebanon

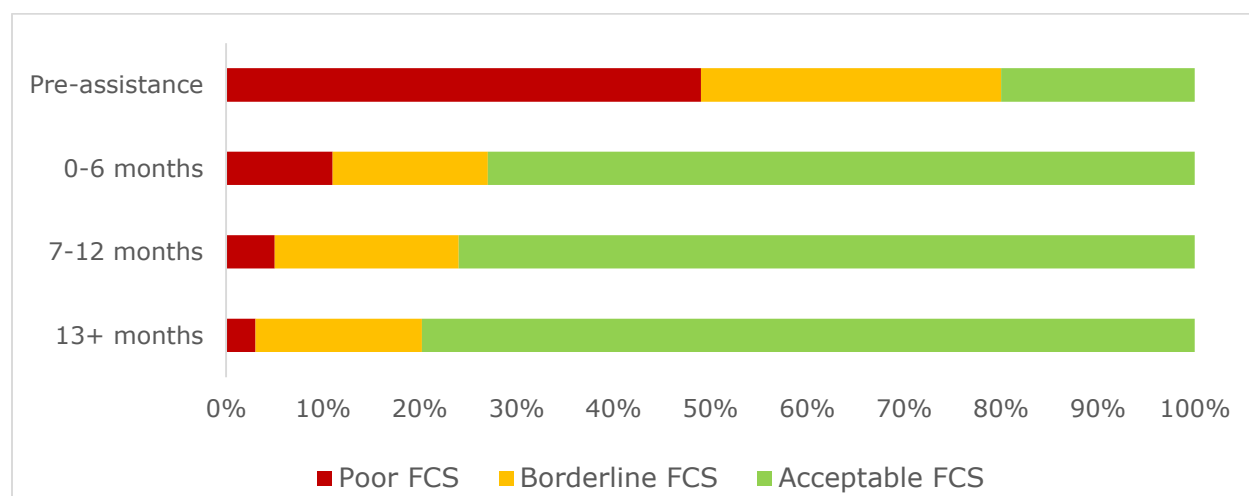
**Pre-assistance baseline (PAB)** monitoring of newly arrived refugees has been conducted in parallel with ongoing PDM in Lebanon and Egypt, whereas Jordan started regular PAB exercise in June 2014. In **Lebanon**, comparative analysis between PAB and PDM results showed that the food consumption levels improved substantially following WFP assistance. PDM analysis by arrival time also shows that the time

<sup>3</sup> During the reporting period, the PDM exercise covered a random sample of 2,338 beneficiary households across the region. Country-level food consumption results are statistically reliable at a >90% confidence level with a precision of  $\pm 5\%$  (assuming an expected average response distribution of 85% for the percentage of households with an acceptable FCS).

<sup>4</sup> Iraq results for first quarter 2014 have been slightly adjusted due to reviewed weightings at data analysis level.

since arrival is positively correlated with improved or stabilized food consumption.

**Figure 5 - Syrian refugees in Lebanon:  
Food consumption pre/post-assistance and by time since arrival**

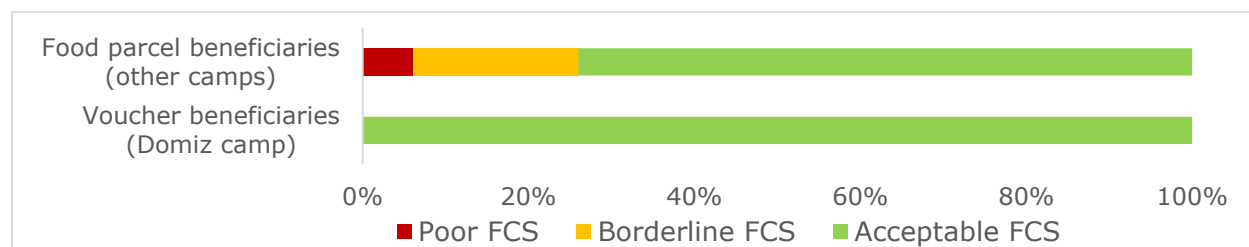


Source: WFP PAB and PDM (Lebanon)

## Iraq: food and vouchers outcomes

A comparative analysis between quarterly outcome results of different **transfer modalities** has been applied to **Iraq**, where Syrian refugees are assisted through either food vouchers (~73,000 people in Domiz camp as of May 2014) or food parcels (~32,000 people in other camps). It has been observed that approximately 1 out of 4 households assisted with food parcels did not have an acceptable FCS, whereas all of the interviewed voucher-assisted households (~200) had an acceptable FCS. Another important finding from Iraq PDM refers to the use of assistance: it has been observed that while monetization of food vouchers is absent, 48 percent of households receiving food parcels did sell part of their ration during the reporting period, with the main reported reasons including need for more/higher quality food.

**Figure 6 - Syrian refugees in Iraq: Food consumption by transfer modality**



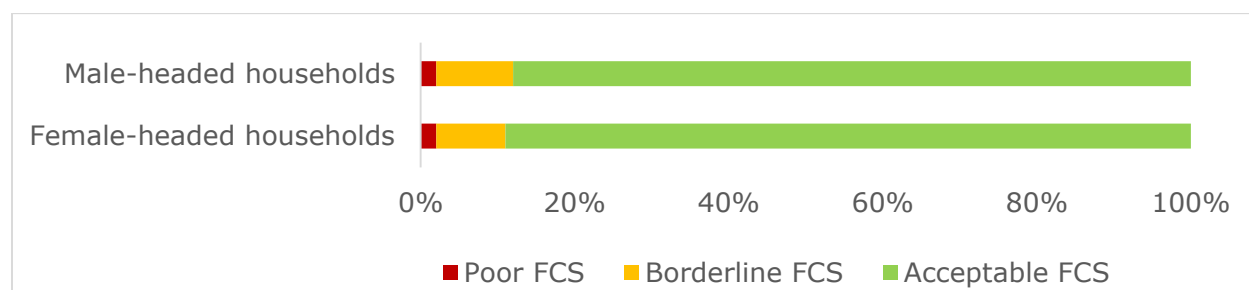
Source: WFP PDM (Iraq)

## Gender analysis of household food consumption

From PDM data it was possible to derive some gender/food security aggregated cross-analysis across the five countries hosting WFP-assisted refugees. By comparing female-headed and male-headed household, it has been observed that, overall, the same level of acceptable food consumption has been

maintained for the two groups (~90 percent) during the reporting period.

**Figure 7 - Food consumption by sex of head of households (all countries)**



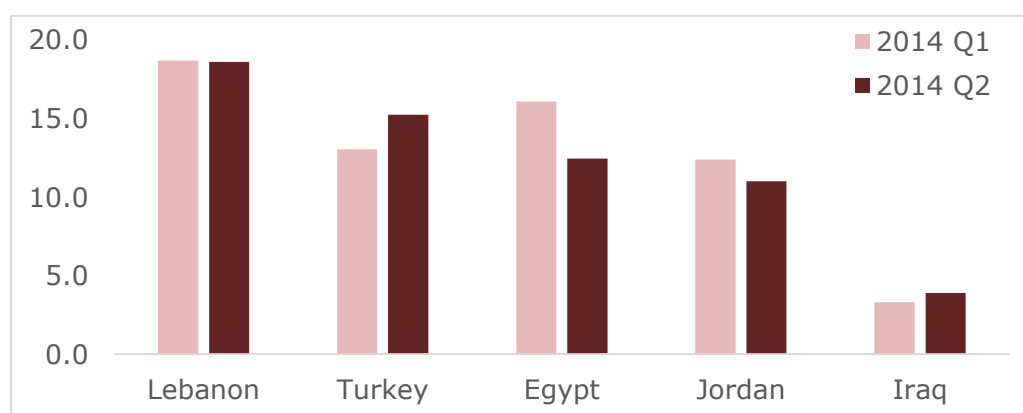
Source: WFP PDM (aggregated)

## Adoption of coping mechanisms remains frequent, stable

The **food-consumption based Coping Strategy Index (CSI)** showed a general stabilization compared to the previous quarter. A slight improvement is observed among assisted Syrian refugees in Egypt. Although not a significant cause for alarm, a slight deterioration was observed amongst those in Turkey during the same time period. Overall, higher levels of food-based CSI are observed in Lebanon. Conversely, Syrian refugees in Iraq showed the lowest frequency of coping strategies, mainly due to the relatively better condition observed in Domiz camp.

Main food-based strategies being adopted include relying on less preferred food, reducing meal size, reducing the number of meals eaten in a day, restricting adult consumption, and borrowing food.

**Figure 8 - Food-consumption based Coping Strategy Index**

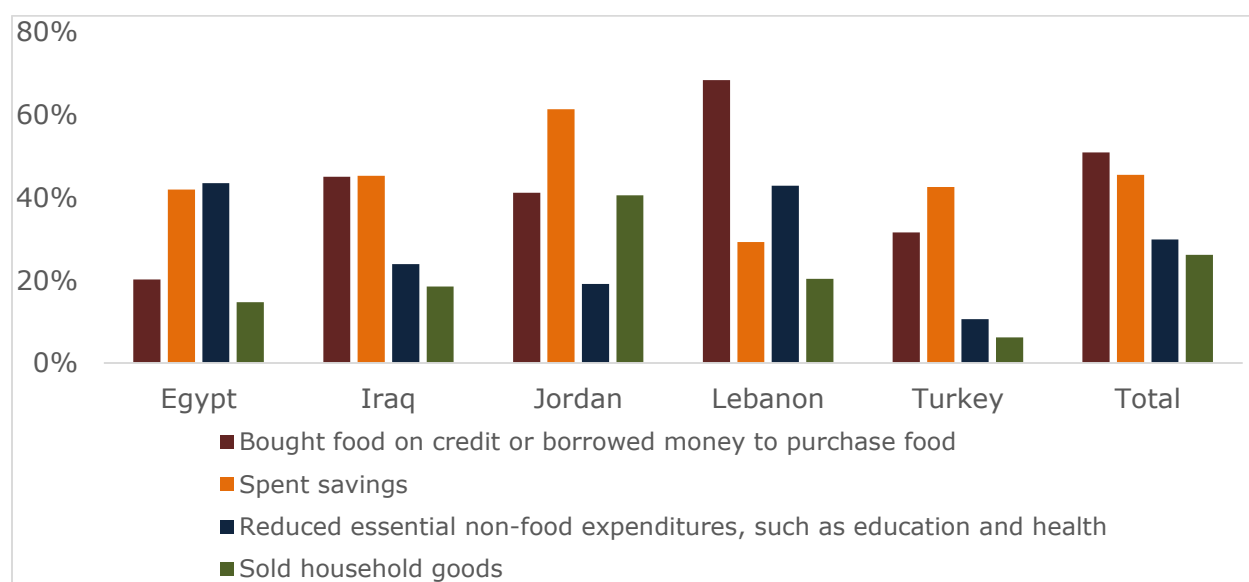


Source: WFP PDM (CFSME assessment for Jordan in Q1)

Frequency of **asset-depletion coping mechanisms** also remains high among refugees across the region. Approximately 50 percent of refugee households reported taking on debt to purchase food and/or spending their savings during the previous 30 days. These coping mechanisms were observed more frequently among Syrian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan respectively.

Relatively higher frequency of reduction in essential non-food expenditures, such as health and education, were observed in Egypt and Lebanon.

**Figure 9 - Adoption of main asset depletion strategies**



Source: WFP PDM (aggregated)

## More on monitoring activities

In addition to outcome monitoring, WFP continued to conduct monitoring activities at project implementation level through various on-going exercises, namely on-site monitoring (in shops and at distribution points) and beneficiary contact monitoring. The main aim of these process monitoring activities is to inform programme decision makers at country office level to take rapid corrective actions as necessary, in an efficient and timely manner. Main aspects monitored included: specific shop constraints, distribution and redeeming processes, protection issues, preferences, and satisfaction.

Furthermore, **price monitoring** exercises are regularly conducted in contracted and non-contracted shops, to assess the food basket value vis-à-vis the beneficiary entitlement. Some main price monitoring findings from the largest operations are provided below:

- **Lebanon:** the value of the WFP basket remained higher than the US\$30 individual entitlement over the reporting period. The WFP basket price was US\$31.96 in April, US\$32.29 in May and US\$32.51 in June 2014, recording a 1.7 percent increase during this period. Prices in Beirut, Mount Lebanon and South Lebanon continue to be higher than in the other areas of the country. Prices of staple and essential food remained stable throughout the second quarter of 2014, with the exceptions of pasta (+14 percent) and vegetable oil (-5 percent), which witnessed noticeable variations in prices.
- **Jordan:** as of April 2014, WFP partner shops in hosted communities continued to be cheaper than non-partner shops and the average food basket is still costing less than the JD24 (~ US\$33.9<sup>5</sup>) currently distributed through vouchers or e-cards per person in communities. Overall, the average price of the food basket increased by 1.7 percent between March 2013 and April 2014.

<sup>5</sup> JD/US\$ and TRY/US\$ exchange rates as of 16 September 2014



- **Turkey:** as of June 2014, significant variations in the minimum value of the food basket were observed across the contracted shops, from a minimum of TRY64 (~ US\$28.9) in Yayladagi to a maximum of TRY90 (~ US\$40.7) in Adyaman. Overall, shops in 5 out of 20 camps noted a minimum value of the food basket above the TRY80 (~ US\$36.1) threshold, which corresponds to the individual value of monthly vouchers. Efforts of WFP monitors to harmonize the prices between contracted and non-contracted shops were successful in 10 camps where a reduction in the prices of basic commodities was recorded.

### Story: E-card eases burden on Jordan's Syrian refugees

"I cannot imagine how we could survive without the food assistance we get. Without it we'd be begging for food."

Sitting on a mattress in an almost empty two-room apartment, 65 year-old Nimer Masalmeh, Abu Maher, spoke about the relief he felt when his family was registered in WFP's food assistance programme. He and his family have been living in the northern governorate of Ramtha in Jordan for almost two years since fleeing from his hometown of Dara'a, Syria, with almost nothing but the clothes on their back.

"We were a family of 24 when we first came here," Abu Maher reminisces, "but with no assistance, money or jobs, some of us headed back to Syria, preferring to face death rather than live without dignity."

Today, Abu Maher lives with his wife, widowed daughter-in-law and her three children. "With WFP's support, I have one less financial concern to worry about... even if we're forced out on to the streets, at least I can still feed my grandchildren."

This support became all the more convenient and cost-saving for Abu Maher with the introduction of WFP's e-vouchers. "The card helped me in two ways: it spared me the hassle and transportation cost of having to go to monthly paper voucher distributions. It also allowed me more time and freedom to use my voucher whenever and wherever I want instead of having to redeem it in one go and at one shop," says Abu Maher who has been using his e-voucher for two months.

Abu Maher is one of the hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees living in Jordan who receive regular food assistance from the WFP thanks to the support of all WFP donors.



Photo: WFP/Shaza Moghraby

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