

Food security deteriorates in Diyala as more people return to their homes

Key points:



As displacement continues in Salah al-Din, poor food consumption is on the rise, especially among IDPS in Tikrit.



Food insecurity is increasing, particularly among returnees.



Household access to the Public Distribution System improved in August in many surveyed locations, but respondents reported experiencing delays in distribution as well as receiving incomplete rations and poor quality food.



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Situation Update

In August, there was a significant rise in military activity in the Mosul Corridor, as well as in the number of people fleeing the area. Iraqi forces, backed by coalition air strikes, have pushed ISIL out of Qayyarah (south of Mosul), a town considered strategic for any future offensive against ISIL's stronghold of Mosul.

On 26 August, the International Organization for Migration said that over 90,000 Iraqis have been displaced in the Mosul Corridor as military operations continue in preparation for the recapture of Mosul. This figure includes over 82,600 IDPs who have been displaced from Salah al-Din (Baiji and Shirqat districts) and Ninewa (Qayyarah district) since 16 June.

1555 Households surveyed



6% Returnee
23% IDP
71% non-IDP



95% Male
5% Female

33 Average age of respondents



50% Own Home
41% Rental
4% Guest
3% Camp
2% Unfinished building



Food consumption deteriorates in Diyala

In August, the food consumption of sampled households in conflict-affected locations remained largely unchanged compared to previous months. However, food consumption worsened significantly in three locations in Diyala governorate: households with inadequate food consumption rose from 2 to 12 percent in Beladrooz, from 3 to 12 percent in Muddadiya, and from 1 to 14 percent in Ba'quba (Map 1). According to IOM- Displacement Tracking matrix, Diyala saw a 6 percent increase in returnees (9,330 more households) in August. This might be linked with the deteriorating food consumption levels in this governorate.

IDPs, returnees and residents continue to exhibit different levels of food security. However, a similar trend of deteriorating food consumption has been observed for all groups. There has been a significant increase in the percentage of returnee households (n=92) eating an 'inadequate' amount of food, with more than a third reporting poor or borderline food consumption (Figure 1). Because of continuous displacement in Tikrit (Salah al-Din), the percentage of displaced households reporting poor consumption increased from 5 to 18 percent. IDPs in Akre and Shikhan reported a better diet with poor consumption rates dropping from 15 to 1 percent.

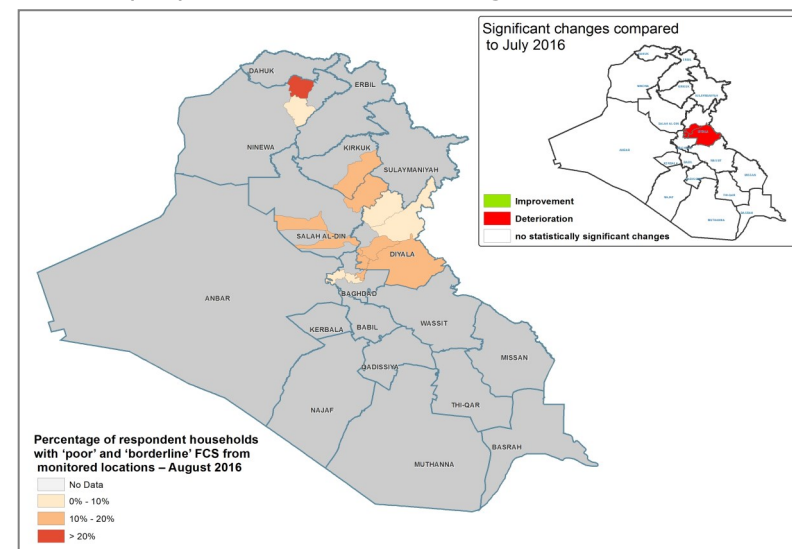
The food groups most commonly consumed by IDPs are staples and dairy; IDPs are consuming proteins and fruits less than twice a week.

Methodology – mVAM remote data collection

In August 2016, mVAM conducted household food security monitoring using live telephone interviews throughout Iraq.

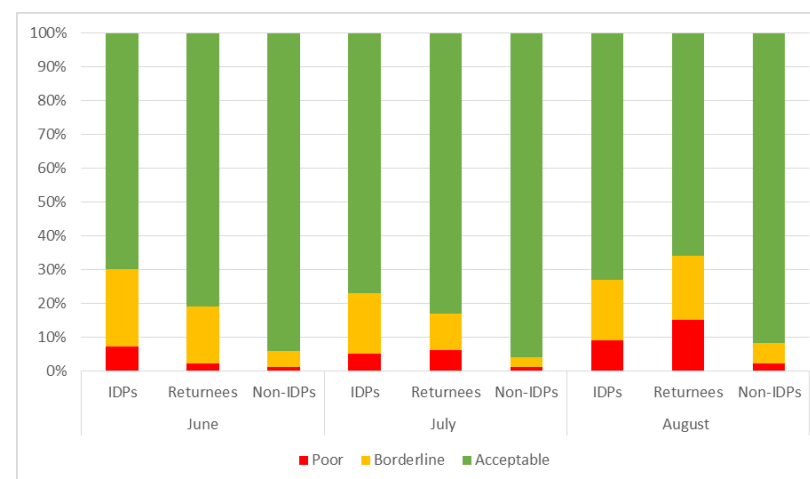
Data was collected from a sample of 1,555 respondents via Korek, a major mobile network operator. WFP monitored respondents living in Iraq's 18 governorates and in conflict hotspots, drawn from Korek's database. The data was weighted by the number of mobile phones owned by the household.

Map 1: Percentage of respondent households with 'poor' or 'borderline' food consumption score (FCS) in monitored locations – August 2016



Source: mVAM August 2016

Figure 1. Households with inadequate consumption by respondent status, June – August 2016



Source: mVAM August 2016



More returnee households resorting to negative coping strategies

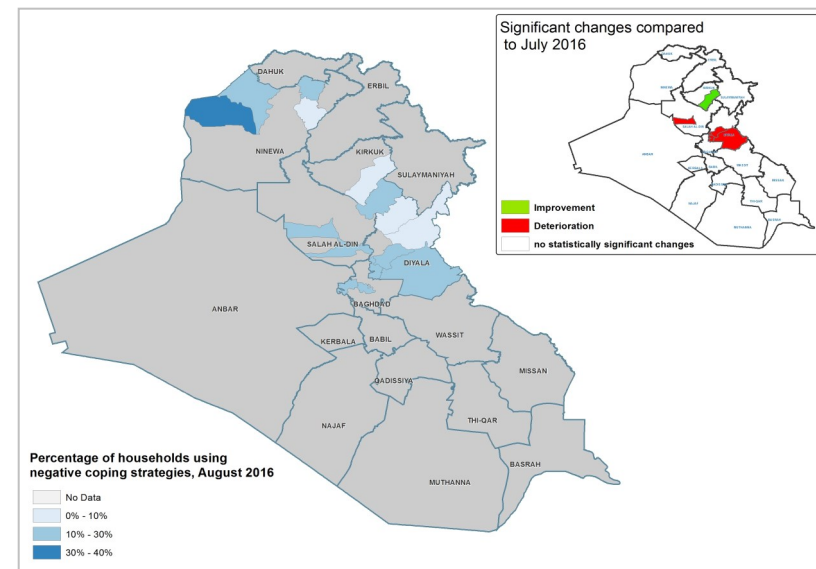
Households were asked if there were times in the week before the survey when they did not have enough food or money to buy food – an indication of perceived food access. In line with the other indicators, perceived poor food access increased in Diyala (Beladrooz, Al-Muddadiya and Ba'quba) and in Salah al-Din (Samarra). It remained stable in the other monitored locations (Map 2).

The most common coping strategies used by households in August were relying on less preferred and less expensive food, limiting portion sizes and eating fewer meals a day. On average, IDP and non-IDP households used these strategies more than four times in the week before the survey.

Negative coping remains most prevalent among IDP and returnee households. Compared to July, a higher proportion of returnees and residents adopted negative coping strategies in August. However, fewer IDPs used coping strategies (Figure 2).

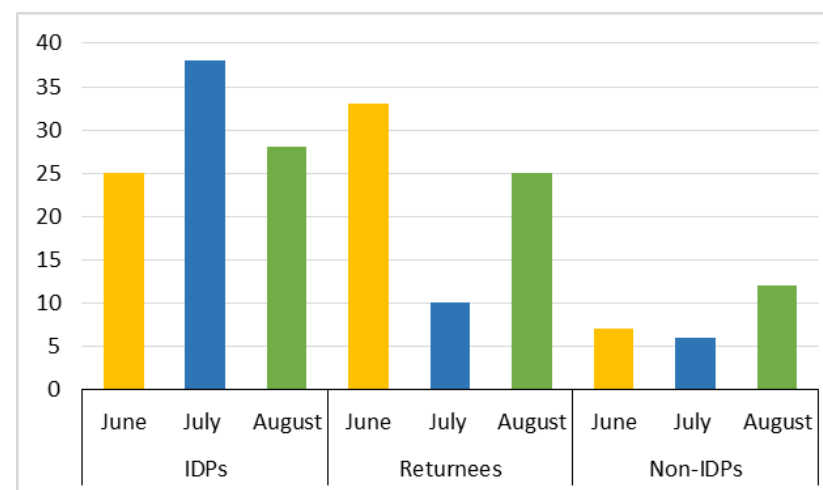


Map 2: Percentage of households using negative coping strategies, August 2016



Source: mVAM August 2016

Figure 2. Percentage of households using negative coping by respondent status, June – August 2016



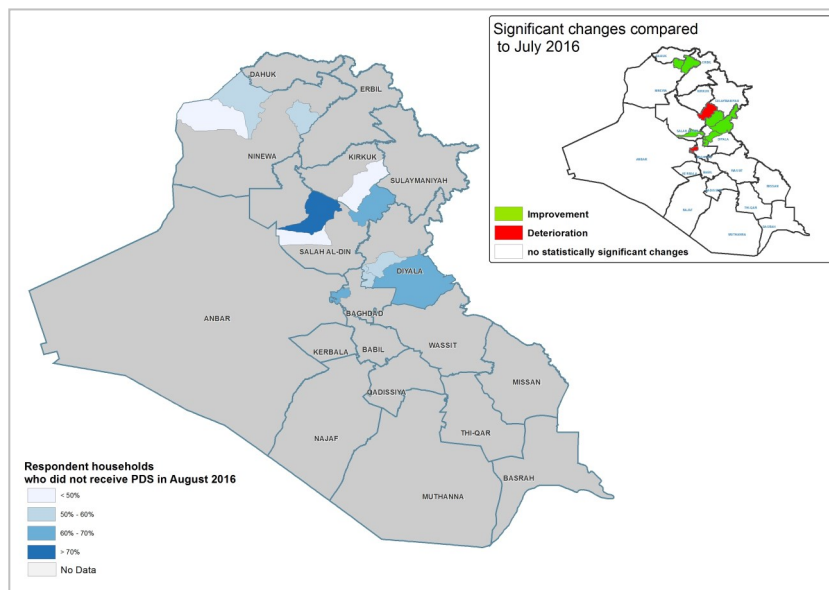
Source: mVAM August 2016



Household access to the Public Distribution System (PDS)

In August, household access to PDS rations improved in several surveyed locations, particularly in Ninewa (Akre and Shikhan), Diyala (Muqdadiya, Baquba, Khanaqin and Kifri) and in Salah al-Din (Balad) where significantly fewer households reported not receiving PDS rations (Map 3). However, access to a full PDS ration is still very limited: none of the surveyed households reported receiving a full ration in August.

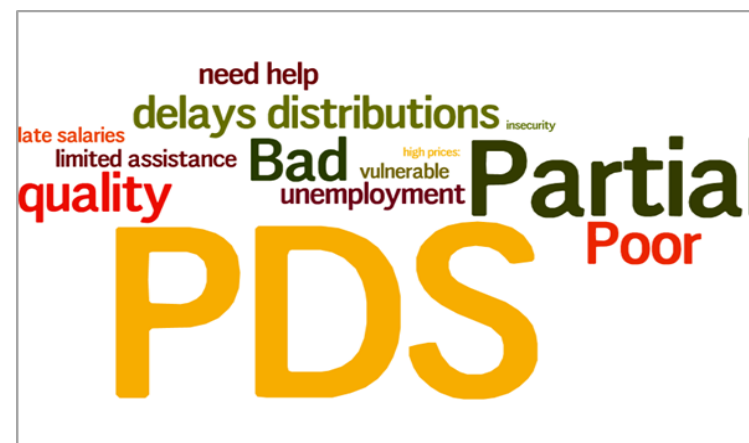
Map 3: Respondent households who did not receive PDS in August 2016



Source: mVAM, August 2016



Household access to the Public Distribution System (PDS)



At the end of the phone survey, every respondent was asked an open-ended question about their community's food security situation. The feedback was captured in a word cloud which illustrates the terms most commonly found in their responses: the size of the words represents their frequency. As in previous rounds, 'PDS' was the term most frequently mentioned by respondents. Nearly all of the responses were related to issues regarding the partial size of the PDS ration received, the poor quality of the food received and delays in distributions. Respondents also described lack of work opportunities and delays in the payment of salaries as major challenges. Several also reported a lack of access to basic services like medical care, and high prices and a lack of functional markets because of high levels of insecurity in Tel Araf (Ninewa) and in Muqdadiya (Diyala).



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