YEMEN

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food security analysis
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Food security deteriorates in spite of the harvest, particularly in Sana'a

Key points:

Food security indicators have deteriorated across Yemen after two months of stability

Increased conflict in the governorate of Sana'a has caused a sharp decline in household food consumption

Households are eating far fewer vegetables and staples and are relying more frequently on the most severe negative coping strategies throughout the country

WFP/Yemen

Situation Update

The intensification of conflict and airstrikes continue to damage food security and agricultural activities in Yemen. According to the Yemen Food Security Information System (FSIS), despite above-average rainfall, cereal production has been negatively impacted by the ongoing conflict and insecurity, particularly in the most conflict-affected areas of Taizz, Sa'ada, Marib, Hajjah and Sana'a. In fact, food security appears to be worsening across Yemen despite the start of the second harvest season (sorghum and coffee) in October – which under normal circumstances would result in better food security.

2418 Households Surveyed

38 Average age of Respondents

31% IDP
69% Non-IDP

Residence Type
55% Own home
35% Rental
5% Guest
5% Other

Gender Head of Household
96% Male
4% female

Source: mVAM October 2016

Worsening levels of food consumption and dietary diversity nationwide

Fig. 1: National mean FCS, April–October 2016

Source: mVAM October 2016

After two months of stability, the national mean Food Consumption Score (FCS) fell sharply from 47 in September to 44 in October (see Figure 1). Concurrently, as Figure 2 shows, the proportion of households with poor food consumption increased from 21.4 percent in September to 24.9 percent in October – indicating worsening food security across the country. Similarly, dietary diversity has deteriorated, with lower household consumption of all foods especially vegetables (5.5 percent less than September) and staples (3.8 percent less).
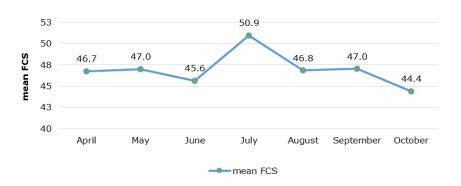
At the governorate level, the deterioration in the mean FCS has been particularly significant in Sana'a, Dhamar and Shabwah. The worst decline was observed in Sana'a – from 47.1 in September to 38.8 in October: the city saw an escalation of conflict and an increase in airstrikes in October.

Moreover, food security has worsened for displaced and non-displaced households at the same rate; their mean FCS dropped by around 5 percent each compared with the previous month (from 40.1 in September to 38.0 in October among IDPs, and from 47.8 to 45.2 among non-IDPs).

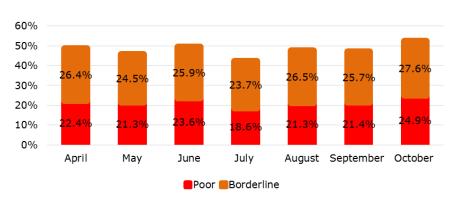### Methodology: mVAM remote mobile data collection

In October 2016, mVAM conducted the 15th round of household food security monitoring in Yemen, using live telephone interviews. The data was collected during the first two weeks of October. Responses are likely to be biased towards younger, somewhat better-off households who live in urban areas and have better access to electricity and phone-charging services. In March, a question on the number of active mobile phone owners per household was introduced to the questionnaire to adjust for the fact that households with more phones are more likely to be selected. The findings in this report are weighted by the number of SIM cards held by households and the population estimates for IDPs and non-IDPs. Details on methodology and aggregate data tables are available online.

Fig. 2: National percentage of households with poor and borderline food consumption, April–October 2016
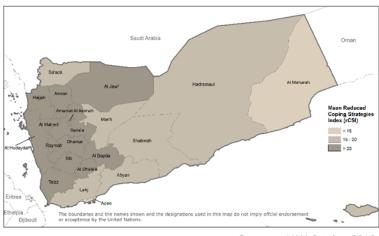

Source: mVAM October 2016

Rise in negative consumption-based coping strategies

As Map 1 shows, the use of negative food-related coping strategies continued to be rampant across Yemen: 89.1 percent of households used at least one of the five monitored consumption-based coping strategies in October compared with 86.9 percent in September. Additionally, households reported to be relying more frequently on the two most severe coping strategies – borrowing food (5.6 percent increase compared to September) and restricting adults' consumption so small children can eat (3.8 percent increase) (see Figure 3). As Figure 4 shows, the national mean rCSI was marginally worse in October (21.9) than September (21.0) – a trend that was mainly seen among non-IDP households.

Map 1: rCSI by governorate, October 2016

Source: mVAM October 2016

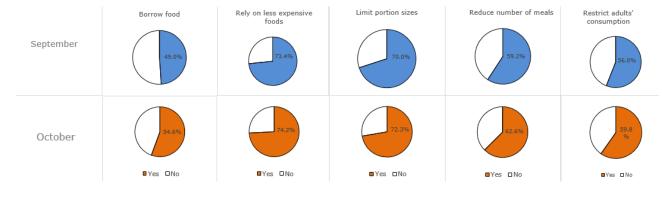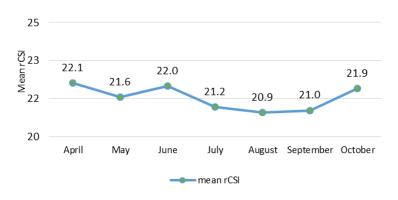Fig. 3: Proportion of households employing rCSI strategies in September and October 2016

Source: mVAM October 2016

Fig. 4: National mean rCSI, April–October 2016

Source: mVAM October 2016

Concerns over lack of food and money

When asked about the food security situation in their communities, respondents across all governorates said their main concerns are shortages of food and money. They also stated that they are no longer able to meet their basic needs because of the lack of salaries and income coupled with high food prices. Other common concerns were related to unemployment, high rental expenses and lack of electricity and water. Responses mentioned by female respondents were also similar to the general concerns raised by all the survey respondents.

Fig. 5: Word cloud for Yemen, October 2016

Source: mVAM October 2016

"Significant lack of money and food particularly for wheat and sugar"

(*Male respondent from Sana'a*)

"Lack of medical treatment and power cuts. Also, the shortages of mattresses and blankets create a big problem since the winter season is coming"

(Male respondent from Sa'ada)

"There are no job opportunities and the salaries were not paid. Prices are high and cooking gas is lacking. The school has also stopped due to the teachers' strike since their salaries weren't paid"

(Female respondent from Sana'a city)

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