



# Food Security Assessment

Nahr el-Bared Camp

A report submitted by WFP to UNRWA May 2008

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# Contents

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<b>1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>2. RECOMMENDATIONS</b> .....	<b>4</b>
2.1. OVER ALL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ANY PROGRAM APPROACH ADOPTED .....	4
2.1.1. TRANSPARENCY AND PARTICIPATION.....	4
2.1.2. CRITERIA FOR TARGETING OF INTERVENTION .....	4
2.1.3. SIZE OF CASE LOAD.....	4
2.1.4. INTERVENTION AND FAMILY SIZE .....	5
2.1.5. SUSPENSION OF THE SHC PROGRAM .....	5
2.1.6. FREQUENCY OF DISTRIBUTION.....	5
2.2. TWO POSSIBLE PROGRAM APPROACHES.....	6
2.2.1. CASH.....	6
2.3. INTERVENTION I - COUPON / RATION CARD .....	7
2.3.1. WHAT TO INCLUDE ON THE RATION CARD/ COUPON .....	7
2.3.2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RATION CARD / COUPON SYSTEM .....	8
2.3.3. DEVELOPMENTAL ADVANTAGES OF A RATION CARD/COUPON SYSTEM .....	8
2.3.4. CALCULATING THE VALUE OF THE RATION CARD/COUPON SYSTEM .....	9
2.3.5. FUTURE FUNDING REQUEST.....	9
2.4. INTERVENTION II - MODIFIED FOOD BASKET APPROACH .....	10
2.4.1. RATIONAL BEHIND THE SIZE OF THE BASKET IN INTERVENTION II .....	11
2.5. INTERVENTION III MODIFIED FOOD BASKET .....	11
<b>3. BACKGROUND ON NAHR EL-BARED CAMP</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>4. NBC REFUGEE STATUS</b> .....	<b>15</b>
4.1. OVERALL ECONOMIC SITUATION .....	15
4.2. INCOME .....	16
4.3. SAVINGS.....	16
4.4. INFLATION AND RISING FOOD PRICES .....	17
<b>5. UNRWA RESPONSE – FOOD AND NON-FOOD</b> .....	<b>18</b>
5.1. HEALTH .....	18
5.2. EDUCATION.....	18
5.3. MICRO-CREDIT.....	18
5.4. HOUSING .....	18
5.5. SPECIAL HARDSHIP CASES AND ACCESS TO FOOD SECURITY .....	19
5.6. CHANGES IN IDENTIFYING AND CLASSIFYING SHC.....	20
5.7. NUTRITIONAL SUPPORT TO PREGNANT AND LACTATING MOTHERS.....	20
5.8. GENERAL NBC FOOD BASKET .....	20
5.9. DISTRIBUTION OF THE GENERAL NBC FOOD BASKET.....	21
<b>6. FOOD SECURITY OF IDP REFUGEES</b> .....	<b>22</b>
6.1. AVAILABILITY.....	22
6.2. ACCESS.....	22
6.3. UTILISATION.....	22
6.3.1. NUTRITION AND HYGIENE.....	23
6.3.1.1. CALORIC INTAKE .....	23

6.3.2.	AWARENESS .....	24
<b>7.</b>	<b>COPING STRATEGIES.....</b>	<b>25</b>
7.1.	MONEY FROM DONORS .....	25
7.2.	FOOD AND CLOTHES.....	25
7.3.	SITUATION OF NON-UNRWA SUPPORT .....	25
7.4.	OTHER RESOURCES .....	26
7.5.	UNRWA CASH SUPPORT .....	26
<b>8.</b>	<b>RESEARCH DATA AND ANALYSIS.....</b>	<b>27</b>
8.1.	OUTCOME OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION.....	27
8.1.1.	OVERALL IDEA ON THE COST OF FEEDING A FAMILY .....	27
8.1.2.	IN-DEPTH DISCUSSION ON COPING STRATEGIES AND VULNERABILITY .....	27
8.1.3.	A CASH COMPONENT .....	28
8.1.4.	PREFERENCES ON THE CONTENT OF THE FOOD BASKET.....	28
8.2.	QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH DATA.....	28
8.3.	DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION.....	29
8.4.	INCOME AND COPING STRATEGIES .....	30
8.5.	RENT .....	31
8.6.	FOOD CONSUMPTION .....	31
8.7.	COMPOSITION OF THE FOOD BASKET .....	33
8.7.1.	POWDERED MILK .....	35
8.7.2.	BREAD .....	35
8.7.3.	FLOUR .....	35
8.7.4.	CASH ADDITION TO BASKET .....	36
8.7.5.	COUPON ADDITION TO BASKET.....	36
8.8.	SUSPEND THE SHC PROGRAM DURING THE EMERGENCY .....	36
8.9.	DISCONTINUING THE EMERGENCY FOOD BASKET.....	37
<b>9.</b>	<b>TRANSPARENCY ACCOUNTABILITY AND PARTICIPATION.....</b>	<b>38</b>
9.1.	TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY.....	38
9.2.	PARTICIPATION .....	38
<b>10.</b>	<b>MONITORING SYSTEM.....</b>	<b>39</b>
10.1.	REGULAR MONITORING MEETINGS .....	39
10.2.	RESPONSE REQUIRED TO INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM MONITORING .....	40
10.2.1.	FOOD PREFERENCE .....	40
10.2.2.	OVER SUPPLY OF AN ITEM .....	40
10.2.3.	FOOD CONSUMPTION SCORE RESPONSE.....	40
10.2.4.	PLOTTING FOOD CONSUMPTION BY FOOD GROUPS .....	40
10.2.5.	OVER ALL FOOD CONSUMPTION SCORE.....	40
10.3.	EXTERNAL MARKET PRICE INCREASES.....	43
10.3.1.	IF THE PRICE OF BASIC FOOD STUFFS INCREASES ABOVE 10%: .....	44

## List of Tables

TABLE I	INTERVENTION II FOOD BASKET.....	10
TABLE II	DAILY KCAL AND QUANTITY INTERVENTION II .....	11
TABLE III	ILLUSTRATED FOOD BASKET INTERVENTION III.....	12

TABLE IV:	CONTENTS OF SHC FOOD BASKET .....	19
TABLE V:	CONTENTS OF GENERAL NBC FOOD BASKET .....	20
TABLE VI	MALE / FEMALE RESPONDENTS .....	28
TABLE VII	ADDRESS OF RESPONDENTS .....	28
TABLE VIII	POPULATION PYRAMID (N=420).....	29
TABLE IX	HOUSING TYPE .....	29
TABLE X	SHC REGISTERED.....	29
TABLE XI	MAIN SOURCES OF INCOME .....	30
TABLE XII	COPING STRATEGIES .....	30
TABLE XIII	OTHER COPING STRATEGIES.....	31
TABLE XIV	RENT .....	31
TABLE XV	ITEMS TO REPLACE OR REDUCE .....	33
TABLE XVI	WHAT TO REPLACE .....	34
TABLE XVII	SUGGESTIONS FOR INCLUSION .....	35

## List of Figures

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FIGURE 1	MAP OF LEBANON (SOURCE – UNRWA WEBSITE).....	14
FIGURE 2	FORMS OF SAVING IN BEDDAWI AND NAHR EL-BARED AS A PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS.....	17

## Annex

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ANNEX I .....	TOR AND METHODOLOGY
ANNEX II .....	<u>CRITERIA FOR ELIGIBILITY AS A SPECIAL HARDSHIP CASE</u>
ANNEX III .....	<u>HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY QUESTIONNAIRE</u>
ANNEX IV.....	<u>FOOD PROVISION MONITORING FORM</u>

## Acronyms

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IDPs	Internally Displaced People
ILO	International Labour Organisation
NBC	Nahr el-Bared camp
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
WFP	World Food Program
RSSP	Relief and Social Services Program (UNRWA)

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Conflict erupted in Nahr El-Bared camp (NBC) for Palestinian refugees between May and September 2007. As a result all the 5,500 families residing in the camp fled and the camp was totally destroyed, while the adjacent area to the main camp was also heavily affected.

The displaced refugees are currently housed in a variety of ways while UNRWA builds temporary housing, where they will live for at least three years until the camp is rebuilt. At the time of the initial field trip, 1200 families had moved back to the adjacent area around Nahr el-Bared housed in either renovated housing or in UNRWA constructed temporary housing. During the second mission the WFP team saw additional just-completed housing in the area, which received about three hundred families who were being moved from schools and classrooms where they had been living since the start of the conflict in May 2007. Most of the remainder are currently housed in rented flats or garages in Baddawi Camp and surroundings in North Lebanon . There are about 380 further families who are dispersed in Tyre, Beirut, Saida and elsewhere.

Economically the IDPs of NBC have become very vulnerable; most of them have lost nearly all their possessions and find themselves in cramped housing relying on only very basic utensils. When compared with the statistics from before the fighting<sup>1</sup> this study has revealed that the number of people engaged in wage income has fallen from 48% to 22%. Those who are self employed have dropped from 35% to 19%. We know from focus group discussions that finding casual work is very difficult at the moment.

*“We lost everything, we were not rich before but we had a house, some basic items like a washing machine and a stove, now like everyone else whether they were rich or poor we have lost everything. Now we are living without regular electricity, in very small houses, we are like the refugees our fathers and grandfathers were... you see nothing changes in 60 years” (Mother of six, focus group NBC adjacent area, April 2008)*

All data shows that the IDPs of NBC are well nourished and consuming sufficient calories. (See section 6.3.1 and 8.6) Because of the lack of a baseline or control group the study was unable to determine the nutritional or economic impact of the current food basket distributed by UNRWA since the fighting erupted. Anecdotal data through focus groups discussions shows that the food basket is having a large influence on what people eat:

*“...before we rarely ate from tins, now we eat tinned food all the time, we have to eat what we are given” (mother of four, Focus group discussion Beddawi camp, April 2008)*

The current food basket provides 38% of the total recommended calories per person per day, however it is clear that people are supplementing this with other food to make up both their caloric and micronutrient needs.

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<sup>1</sup> Page 8 “A Socio-economic Profile of the Nahr El-Bared and Beddawi Refugee Camps of Lebanon” Based on the 2006 Labour Force Survey among Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon Åge A. Tiltnes, Fafo, 2007

The research has shown that people are using a variety of coping strategies, forty seven of which were documented by the research. The research showed that 41.5% of families skip at least one meal a week. Eleven percent are now also using wood to save on gas. (see **Income and coping strategies** for further details on coping strategies)

*“...this is the 21<sup>st</sup> century and we have gone back to the age of our grandparents” (focus group, NBC adjacent area, April 2008)*

The picture the research has painted is that, over all, people have stretched their coping strategies close to the limit. Those who were owed favours have called them in, 62% of the population is in some kind of debt; and those who had jewellery or other types of assets have sold them (39%). There is no question as to the vulnerability of the IDPs of NBC.

It is clear programmatically that UNRWA has to continue to focus on the IDPs of NBC as a particularly destitute segment of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. However we are presented with a dichotomy when it comes to the analysis of the findings.

From a purely nutritional and food security perspective, the population does not require additional supplements to what is already presented. While; as stated above, we are not able to isolate the impact of the current basket we can say that the caloric value of the basket is sufficient. Following from this it would then be possible to design a basket which conforms to the same caloric value (800 kcal) but is made up of only staple items. Using this analysis it is possible to reduce the cost of the basket by providing cheaper items with a high caloric value.

However there is another strong argument which looks at the food basket as a subsidy to a particularly vulnerable population. This argument would be in line with UNRWA mandate and analysis which uses economic (among other) factors to identify vulnerable cases. Using this basis one would look at a food basket from a financial perspective and identify items which efficiently reduce costs for the recipients. Furthermore this opens the door to other interventions which are more efficient forms of subsidy such as ration cards or cash payments.

The problem that arises here is the question, how much does one subsidise? If you used the same argument as above then the financial value of the current basket is adequate and one would analyse different interventions for their comparative advantages and efficiency using the same dollar figure of the food basket as the parameters. This paper presents the option of using coupons for bread as a cost equivalent but more efficient subsidy.

The cost equivalence argument needs to be further verified and this could be built into any future proposals. UNRWA social workers are trained to assess families to register them as special hardship cases (SHC). The same assessment can be used to ascertain if they are eligible for the subsidy proposed. Furthermore these assessments gauge income level which in turn will make it possible to see how far people are below the bar (which UNRWA has identified using the SHC criteria or the abject poverty line they may adopt). The difference between real incomes to the minimum standard defined by UNRWA would be equivalent to the level of subsidy needed. It would only be possible to collect this information over some time and for this reason it would be carried out as part of an intervention informing the adjustments to the intervention.

While this report is unable to resolve the above dichotomy between the subsidy and the caloric value perspective, which has to be done at UNRWA policy level, the paper tries to present the pertinent information needed for an informed decision. The report goes further, by exploring the option of a ration cards/ coupon program. (See section 2.3 Intervention I - Coupon / ration card) Over all this report indicates that the population are more in need of a subsidy than they are a nutritional supplement.

The report has been able to gather a lot of data from a statistically significant sample of the population. This data can be used for a number of different analyses and is housed at UNRWA for future use. In addition prices were collected from all the shops which supply the population. This can be used by UNRWA as a baseline when monitoring price rises and will be useful information to inform UNRWA on program directions. (See market servay submitted as a separate documen

Finally this report presents a monitoring system. It proposes the use of the food consumption score as a simple method to track trends in consumption of food categories. It also proposes methods of continuous feedback of information from the field to inform program directions.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

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### 2.1. Over all recommendations for any program approach adopted

#### 2.1.1. Transparency and Participation

Transparency and participation leave room for improvement. (See section 9 Transparency Accountability and Participation) The following recommendations are relevant to which ever program approach UNRWA ultimately decides to take. They are aimed to go towards addressing the issues of transparency and participation.

1. At a minimum all recipients should be informed about any changes to the food basket or indeed a change in program, to this end it is recommended that letter is distributed with the basket which details the following:
  - The contents of the basket ( a list of items)
  - The value of the products (cost to UNRWA not value in market)
  - The quantities supplied
  - Reassurance that the value of the basket is the same
  - An explanation that the changes were made after research and consultation
2. More feedback from the field to the head office in Beirut should be regularised and systematised. This should be done in a number of ways”
  - The monitoring form will provide direct feedback from the field to UNRWA office
  - Monthly meetings between Beirut office staff and field staff which provide a form for feedback and also a forum to explain the thinking behind policies to the field staff. The field staff are in constant contact with the IDPs but are quite removed from decisions taken in UNRWA Beirut.
  - A system other than the monitoring form should be put in place which allows the IDPs to give direct feedback in a formal way to the program.

#### 2.1.2. Criteria for targeting of intervention

Due to the differing mandates between UNRWA and WFP, the criteria WFP use for defining those who need to receive food supplements is not applicable to UNRWA. This report has therefore decided to adopt UNRWA criteria for identifying those most in need. UNRWA is currently in the process of analysing its criteria and possibly reforming it, however this does not affect the decision to adopt UNRWA criteria.

It is recommended that the same targeting criteria that UNRWA now uses for SHC is used for the general food basket. The social workers are familiar with it, it is comprehensive, well researched and will capture all those who need support. (See Annex II for details)

#### 2.1.3. Size of case load

Using the above criteria for defining who should receive assistance it is anticipated that over 90% of the IDPs of NBC will qualify. This rough estimate is based on income and



employment data in the socio-economic profile of Nahr el Bared (before the fighting) cited later in this report. It is also based on the focus group discussions which were held in April 2008 with the IDPs of NBC.

It was beyond the scope of this study to analyse incomes. The informal/casual nature of employment for many of the displaced make income levels difficult to monitor. It is possible to follow a more rudimentary 'exclusion' approach to determine the caseload, i.e. eliminating UNRWA staff members and any other refugees that social workers know to have a steady (and reasonable) level of income.

If the recommendation to suspend the SHC food support is taken up by UNRWA than it should be ensured that they are all registered for support and then excluded on a case by case basis if and when social workers determine they have reached a reasonable level of income.

Whatever steps are taken to define the caseload, a mechanism should be introduced to allow families to appeal any decision to remove them from the rolls.

#### **2.1.4. Intervention and family size**

It is recommended to accommodate as much as possible to different family size. While recognising that the greater the number of different sized food baskets the more work there is with compiling them, and the more logistical effort needed, it is necessary to be able to cater for different family sizes. This is easier to do with ration cards/coupons than with food baskets. However in both cases it needs to be the main factor in determining the amount the recipients receive.

#### **2.1.5. Suspension of the SHC program**

This report argues strongly for the continuation of UNRWA's recognition of the unique situation of the IDPs from Nahr el-Bared. This unique situation described in the body of this report, warrants a response which is catered to the special needs of the target group. It is clear that the SHC program, which is designed regionally, no longer addresses the realities on the ground in the area discussed.

The rationale for the SHC has broken down with the emergency situation in NBC. While there are many more people who would now fall into the SHC category, (because they do not have an income) the type of support needed for the IDPs (frequency of distribution and composition of basket) calls for a different and more responsive intervention. It was in response to the crisis that UNRWA started its food basket program which in the immediate aftermath of the crises was needed for all IDPs. However the result of this has meant that those receiving the SHC are also now receiving the additional food basket distributed to all.

*It is therefore recommended that the food distribution element of the SHC program be suspended in favour of a more relevant intervention.*

#### **2.1.6. Frequency of distribution**

The present distribution cycle per month is good in so far it enables people in cramped conditions to store the basket. However it is a very tight schedule for the purchasing packing

and distribution. This means that currently the distribution is not made on the same day each month making it harder for people to plan ahead.

Factors which should be weighed in terms of deciding on the frequency of distribution are as follows:

- Ability of recipients to properly store the food (this is both the space needed and the proper containers needed to keep the food)
- Ability to supply at regular intervals
- Cost of distribution and storage
- The content of the food basket, both with regards to expiry dates and with regards to quantities supplied.

It is important to know what is in the food basket before making a decision on the frequency of distribution which is why this report is presenting the factors which will determine the decision and not a timetable.

## **2.2. Two Possible Program Approaches**

This report narrows down the recommendations for response options to two main types of program approaches, both are built upon the overriding conclusion that the most effective response will provide the recipients with basic food necessities that they will directly use, thus reducing swapping or selling.

From a purely nutritional and food security perspective the population does not require additional supplements to what is already presented. While this study was not able to isolate the impact of the current basket we can say that the caloric value of the basket is sufficient. Following from this it would then be possible to design a basket which conforms to the same caloric value (800 kcal) but is made up of only staple items. Using this analysis it is possible to reduce the cost of the basket by providing cheaper items with a high caloric value.

However there is another strong argument which looks at the food basket as a subsidy to a particularly vulnerable population. This argument would be in line with UNRWA mandate and analysis which uses economic (among other) factors to identify vulnerable cases. Using this basis one would look at a food basket from a financial perspective and identify items which efficiently reduce costs on the recipients. Furthermore this opens the door to other interventions which are more efficient forms of subsidy such as ration cards or cash payments.

The different approaches result in different interventions following are three possible interventions using the different approaches.

### **2.2.1. Cash**

Cash allows for flexibility from the recipients perspective. This report has concluded that all people are supplementing the food basket from the market with additional produce. Therefore a cash portion of the food basket would help with this. In addition cash ensures local sourcing of food and stimulates the local economy.

On the other hand, operationally cash is very difficult to track, in terms of regulating how it is spent. However more problematic than regulation, is the fact that inflation is eroding the purchasing power of cash. Therefore any cash addition to the basket must be linked with the inflation of basic food stuffs such as bread and vegetables, (in fact all items which are part of the basic diet) not supplied by the basket. In addition the cash amount should be linked to family size. This would require very flexible funding.

*The research data overwhelmingly concludes that the recipients are aware of both the inflationary cost of food and the decreasing purchasing power of cash. Recipients are not in favour of a cash substitute if they receive the equivalent in a commodity they will use. Recipients want to be protected from inflation.*

### **2.3. Intervention I - Coupon / ration card**

The coupon system provides the same positive economic elements as cash, however it is more limited. Only certain shops and bakeries will be part of the coupon program. However importantly *it does shelter the recipient from inflation.* It further allows for the provision of fresh vegetables and bread in the food basket. A high proportion of people's food budget is spent on bread. With rising wheat prices both locally and globally, there is a very strong argument for the provision of bread coupons.

The data from this study (and it is well known) that all the recipients eat bread on a daily basis. A ration card given to each family allowing them to access UNRWA subsidised bread would better target resources and factor the size of the family into the targeting. In Nhar El-Bared this would mean the establishment of a bakery with UNRWA support to a local baker. (There is at least one who used to work there but his bakery was destroyed). In Beddawi there are already established bakeries which would need to be put under contract with UNRWA. There may be a problem at targeting the 380 families who are not living in Beddawi and NBC adjacent area. Further more this study recognises that further investigation is needed before this can be presented to donors although the basis for the argument is presented here.

Bread is only one of a number of food items that could be distributed using a ration card / coupon approach. The approach allows for flexibility to distribute fresh produce. One of the findings of this study is that while current food consumption is good, there has been a dramatic change in the type of food consumed with much more reliance on canned and dried food and less fresh vegetables and meat. The suggested monitoring system will use the documented current consumption patterns as a baseline and track changes in the consumption pattern. A ration card / coupon approach has the flexibility to address consumption pattern changes easily because of its ability to provide fresh produce as well as dried and tinned items.

#### **2.3.1. What to include on the ration card/ coupon**

Possible items that the coupon could include:

1. Bread
2. Rice

3. Milk powder
4. Oil
5. Fresh Vegetables

The above items are basic essentials used by all people. Depending on funding the recommendation would be to provide either all the cost of these items (calculated on daily consumption per person and factoring in children) or part of the cost of the items thus effectively subsidising the items.

### **2.3.2. Implementation of the ration card / coupon system**

A card will be distributed by UNRWA to individuals on the UNRWA database for those who fall into the category defined by UNRWA using the SHC criteria or the poverty line criteria.

- The card will be valid for a limited time frame (between one – three months)
- On the card will be the names of the family it represents and the UNRWA number
- The card will clearly state the rations eligible based on the number of people in the family.
- The card will entitle the barer to receive their rations from designated shops in the area.

UNRWA will form an implementation team which will have 3 main responsibilities:

1. Building the capacity of local shops. This could include grants from the small and medium enterprise development fund at UNRWA. In addition it will involve training and capacity building in the areas of accounting, budget management, stock tracking and the purchase of stock.
2. Monitoring of the local shops that are contracted with UNRWA and providing a check and balance to make sure that the whole system is running smoothly.
3. Providing a link between UNRWA and the bearer's of ration cards for feedback on the progress of the system. And either trouble shooting on the ground or passing on the issues to UNRWA in Beirut of solving at a higher level.

### **2.3.3. Developmental advantages of a ration card/coupon system**

A ration card/ coupon system has specific developmental advantages to a food hand-out.

- It gives the recipient choice as to when to receive an item. This in part addresses the problem of storage in crowded dwellings.
- With as system that includes a subsidy at a shop or a green grocer it gives the recipient a choice of items thus empowering the user of the coupon / ration card and reducing the need to swap or sell items.
- Capacity building of shops/ green grocers/ bakeries to efficiently run their business. Accounting techniques will be transferred to the owners and managers of these local businesses. In addition purchase methods and stock control training and supervision will be supplied. Further the turnover of these businesses will increase strengthening their overall economic capacity.

- The direct support to local businesses strengthens the overall economy of NBC. It is inevitable that a food handout does exactly the opposite. The logic follows that all factors being equal strengthening the local economy will feed into reducing the number of people who need the ration card.

#### **2.3.4. Calculating the value of the ration card/coupon system**

The above example has assumed that we are using a subsidy approach and are therefore looking at value as determining the size of the subsidy. Currently UNRWA is spending about three hundred thousand dollars a month on the food which is distributed to the IDPs of NBC. Using a rough estimate this would pay for total bread consumption of the whole population targeted using a ration card using today's prices. The cost of packing and delivery and including the cost of employment of people used in the packing a distribution should cover the additional costs to UNRWA for overseeing and managing the ration card/coupon system. This is calculated from the following current costs per food basket:

- \$ 2.5 Cost of empty cartons, labels, scotch, nylon bags...
- \$ 0.6 Labor cost for packing & loading at warehouse.
- \$ 0.8 Distribution cost to IDPs

Therefore currently the total cost per monthly distribution is an average of US\$21,500 which gives a more than adequate yearly budget of US\$ 258,000 for overseeing and managing the ration card system.

It is also possible to use the caloric argument to determine the size of the subsidy. One would then calculate that the subsidy would be equivalent to the cost of 800 calories of bread per day per person or roughly 250g.

#### **2.3.5. Future funding request**

The paragraph above demonstrates that the cost of the coupon system if only used for bread would be about the same cost as the current food distribution. Any funding request would have to factor in inflation. However it is proposed here that there is room for UNRWA to argue strongly for more funding which would allow the ration card/ coupon system to cover not only bread but also; rice, milk powder, oil, and a certain amount of vegetables. The underlying logic is that this new approach is now supporting a number of strategic objectives, such as income generation, regeneration of the local economy and a level of individual empowerment. In addition by expanding the number of items beyond bread, the intervention becomes a better safety net for the recipients. The more items covered the more the recipients are cushioned from inflation. Further, adding in vegetables gives people access to important micronutrients.

Using the above logic UNRWA would put in a funding request which covers all five items and includes the capacity building of UNRWA staff to manage the system effectively and efficiently. In addition UNRWA should factor into any costs a large rate of inflation which is projected over the near to medium term.

## 2.4. Intervention II - Modified food basket approach

The data clearly indicate that the food basket should only focus on essential items which will be used by the household and not traded and or sold. The following recommendations are based on the assessment and are a result of the analysis of both the focus group discussions and the questionnaire administered by this study.

Again the makeup of this intervention is determined by the subsidy approach detailed above. The quantities are not indicated as they are subject to price rises and these have been changing on a daily basis during the whole time of writing this report. However for this intervention the overriding assumption is that the value of the food basket is similar to the value of the current food basket (ie using the economic subsidy not the caloric approach).

### **The following items should be removed from the current food basket:**

- Jam
- Cheese
- Luncheon (murtadila)
- Fava beans
- Lentils
- The tined chick peas with meat (supplied in the April food basket)

### **The following items should be added:**

- Olive oil (as already done last time)
- Bulger wheat
- If money left over to add a bag of sherraya macaroni
- If still have money left over – some magi cubes

### **The following items should be increased in quantity:**

- Vegetable oil
- Rice
- Milk powder (but not the SHC type in silver bags but the same type supplied already)
- Sugar

### **There should be an adjustment in quality of the following items:**

- Tea (make it horse head tea)
- Chick peas – possibly have the pre-packed kind but a type that does not need too much boiling (bigger chick peas)
- Tomato past (big cans not small)
- Tuna (keep it white meat chunks)

### **So the final basket would consist of the following items:**

Table I Intervention II food basket

Item	Comment
Rice	Increase

Item	Comment
Sugar	Increase
Whole milk ( powder )	Increase
Spaghetti	Only 2-4 bags
Vegetable oil	Increase
Samna	Could be distributed every other time
Tuna	Chunky
Chick peas	Improve
White beans	Same quantity
Salt	Same quantity
Tomato paste	Big cans
Tea	Horse head
Olive oil	Add
Bulger wheat	Add
Sharaaya macaroni	Possibly add
Magi cubes	Possibly add

#### 2.4.1. Rational behind the size of the basket in intervention II

The assumption in the above basket is that the value of the basket will remain the same. Therefore the quantities of the items in the above basket will be calculated by value.

#### 2.5. Intervention III modified food basket

Unlike the above food basket this food basket is calculated by caloric value and not economic value. While as stated above we are not able to isolate the impact of the current basket we can say that the caloric value of the basket is sufficient. Following from this it would then be possible to design a basket which conforms to the same caloric value (810 kcal) but is made up of only staple items. Using this analysis it is possible to reduce the cost of the basket by providing cheaper items with a high caloric value.

However it is argued that there is an inconsistency in this logic because if one takes total caloric value and then supplies only staple items we find that the basket then becomes much less relevant to the recipients. See tables below:

Table II Daily Kcal and quantity Intervention II

Item	Quantity in Grams per person per day	Kcal
Rice	120	432
Sugar	10	40
Whole milk ( powder )	20	100
Vegetable oil		

12 106

Item	Quantity in Grams per person per day	Kcal
Chick peas	20	67
Bulger wheat	20	70
Total	162	815

To illustrate what an average basket for a family of five (two adults three children) would look like the following basket is calculated by:

Item weight x 3.5 adults x 30 days

Table III Illustrated food basket intervention III

Item	Quantity
Rice	12.6 kg
Sugar	1.05 Kg
Whole milk ( powder )	2.1 Kg
Vegetable oil	1.26 litre
Chick peas	2.1Kg
Total weight of basket	19.11kg

The above food basket is an illustration only and using the same logic it is possible to reduce the amount of rice and increase other items. Which would be clearly desirable however even giving five litres of oil would mean that there would be 6.3 kg of rice.

However it is clear that using caloric value sidesteps the real issue of how people benefit from these baskets. Their main benefit is as a food subsidy as they are buying most (at least 60% in caloric terms although the data suggests they are buy more than that) of their food. It is only when you look at the basket as a subsidy that the logic flows that you can add essential items such as tea and tomato paste etc.



### 3. BACKGROUND ON NAHR EL-BARED CAMP

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Nahr el-Bared camp is situated 16 kms north of Tripoli near the coastal road. The camp, one of 12 managed by UNRWA in Lebanon, was originally established by the League of Red Cross Societies in 1949 to accommodate Palestine refugees from the Lake Huleh area of northern Palestine. (See map below). UNRWA started providing services for the refugees in 1950. Factional violence in the early 1980s inflicted a heavy toll on this camp.

The camp, like all other Palestinian camps, was overcrowded and the infrastructure poor due to the restrictions in extending the camp constructions beyond the agreed borders. Although all shelters had indoor water mains, these were linked to a very inadequate water supply which was pumped from ground sources. All shelters were connected to a sewerage system which discharged untreated sewage into the sea

Conflict erupted in Nahr El-Bared between May and September 2007. As a result all the 5,500 families residing in the camp fled and the camp was totally destroyed while the adjacent area to the main camp was heavily affected.

Before the conflict in Nahr El-Bared, an UNRWA-MCSP businesses survey conducted in 2004 revealed 700 fixed small businesses with premises in NBC.<sup>(2)</sup> Historical evidence and survey results have ranked NBC as the foremost Palestinian camp in Lebanon with regards to the prosperity of both formal and informal economic activities. Unlike geographically insular camps, NBC's market was an exceptionally open one that relied on the surrounding market demand. This relation was further underpinned by the cheaper prices offered on certain goods in the camp, which attracted both suppliers and end customers from the Lebanese community. Such businesses not only constituted the core of the NBC economy, but also formed and enhanced the economic self-reliance of its dependent households. After the conflict, the resultant widespread destruction led to the loss of the majority of these businesses, thus, leaving their owners, workers and dependents with no source of income.

As Åge A. Tiltnes puts it; "With low incomes and little savings the Nahr El-Bared population is rather vulnerable and cannot alone handle the consequences of the current crisis. Considerable intervention by donors would most likely be required to help rebuild the Palestinian refugees' homes, to ensure continued schooling of the children, and to re-establish businesses and provide new job opportunities."<sup>3</sup>

The displaced refugees are currently housed in a variety of ways while UNRWA builds temporary housing which they will live in for at least three years until the camp is rebuilt. At the time of the initial field trip, 1200 families had moved back to the adjacent area around Nahr el-Bared housed in either renovated housing or in UNRWA constructed temporary housing. The WFP team saw additional just-completed housing in the area which was ready to receive about three hundred of families who were being moved from schools and

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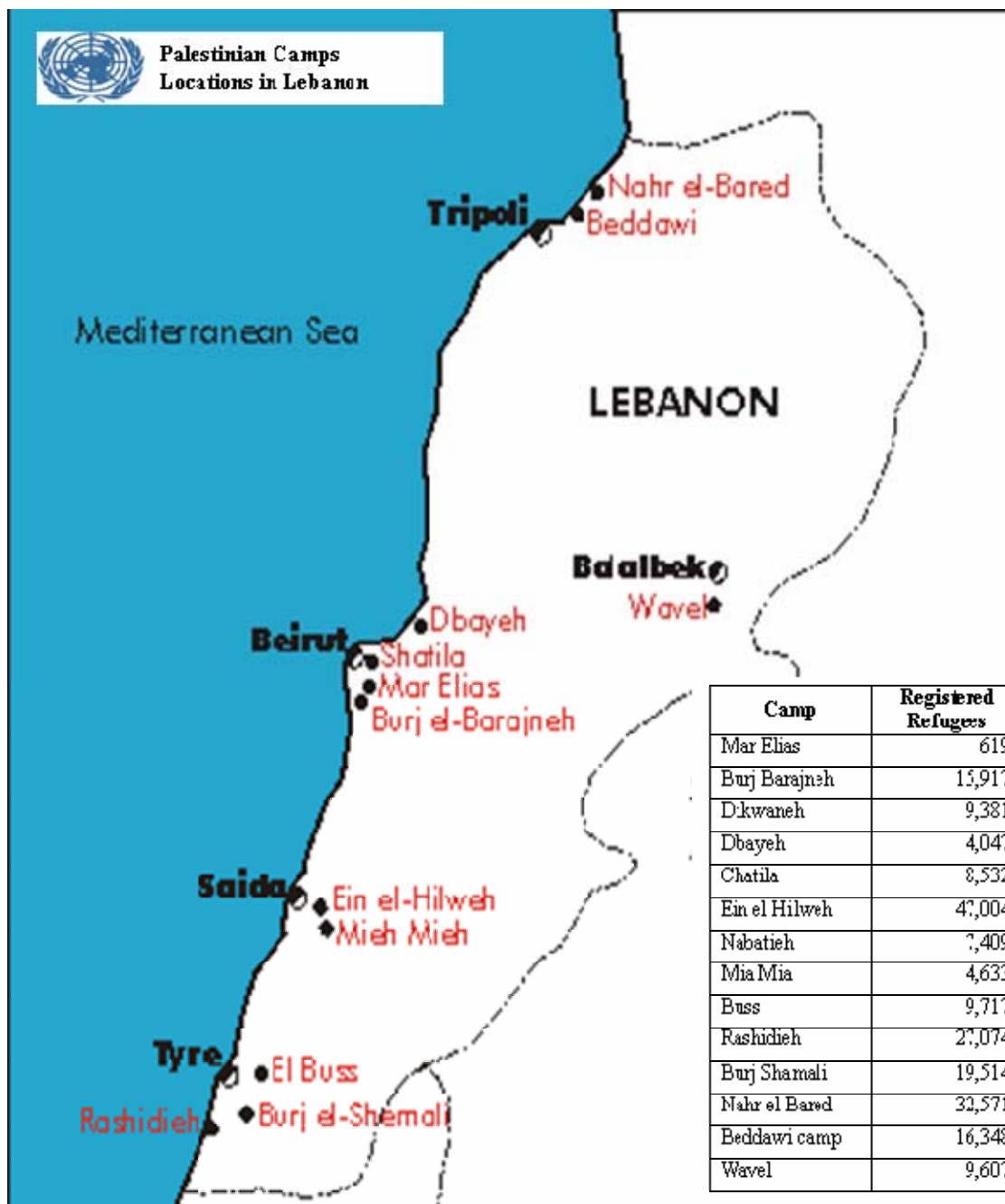
2 MCSP-UNRWA conducted in 2004 a survey on all businesses existent inside Palestinian camps all over Lebanon and NBC was recognized for scoring the highest number of available fixed businesses, which were confined to a physical premise

3 "A Socio-economic Profile of the Nahr El-Bared and Beddawi Refugee Camps of Lebanon" Based on the 2006 Labour Force Survey among Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon Åge A. Tiltnes, Fafo, 2007.

classrooms they had been living in since the start of the conflict in May 2007. Most of the remaining are being housed in mosques, schools or renting flats in Baddawi Camp. There are a about 380 families who are dispersed in Tire, Beirut, Saida and elsewhere.

The current situation is characterized by lack of jobs, homelessness, cramped living conditions, lack of income, and insecurity for the majority of the displaced as well as returnees. UNRWA’s priority is to facilitate the smooth return and progressive reintegration of the displaced population through livelihood support interventions and reactivation of the NBC economy. At the same time, UNRWA realizes the limited means of the majority of the population and continues to provide relief support in different ways.

Figure 1 Map of Lebanon (Source – UNRWA)



## 4. NBC REFUGEE STATUS

### 4.1. Overall economic situation

The northern districts of Lebanon where NBC is situated are some of the poorest districts in Lebanon. A significant number of the NBC people (around 25%)<sup>4</sup> were considered on or below the poverty line before the destruction of the camp. Clearly there are many others now who, having lost their houses and businesses, have also fallen below the poverty line.

Table V: Regional Poverty Line

Field	Daily Abject Poverty	Daily Absolute Poverty Line
West Bank	0.99	2.49
Gaza	0.94	2.37
Lebanon	1.53	3.90
Syria	0.67	1.35
Jordan	0.80	1.70

Table 1 opposite positions the abject poverty line (defined as the cost to an individual to adequately eat) and the absolute poverty line (defined as the cost to an individual to provide for basic necessities including food, housing etc). It is clear that because of the cost of living in Lebanon the poverty lines are the highest in the region.<sup>5</sup>

So far, the economy and community of NBC is unable to re-establish it-self, as it lacks the levers for livelihood revival (described further in the report). Only one fourth of pre-existent micro, small and medium size enterprises<sup>(6)</sup> managed to reactivate, and the majority of these are smaller in scale relying on fewer customers, hindered by the military cordon around the camp and starting up with less stock. Consequently, the remaining business owners are currently reliant, as part of the 5,449 displaced and returnee families, on the distribution of basic needs provisions from UNRWA, and local and international organizations. This leads to increasing frustrations, social problems and a decrease in the overall well-being of the families, placing even greater pressure on service providers. This situation is unsustainable; it also prevents the families from re-building independent capabilities.

The overall economic situation of the NBC IDPs is desperate.<sup>7</sup> 1512 businesses were destroyed and the crisis severely undermined the ability of entrepreneurs to re-establish their enterprises. They were constrained by two main obstacles:

- 1- An erosion of the customer base of NBC enterprises: More than two third of NBC residents (Palestinian customers) are still displaced, while the Lebanese customers avoid returning to the camp due to security issues reducing mobility.
- 2- The destruction of major enterprise premises (85%), thus the unavailability of enough premises. This has driven up rental prices, putting additional operational costs on enterprises and thus undercutting profit.

4 8627 people were classified as hardship cases out of 31,023 registered refugees

5 Source of table: Dr. Ibrahim Hejoj, Senior Poverty Advisor UNRWA (Jordan)

6 The NBC damaged businesses survey results revealed 1500 pre-existent micro, small and medium size enterprise activities with 362 re-operated after the inception of crisis.

7 (for detailed information please see "NBC Damaged/Destroyed Business Survey" Draft report for UNRWA, Fadia Y. Jradi January, 2008)

## 4.2. Income

Palestinians in Lebanon are excluded from about 70 professions (although the minister of Labor has opened the door to about 60 types of skilful jobs no significant improvements have been noticed) including those requiring membership of syndicates like doctors, lawyers engineers etc. Just before the fighting in NBC a study on incomes revealed the following:

“People in Nahr El-Bared typically work long hours (45% work more than 56 hours per week), but hourly wages are low. Only 22% earn above Lebanese pounds (LL) 3,000 (USD 2) per hour. The average weekly wage is LL 114,000 (USD 76). Many households have more than one type of income. 48% report wage income; 35% have income from self-employment, while 3% report property or other forms of income. 72% of the households receive some kind of transfer income. Average total yearly household income is approximately LL 6.3 million (USD 4,200). Approximately a third of the households have some kind of savings, either in banks (7%), in savings clubs (6%) or in the form of gold and jewellery (28%). The amounts put aside are typically limited.”<sup>8</sup>

## 4.3. Savings

Nahr el-Bared and Baddawi camps savings were closely scrutinised:

“Approximately a third (34%) of all households said they had some form of savings. As shown by figure 2 below, some households place money in a savings account at a bank, while it is more common to use informal savings clubs (jam’iyyat) or to keep savings as silver and gold and other precious metals. Our data suggests that people in the two camps may have somewhat different practices with regard to savings, with jam’iyya being much more prevalent in Beddawi and the traditional form of gold savings being more popular in Nahr El-Bared.

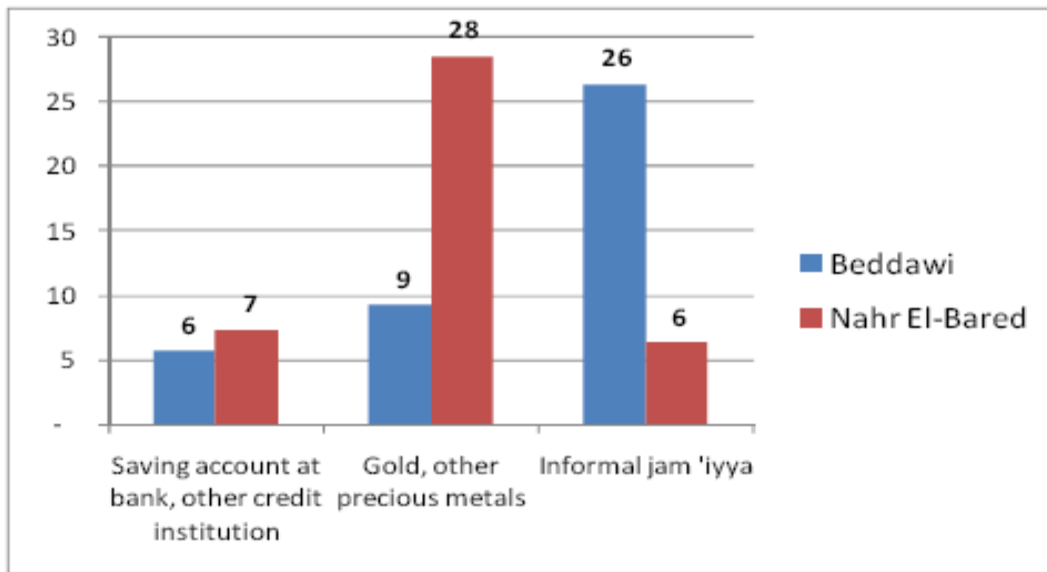
Palestinian households in Beddawi and Nahr El-Bared report by and large low incomes and only a third of the households have any form of saving. The survey does not provide information about the level of saving, but based on the low overall income level and our knowledge of the camps from qualitative research, we suspect a majority have very limited sums deposited in banks or put aside in alternative ways. Thus, our general impression is one of high vulnerability in the two camps. The informality and minimal job security of most employment add to that picture.”<sup>9</sup>

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8 Page 8 “A Socio-economic Profile of the Nahr El-Bared and Beddawi Refugee Camps of Lebanon” Based on the 2006 Labour Force Survey among Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon Åge A. Tiltnes, Fafo, 2007

9 “A Socio-economic Profile of the Nahr El-Bared and Beddawi Refugee Camps of Lebanon” Based on the 2006 Labor Force Survey among Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon Åge A. Tiltnes, Fafo, 2007.

Figure 2 Forms of Saving in Beddawi and Nahr el-Bared as a percent of households<sup>10</sup>



The Phase II study will look at whether people have sold their savings in gold and precious metals to cope and thus have nothing further to rely on.

#### 4.4. Inflation and rising food prices

Recent months have seen rising food prices in Lebanon as in the rest of the world. This will undoubtedly have an impact on the food security of the displaced NBC refugees. After the focus group discussions in Phase II an idea will be obtained on what people are eating. Prices for these food items will be obtained from the local market. These prices will act as the baseline for the average cost of feeding a family of a specific number of people. This information will then be used in the monitoring system and help to analyse the impact of rising food prices on the overall cost of food for people.

While people are extremely aware of becoming depended on handouts and are asking for support in establishing their businesses, the current economic situation will not enable the majority of people to do so. This means that they will have to remain reliant on UNRWA support until such time as the economy is revived.

<sup>10</sup> "A Socio-economic Profile of the Nahr El-Bared and Beddawi Refugee Camps of Lebanon" Based on the 2006 Labor Force Survey among Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon Åge A. Tiltnes, Fafo, 2007.

## 5. UNRWA RESPONSE – FOOD AND NON-FOOD

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### 5.1. Health

UNRWA's health programme aims to protect, preserve and promote the health of Palestine refugees and to meet their basic health needs. Since its establishment, the Agency has been the main health care provider for the Palestine refugee population, providing the following health services:

- Primary health care
- Nutrition and supplementary feeding
- Assistance with secondary health care
- Environmental health in refugee camps

Nutritional information for this report was obtained through the UNRWA health care program. All interviewed IDP refugees agreed that they were able to access free UNRWA clinics.

### 5.2. Education

UNRWA operates one of the largest school systems in the Middle East and has been the main provider of primary education to Palestine refugees for nearly five decades. The Agency provides primary and secondary schooling free of charge for all Palestine refugee children in the field including Nahr el Barid and Beddawi camps. Vocational and technical training courses are given in the eight UNRWA vocational training centres. The Agency also runs an extensive teacher-training programme, and offers university scholarships to qualified refugee youth.

### 5.3. Micro-credit

UNRWA is actively providing loans to refugee clients with potential business including to the IDPs of Nahr el-Bared. This program has just received additional funding and it is expected to provide substantial support in the rehabilitation of businesses in the area.

### 5.4. Housing

UNRWA has been very rapid in its response to the immediate need for housing. UNRWA has constructed both pre-fabricated and brick shelters which conform to Sphere standards in the adjacent area to the NBC camp. They are in the process of moving people out of temporary accommodation in schools in Beddawi camp into the prefabricated shelters. Whilst conforming to Sphere standards, the conditions are cramped, with a family of five offered one room with a small kitchen and a small toilet attached. UNRWA is very constrained by the lack of availability of land which has dictated that the shelters be small, in some cases multi-storey, and is limiting the ability of UNRWA to build enough for all the IDPs.

In addition to constructing housing, UNRWA is providing a rental subsidy of 200 US\$ to all those who are not housed in their accommodation. Two-thirds of families are accommodated in a private setting, while a third of them have found lodging in schools, offices, garages,

stores, etc. Two-thirds of the families pay rent, while a third do not. Nearly three-quarters of the families share accommodation with other families, primarily relatives. The average family size is five persons. Seventy percent of the families have only one room at their disposal.

The average number of persons residing in a dwelling unit is 11.5. One room at the disposal of a displaced family typically accommodates four displaced persons. Yet, since the displaced frequently share their living space with other families, one room in average accommodates six persons. All IDPs have access to safe water, with a majority having water either piped into the dwelling (51 percent) or into the building where the dwelling is located (22 percent). Twenty-three percent rely on bottled water as drinking water. Three-quarters of the displaced families have access to a private (23 percent) or shared (51 percent) bathroom. The rest have access to communal facilities.<sup>11</sup>

## 5.5. Special Hardship Cases and access to food security

Under its regular relief services program, UNRWA targets poor families who are in hardship, and provides monthly food and cash for food for each person. The total annual value of this intervention is \$110 per person, \$70 in kind and \$40 cash. There are strict and well defined criteria which make a person or family eligible for special hardship assistance. (See Annex I)

Before the outbreak of violence in May 2007, there were 1502 SHC families registered in NBC. They currently receive two food baskets: the SHC food basket and the general food basket distributed to all IDPs from NBC (described below section 5.8 General NBC food basket). This is inconsistent since there are clearly many people who would now fall into the SHC criteria as they have lost everything including a large number who have lost their livelihoods It is therefore recommended that this policy be reviewed (see section 2.1.5 Suspension of the SHC program)

Table IV: Contents of SHC food basket

Item	Quantities to be distributed per beneficiary/3 month	Kcal
Sugar	03 Kg.	12,000
Rice	03 Kg.	10,800
Sun flower oil	03 Bottles each of one	26,550
Whole milk	1 Kg.	250
Lentils	3 Kg.	10,200
B/Beans	3 Kg.	2,220

Table 2 describes the items given to those who are classified as Special Hardship Cases (SHC). They receive this parcel once every three months. It is clear looking at the Kcal provided to the SHC recipients that this basket is viewed by UNRWA as supplementary support to

the under-privileged as opposed to a nutritional package aimed at fully sustaining them.

<sup>11</sup> "Characteristics of Displaced Palestinian Refugees from the Nahr El-Bared Refugee Camp Business survey" A Report to UNRWA and ILO By Åge A. Tiltnes, Fafo December 2007

## 5.6. Changes in identifying and classifying SHC

Currently the definition of a special hardship case is status-based. The specific criteria defining SHCs are annexed in this document. There is a move in UNRWA to move to a needs-based approach which will use abject and absolute poverty lines and the Proxy Means Testing Formula as the determining factors for the identification of SHCs.<sup>12</sup> In other words the poverty of the family level of the family will determine eligibility and not an array of other indicators as well such as is currently used.

## 5.7. Nutritional support to pregnant and lactating mothers

In addition to SHC support, pregnant and nursing mothers receive a food basket plus vitamins and dietary supplements dispensed at the UNRWA medical centre. The food parcel is made up of 1 KG sugar, 2 KGs lentils, 2 KGs rice and 1 LT of vegetable oil per month of registration to the program. It is distributed once every three months. As with SHC support, this support is nationwide and not particular to NBC refugees.

## 5.8. General NBC food basket

Since the beginning of the crisis UNRWA developed another food basket, this time targeting the whole displaced NBC population. It is formulated on the basis of a five person family and a provision of 800 Kcal per person (composition of the basket Table 3). This caloric value was defined on the assumption that an additional 1,000 Kcal will be added by the recipients in their daily consumption of bread. The basket includes dry and canned food, powder milk and cheese. However it lacks bread and fresh food like meat, vegetables and fruits, the main sources of animal protein and vitamins and minerals, which UNRWA expects the recipients to secure. The basket is distributed monthly to all the families of the NBC population, displaced and returnees, regardless of the size of the family.

Table V: Contents of general NBC Food Basket

Item	Quantity	Caloric value
1. Rice	6 Kg	21,240
2. Sugar	4 Kg	15,000
3. Whole milk ( powder )	2Kg	10,000
4. Cheese	3 Kg	10,599
5. Spaghetti	10 rolls ( 300 gm each	3,000
6. Jam	2 Kg	5,400
7. Vegetable oil	3 LT	27,000
8. Ghee	1 Kg	7,360
9. Tuna	5 cans ( 200 gm each	1,970

<sup>12</sup> UNRWA September 2006 "Special Hardship Case Programme Reform Project Options for Income Thresholds, Eligibility Criteria and Payment Schemes for SHC Families in the Occupied Palestinian Territories A Quantitative Analysis" Ibrahim M. Hejoj, Ph.D. and Adnan Badran



Item	Quantity	Caloric value
10. Luncheon meat	4 Cans 500gm	8,266
11. Lentil	2 Kg	7,020
12. Fava Beans	2 Kg	1,480
13. Chick peas	2 Kg	1,480
14. White beans	2 Kg	1,695
15. Salt	500 gm	
16. Tomato paste	10 cans ( 70 gm each	588
17. Tea	0.5 Kg	

Total Kcal / Family / Month 122,100

Total Kcal / Person / Month 24,420

Total Kcal / Person / Day 814

The above food basket is calculated for a family of 5, however it is given to all families regardless of the size of the family. This is a basic yet critical observation. Clearly people with larger families or have more than five dependants are disadvantaged. It is recommended that there is more flexibility in the basket size which takes into account larger families. (See section 2.1.4 Intervention and family size)

### **5.9. Distribution of the general NBC food basket**

The food basket is distributed from a number of fixed points where people come to claim it. Each claimant has an UNRWA identification card with a unique ID number. Distribution happens over a number of days with different numbers eligible over different days. Distribution does not always happen the same day of the month.

## 6. FOOD SECURITY OF IDP REFUGEES

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This report contains two sections which relate to food security of the IDPs of NBC. This section does not detail the research results but is a discourse on the overall issue and identifies the areas where research was needed. The research results are found in section 8 Research Data and Analysis.

For the purposes of this study, we are dividing food security into three main areas of analysis: availability, access and utilisation.

### **6.1. Availability**

All accounts are confirmed by the market survey that there is currently no problem of availability of food. The shops are close at hand and are very well stocked with fresh vegetables, fruit, and an abundance of other local and imported products throughout the year.

The team has determined that the availability of food is not an issue for the IDPs of NBC.

### **6.2. Access**

Access to food has been assessed as the key constraint with regards to food security for the IDPs of NBC. Whilst the food is available at markets (see section above), the price of the food is beyond the reach of many. Therefore access to food for those with little money is greatly restricted.

It is incredibly difficult to assess the exact income of people. It is clear that different families will have different coping mechanisms. Some families have members working outside Lebanon sending remittances to the family; however it is impossible to gauge how much money is sent, which will clearly vary depending on the job of the person overseas, the country they are in, and the individual sending the money. In addition it has been recently reported that some Arab countries which used to give work visas to Palestinians are now not doing so, thus further reducing the opportunity for them to work overseas.

Other families have been able to re-establish some of their small informal industries; however these are now relying on a smaller customer base and higher overheads (such as rent). Most of these industries are informal and therefore again it will be very difficult if not impossible to ascertain the revenue

In addition to a fall in income, people all over Lebanon, are affected by the national level rise in food prices, reducing further their ability to access food. (See section 4 NBC Refugee Status)

### **6.3. Utilisation**

This is an urban population with access to clean water and adequate sanitation. There are no reports of significant malnutrition, water-borne diseases or diarrhoea amongst children. Storage facilities are limited and only a few households have functioning fridges. Nevertheless, nutrition and hygiene awareness is high and a variety of foods are cooked on a

daily basis. Infants are breast fed up to the age of six months. Powdered milk is mixed with either boiled or bottled water.

### **6.3.1. Nutrition and hygiene**

“There have been no cases of malnutrition among the population of Nahr el-Bared Camp whether during displacement or after return. Data on the number of growth retarded children is collected on a monthly basis. There were 1782 children below the age of three years under supervision at Nahr el-Bared clinic at the end of 2007; only 1.5% had growth retardation. This compares with 2.8% at Beddawi clinic and 2.4% field-wide.

The occurrence of outbreaks of communicable diseases is under strict surveillance, where data on the incidence of communicable diseases are reported on a daily basis to the Field Office. No outbreaks of food-borne or water-borne diseases were reported since the onset of the crisis. It is worth noting that coordination is being made with all stakeholders in this respect.

UNRWA does not collect data on micronutrient deficiencies, except iron (anaemia). The prevalence of anaemia was 24% among pregnant women and children below the age of three years. The figure for pregnant women is the same as that field-wide and that for children is lower than the field’s average. It is worth noting that UNRWA is implementing programmes for prevention of iron deficiency anaemia and Vitamin A deficiency.

Before the crisis NBC had nine, currently accessible water wells in the camp. Water was tested at the time of return and found to be of good quality. A few weeks later the routine testing revealed that three of the wells were contaminated. These wells are currently under rehabilitation. Water from the wells and the distribution system is tested daily for chlorine content and bi-weekly for bacteria by ACTED and Islamic Relief in close coordination with UNRWA. All the water distributed to Beddawi camp and the areas adjacent to Nahr el-Bared camp come from UNRWA wells in both locations.”<sup>13</sup>

Whilst it is clear that the current nutritional status of people is not alarming, one major concern for the future is the lack of availability of fridges for many of the IDPs. With summer approaching this will affect the shelf life of food they have in the house.

#### **6.3.1.1. Caloric intake**

Ideally the size of the food basket should conform in calorific terms to the WFP international standard of 2100 Kcal per person per day. Currently the basket contains 814 Kcal showing a shortfall of 1286 Kcal per person. The basket was calculated with the assumption that everyone has access to bread which would give the total caloric value 1814 Kcal. While people are not malnourished the study determined their current level of food consumption is adequate, with only 1.7% registering as borderline.

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<sup>13</sup> All the above information in the nutrition section was obtained from and email from Jamil Yusef, MD, MPH Chief Field Health Programme UNRWA, Lebanon

### **6.3.2. Awareness**

UNRWA is conducting nutritional awareness campaigns in the community. Anecdotally the mission found a good awareness on the need for fresh vegetables and foods high in vitamins as well as the special nutritional needs of pregnant women. Other organisations including local NGOs are conducting both hygiene and nutritional awareness campaigns.

## 7. COPING STRATEGIES

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As explained earlier the violence and destruction in NBC caused people to flee with very few belongings. There have been a number of different ways people have coped with the trauma which has impacted on their food security. This was of key interest to the study in phase II. Whilst there is sufficient data to suggest that people have not fallen into malnutrition now further information is needed about people's coping strategies.

Immediately after the start of the conflict there was a flood of assistance. Many local and international organisations and political parties supplied assistance in the form of money, food and other items such as clothes. While the shelling of NBC was continuing and the topic was in the political spotlight, there was much support. However, as is often the case, as the issue lost its news worthiness the support dwindled. A further description of this support is detailed below.

### **7.1. Money from Donors**

As an example, UAE and Saudi Arabia provided US \$ 1,300 to each family in a one-off distribution. In addition the PLO provided US\$ 1,000

Money was distributed to different people who supported or were members of different political parties in Lebanon. It is difficult to evaluate how much was distributed to how many. However this support is not considered significant.

### **7.2. Food and clothes**

Hot meals were served for several months to the IDPs of NBC, organised by political parties and NGOs in Lebanon. In addition to food, clothes, toiletries and other support was given by government, political parties, international and local NGOs. Between May and December 2007 hot meals, bread distribution, vegetables, etc... This means that the refugees used to cover their food intake from a variety of sources.

### **7.3. Situation of non-UNRWA support**

An important factor to note at this stage is that there are few, remaining organisations providing material support to the IDPs of NBC. Those NOGs which remain active, provide soft or non-material support. Moreover the IDPs are expected to remain displaced in temporary housing until the Camp is rebuilt, which will take, according to UNRWA planners, a minimum of three years for some families. This means that whilst they may well have been relying on support as a coping mechanism to provide for their nutritional needs, now that this support is largely withdrawn (with the exception of UNRWA) their vulnerability to food insecurity has increased.

#### **7.4. Other resources**

Whilst the vast majority of people lost everything except for what they were wearing and what they were able to carry, a very small number had bank accounts or assets outside NBC. It is very difficult to quantify how many people have such assets and how much they have. We have good information about the situation before the fighting.

Other assets include people who owed money from people outside NBC. However there have been many reports of this money not being repaid because of the violent events. Conversely, there are people from NBC who had bought things such as furniture and electrical goods on instalment, which are now destroyed but the outstanding instalments are still being repaid.

#### **7.5. UNRWA cash support**

UNRWA currently provides cash support to Special Hardship Cases (\$10 a quarter per person). It also pays US\$200 per family per month as a rental subsidy for families who are renting. For some people this is the only regular source of income now that their regular sources of income are lost. This will be taken into account during the study of coping mechanisms.

## 8. RESEARCH DATA AND ANALYSIS

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### 8.1. Outcome of Focus Group discussion

The focus group discussions were aimed at answering four main questions. In addition the focus groups and the questionnaire are an acknowledgment of the need for participation and feedback from the Palestinian IDPs of NBC in the makeup of the food basket provided to them. It is clear from this report, and the factors analysed in the assessment that preference is in no way the sole determinant of the composition of the food basket however, preference and feedback will be taken into account with the other factors mentioned in the report and with the realities and constraints faced by UNRWA.

In addition to answering the four main questions that the focus group discussions were designed to answer, additional pertinent information was obtained and will be discussed below.

#### 8.1.1. Overall idea on the cost of feeding a family

It was found that an idea on the cost of feeding a family was not easy to obtain. Whilst information was collected during two different focus group discussions, much of it was difficult to verify and in many cases contradictory. Variables such as; size of family, food preference, and the fact that returnees to NBC adjacent area received bread, meat and vegetables from Fatah during the last few weeks, skewed results.

The information on the cost of feeding a family was going to be used as a benchmark for the monitoring system. However a market survey of the areas where the Palestinians buy food will give an accurate indication of current food prices. The information from the market survey will be incorporated into the monitoring system and will serve the same purpose. (See market survey submitted as a separate document)

The other use for the information on cost of feeding a family was to help inform on the effect that the value of the food package has on the family. However this effect was captured in other ways by eliciting responses on the reliance on the food basket.

#### 8.1.2. In-depth discussion on coping strategies and vulnerability

A large amount of data was gathered on coping strategies and vulnerability. A synthesis of this concludes that coping strategies have been stretched to a limit. Any assets that were salvaged such as jewellery have been sold. One off payments have been spent.

Some of those who have found it particularly hard to cope have been those who were relatively well off before the fighting. Being used to a fridge, multiple rooms in the house, constant electricity, automatic washing machines, computers and other basic comforts it is hard for them to adjust to very cramped conditions, in frequent electricity, and no electrical items. This directly affects cooking which has had to drastically change. Changes include the use of wood, having to cook all food on one gas ring only, and a reliance on the UNRWA food basket which greatly determines what will be eaten.

### 8.1.3. A cash component

There was a clear and unanimous finding on the issue of a cash component to the food basket. Substitution of a food item for cash was not preferred because of the rising prices. The proviso to this was that all the food items be essential and therefore used by the recipients. If items are sold they are always sold for less than the market value, thus it is important that all items provided are used. However all respondents in all the focus groups agreed that if the food basket was filled with essential items in sufficient quantity and of sufficient quality then it would be better for them to receive the goods in kind as opposed to in cash.

The study considers this finding definitive and this is expressed in the recommendations section of this report.

### 8.1.4. Preferences on the Content of the Food Basket

Much information was gained through the focus group discussions on the preferences of the content of the food basket. In summary it was agreed by all that the food basket should contain only basic items such as rice, milk, oil etc. the value of the other items such as tins of tuna, tins of meat should be used to increase the amounts of the basic items. This is further supported with quantitative data from the questionnaire.

## 8.2. Quantitative research Data

The respondents for the survey were overwhelming women or both men and women 78.5%. This bias was intentional as women are predominantly the knowledge bearers of much of the information contained in the questionnaire. The sample size was 420 families which equals 8 percent of the population and is therefore a comfortable and statistically significant sample of the population.

Table VI Male / Female Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Father	57	13.6
Mother	274	65.4
Both	55	13.1
Other	33	7.9
Total	419	100.0
Missing	1	0.2
Total	420	100.0

The address of the respondents reflects some logistical limitations. The survey was conducted in NBC adjacent area Beddawi Camp and Beddawi adjacent area. There are a number of families who are from NBC and do not live in those areas and they reflect more than the 12% of other address however not significantly more.

Table VII Address of respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
NBC adjacent area	120	29	29
Beddawi Camp	124	30	30



	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Beddawi Camp adjacent area	124	30	30
Other	50	12	12
Total	418	100	100
Missing	2	0	
Total	420	100	

### 8.3. Demographic Information

The demographic information conformed to demographic data from other studies conducted by Fafo and UNRWA data such as SHC lists. The data is as follow:

Table VIII Population pyramid (n=420)

	Frequency	Percent
Male Less than 5 years	140	<b>7%</b>
Female Less than 5 years	104	<b>5%</b>
Male 5 - 17 Years	353	<b>17%</b>
Female 5 - 17 Years	335	<b>16%</b>
Male 18 - 59 Years	562	<b>26%</b>
Female 18 - 59 Years	550	<b>26%</b>
Male Greater than 59 Years	46	<b>2%</b>
Female Greater than 59 Years	41	<b>2%</b>

Table IX Housing type

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Individual Renting	133	32	32
Shared Rental Flat	138	33	33
Individual Garage rental	38	9	9
Shared Garage Rental	5	1	1
UNRWA Temporary Accommodation	42	10	10
Other	64	15	15
Total	420	100	100

Table X SHC registered

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	107	25	26
No	311	74	74
Total	418	100	100
Missing	2	0	
Total	420	100	

## 8.4. Income and coping strategies

The survey looked at the main sources of income for the IDPs of NBC, the results are shown as a percent of respondents where n=420

Table XI Main sources of income

	Main source in %	Minor Source in %
Casual labour	35.2	5.7
Remittances	8.1	10.5
Employee	21.9	1
Self employed /own shop	19	1.4
SHC money (URWWA)	10.5	14.5
Support from agencies other than UNRWA	4.5	13.6

When compared with the statistics from before the fighting<sup>14</sup> we see that the number of people engaged in wage income has fallen from 48% to 22%. Those who are self employed have dropped from 35% to 19%. We know from focus group discussions that finding casual work is very difficult at the moment which means that the 35% relying on it as a main source of income are in a precarious situation.

In addition to the above the survey revealed a staggering 62% of households in some form of debt. 39% of households had sold jewellery or other assets since the fighting started. Further coping strategies are depicted in the table below as a percent of respondents were n=420

Table XII Coping Strategies

Coping Strategy	Never	Seldom (1-3 days/ month)	Sometimes (1-3 days/week)	Often (3-6 days/ week)	Daily
Skip a meal or reduce portion size	58.5	13.2	13.2	7.4	7.7
Rely on less expensive or less preferred foods	12.7	16.7	29.4	20.8	20.3
Purchase food on credit or borrowing	70.3	11.9	9.7	2.4	5.6
Collecting wild plants	82.6	9.9	4.8	1.2	1.5

Other coping strategies that were volunteered by the respondents are listed below. Only those which were reported by five percent of the respondents are shown. In total there were 42 different coping strategies presented. (*Only 242 out of the 420 answered this question, the percentage shown is a percentage of those who answered the question i.e. of 242. The*

<sup>14</sup> Page 8 "A Socio-economic Profile of the Nahr El-Bared and Beddawi Refugee Camps of Lebanon" Based on the 2006 Labour Force Survey among Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon Åge A. Tiltnes, Fafo, 2007

*assumption here is that those who did not answer had coping strategies but these were not identified as opposed to did not have coping strategies)*

**Table XIII Other coping strategies**

Coping strategy	Percent
Support from relatives (working son/ son-in-law/ brother in law/ father)	7%
Only buy small gas bottles one at a time	10%
Cook enough food for one day only as there is no fridge	6%
Only buy the cheap food	12%
Use only basic kitchen utensils and cleaners	11%
Saving (not buying) basic items such as furniture	12%
Saving by buying cheap or used basic items such as furniture	6%
Relying on food which is distributed and reducing the quantity per portion of bought food like meat	10%
Growing some herbs and making food at home that would normally be bought to save money	14%
Using wood as fuel and using wood ovens	11%
Looking for any type of work regardless of qualifications	5%

## 8.5. Rent

Because UNRWA is paying a rental subsidy which in many families is in-part saved, there is a connection between the rental subsidy and coping strategies. The questionnaire provided data on actual rent costs, UNRWA has a list of all those receiving rental subsidy which can be correlated with those who are sharing accommodation (also supplied in the data) to see how many people are actually saving in this way. For time reasons this report has not undertaken that level of analysis. However as people are moved into UNRWA accommodation they will be losing their rental subsidy (as they do not pay rent in UNRWA accommodation). This report is concluding that for those who are saving some of the subsidy will be made more vulnerable when this “source of income” dries up.

**Table XIV Rent**

Rent in US\$	<100	100-150	150-200	200-250	>=250
% of respondents	3	34.5	40.9	10	6.7

## 8.6. Food consumption

The food consumption score is a proxy indicator that represents the energy (calories) and nutritional (macro and micro nutrient content) value of the food that people eat. It is calculated from the types of foods and the frequencies with which they are consumed over a seven day period. Using it in periodic monitoring, the tool becomes an early warning indicator, highlighting stress before actual malnutrition sets in.

While it is arguable that the nutritional level of people is good in part because they are receiving the food basket the study was not able to determine what the nutritional level would be if the food basket was stopped this was because there was no baseline information or control group to compare with. What is clear is that the actual nutritional content of the food basket is not high nor is the caloric quantity sufficient. This means that people are actually getting their nutrition and caloric values from other sources. On the other hand the monetary value of the food basket is high freeing up money so people can buy vegetables and bread etc which are not supplied in the food basket. Also the study looked at peoples coping mechanisms and has determined that they are stretched very thin. ie that the population is very vulnerable to any further shocks. Thus it would be anticipated that a stoppage of the food basket with no replacement would mean that there would be a drop in consumption levels and could lead to malnutrition but again we cannot quantify this.

Another way of putting the above is that the current nutritional value of the food basket is adequate and the population shows adequate food consumption therefore the Kcals distributed are sufficient. One could then argue that any future food basket can be calculated Using the same amount of just over 800 Kcals per person per day.

<b>Results of the food consumption score from a sample of 420 clearly indicate adequate consumption for the population as a whole.</b>			
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Borderline 21 - 35	1	0.2	0.2
Adequate Consumption > 35	419	99.8	99.8
Total	420	100.0	100.0

Following the standard analysis the food consumption score was adjusted (there is precedence of this adjustment in a WFP analysis in the Occupied Palestinian Territories). There the category ratings were adjusted so that borderline became 28-42 and adequate consumption became above 42. Further analysis will be undertaken on the 7 respondents considered borderline in these results.

<b>Results of the adjusted food consumption score still clearly indicate adequate consumption for the population as a whole. (n=420)</b>			
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Borderline 28- 42	7	1.7	1.7
Adequate Consumption > 42	413	98.3	98.3
Total	420	100.0	100.0

## 8.7. Composition of the food basket

In one respect ideally the size of the food basket should conform in calorific terms to the WFP international standard of 2100 Kcal per person per day. Currently the basket supplied contains 814 Kcal showing a shortfall of 1286 Kcal per person.

In addition using the abject poverty index, the cost of the basket would be valued at USD 1.53 per person. This would mean that the average food basket for a family of 5 would be valued at about 160 EUR per month. The current value of the food basket is about 56 US\$. It is possible to argue that, if the aim of UNRWA is to provide for the full nutritional needs of the IDPs of NBC then we should be looking to allocate the above resources to the food basket. However UNRWA's approach is more holistic than food provision alone and the allocation of resources to other areas such as job creation and improved housing is clearly a priority.

Therefore the study evaluated the level of people's dependency on the food basket. This proved to be high. This evaluation was done through focus group discussions. *It was clear that people wait for the basket every month, and that the content of the basket determines to a large extent what they eat.*

It was not possible to determine the nutritional impact of the food basket as there was no control group or baseline and to many other determining factors to draw causal relationships between the food basket and nutrition. However it is possible to say that the caloric value of the basket is sufficient as the population is well nourished and shows sufficient food consumption.

The research showed that while people are generally happy with the contents of the food basket there was a general complaint on the inclusion of fava beans, lentils and an oversupply of macaroni. The survey supported these initial conclusions and further refined and quantified the data.

The following two tables depict respondent's preferences for the contents of the food basket. Respondents were asked "Which item(s) would you take away or reduce in quantity if the value of that item was added to the rest of the basket?" The table below gives the % of respondents against an item in the existing food basket. (n=420)

Table XV Items to replace or reduce

Item	% replace	% Less quantity
1. Rice	1	1
2. Sugar	0	0
3. Whole milk ( powder )	0	0.2
4. Cheese ( spread creamy )	15.2	4.8
5. Spaghetti	13.1	29.5
6. Jam	36.2	12.4
7. Vegetable oil	0	0.5

Item	% replace	% Less quantity
8. Samna	11.4	4
9. Tuna	7.1	5
10. Luncheon meat	23.1	6.2
11. Lentil	20.7	20.2
12. Fava Beans	36.2	15.5
13. Chick peas	9	9
14. White beans	8.8	11.7
15. Salt	0.2	0.1
16. Tomato paste	0.7	1
17. Tea	3.3	4

The respondents were further asked: “To replace the items identified above would you like an increase in quantity of any of the items supplied?” (n=420)

Table XVI What to replace

Increase quantity of Item	Percent
1. Rice	50.7
2. Sugar	79.3
3. Whole milk ( powder )	66.2
4. Cheese ( spread creamy )	25.2
5. Spaghetti	7.9
6. Jam (preferable plastic jar)	8.6
7. Vegetable oil	92.4
8. Samna	19
9. Tuna	27.9
10. Luncheon meat	18.1
11. Lentil	6
12. Fava Beans	5.5
13. Chick peas	12.1
14. White beans	8.6
15. Salt	29.3
16. Tomato paste	44
17. Tea	20

Other suggestions for inclusion in the basket expressed as a percentage of those respondents who answered the question.

Table XVII Suggestions for inclusion

Suggested items for addition	Percent
Sharaaya (thin macaroni)	25%
Halva	21%
Flour	25%
Tehina	36%

In all twenty two different items were mentioned in response to the above question however the table only depicts the items which were mentioned by over 20% of the respondents.

Analysing the suggested items and comparing them with the responses on the food basket it is clear that in the opinion of the recipients the current food basket contains enough or more than enough items but that there is a strong demand for an increase in the quantities of vegetable oil 93%, sugar 79%, milk powder 66%, and rice 51%. Furthermore recipients would take out, Jam, Cheese, Luncheon (murtadila), Fava beans, Lentils and the tinned chick peas with meat (supplied in the April food basket and through the focus groups it was unanimously agreed that it was not good) and replace them with an increase in oil, sugar, milk powder and rice.

### 8.7.1. Powdered Milk

There are indications of a high level of awareness of using boiled and bottled water when mixing with milk powder. In addition there is a high level of literacy which would indicate an understanding about proportions. However there is a large body of literature which would not support the distribution of powdered milk.

It is WFP policy not to distribute powdered milk. However this study acknowledges that powdered milk is what is readily available in the area and is what is commonly consumed by the vast majority of people due to frequent electricity shortages all over the country; fresh milk is hard to conserve.

Currently if powdered milk is not distributed people would buy it from the market. It is therefore not a recommendation of this report to stop the supply of powdered milk.

### 8.7.2. Bread

Bread is consumed as a staple by everybody and is eaten every day. It is roughly estimated that an average family of five will spend about US \$ 2 on bread per day. There is a powerful argument to be made about the addition of Bread to the food basket in the event that it is found that people's food consumption is poor or boarder line. The addition of this one item (probably through a coupon system) would greatly impact on food consumption.

### 8.7.3. Flour

Flour used to be distributed by UNRWA who has now discontinued the program due to identified problems. In addition current living conditions even for those housed in UNRWA

temporary housing means that most people do not have ovens within which to bake bread. Therefore there is no recommendation to provide flour.

#### **8.7.4. Cash addition to basket**

The distribution of cash with the SHC basket has set a precedent. Any removal of this would most probably be met with frustration on the part of the recipients. Cash allows for flexibility from the recipients perspective. This report has concluded that all people are supplementing the food basket from the market with additional produce. Therefore a cash portion of the food basket would help with this. In addition cash ensures local sourcing of food and stimulates the local economy.

On the other hand, operationally cash is very difficult to track, in terms of regulating how it is spent. However more problematic than regulation, is the fact that inflation is eroding the purchasing power of cash. Therefore any cash addition to the basket must be linked with the inflation of basic food stuffs such as bread and vegetables, (in fact all items which are part of the basic diet) not supplied by the basket. In addition the cash amount should be linked to family size. This would require very flexible funding.

*The research data overwhelmingly concludes that the recipients are aware of both the inflationary cost of food and the decreasing purchasing power of cash. Recipients are not in favour of a cash substitute if they receive the equivalent in a commodity they will use.*

#### **8.7.5. Coupon addition to basket**

The coupon system provides the same positive economic elements mentioned in the section above on cash, however it is more limited. Only certain shops and bakeries will be part of the coupon program. However importantly it does shelter the recipient from inflation. It further allows for the provision of fresh vegetables and bread in the food basket. A high proportion of people's food budget is spent on bread. With rising wheat prices both locally and globally, there is a very strong argument for the provision of bread coupons.

### **8.8. Suspend the SHC program during the emergency**

The rationale for the SHC has now broken down with the emergency situation in NBC. While there are many more people who would now fall into the SHC category, (because they do not have an income) the type of support needed for the IDPs (frequency of distribution and composition of basket) calls for a different and more wide-spread response. It was in response to this need that UNRWA started its food basket program which in the immediate aftermath of the crises was needed for all IDPs. However the result of this has meant that those receiving the SHC are also now receiving the additional food basket distributed to all. WFP will recommend rationalising this situation in the recommendations section of this report.

It is therefore recommended that the Emergency food basket should supersede all other baskets including the SHC which should only be reconstituted once the IDPs return to NBC and an analysis of the situation has been undertaken.



## **8.9. Discontinuing the emergency food basket**

The above paper concludes that the displaced people from NBC are in a post-emergency situation. While it is not anticipated that this situation will dramatically improve until the camp is rebuilt and the local economy improves, the food security situation will be continuously monitored and any changes will then be reflected in the program.

Building on the above logic, the emergency NBC food basket should be continued until results of monitoring indicate an improvement in the economic situation. **Built in flexibility to the emergency food basket**

The monitoring system will include a series of indicators including the food consumption score. The food consumption score is a fast effective, if crude way of monitoring food consumption. If the food consumption score falls below the threshold then coping strategies are failing and UNRWA response would be required.

## 9. TRANSPARENCY ACCOUNTABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

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### 9.1. Transparency and Accountability

Indirectly the assessment has revealed that there is a lack of communication between UNRWA and the Palestinians in both NBC and Baddawi. While this was not a specific area of study for the assessment there is overwhelming evidence that decisions taken in UNRWA are not adequately communicated to those affected i.e. the Palestinian refugees. The contents of the emergency food basket changes from month to month and while there is a clear logic within UNRWA as to what is put in the food basket this logic is not transmitted to the UNRWA social workers and not revealed to the recipients. Consequently the recipients never know what they will find in the basket each month. This situation exposes UNRWA to numerous allegations and allows for wild rumours. Furthermore the situation weakens UNRWA's position with regards to accountability to the people it is serving.

It must be recognised that the Palestinian refugees displaced from NBC are not a homogenous community. There is no clear and legitimate representative structure, and there are many different political undercurrents. The issue of representation is further complicated by an overwhelming feeling of persecution and exploitation felt by the Palestinians. Consequently trust in any political parties, organisations or government bodies has been eroded. Unfortunately a situation has arisen in which this lack of trust is extended to UNRWA. It is considered vital that this situation is addressed by UNRWA and suggestions on how to move forward in this area are described in the recommendation section of this report.

### 9.2. Participation

As described above there are no obvious representative bodies which are apolitical or felt to be legitimately representative by the Palestinians. This complicates the issue of participation. Whilst it is clearly important that the Palestinians are involved in decisions like the contents of the food basket, it is also important that they are aware of the constraints and realities faced by UNRWA. This assessment was a step in the direction of consultation however more systematic and regular approaches to participation are advocated in the recommendation section of the report. All recommended approaches fully acknowledge the fact that there is no indigenous system of representation and that the formation of committees will inevitably become politicised. It is clear that UNRWA will have to continue to be very aware of the political minefield that is the Palestinian reality, and continue to avoid playing into the hands of any political faction or party.

## 10. MONITORING SYSTEM

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This report has proposed the option of substitution of the food basket intervention with a ration card or coupon system. However such a system would require further study and indeed the monitoring of that system would be an integral part of its application ensuring as little “leakage” as possible. The construction of such a system is beyond the remit of this paper. However it would be part of any application for funding and would have to be researched at the same time as the design of the ration card system. A local (Lebanese) NGO called The Popular Aid for Relief and Development previously implemented a ration card system in Beddawi camp which has now been discontinued, it is recommended that if the intervention is seriously entertained, then they should be interviewed and lessons learned should be built upon.

The following monitoring system is designed for a food basket intervention. It is applicable to any food basket whether its contents are determined by caloric provision or economic subsidy.

The system is designed to inform UNRWA on the need for a change in the food basket. A monitoring form is attached as Annex IV to this document. The monitoring system is designed to be easy to implement but at the same time give reliable and immediate information on the food consumption status of the population. In addition it will monitor food preference and if there is an oversupply of any items. It is suggested that the monitoring form should be used every 2 months and a random sample of 60 recipients should be interviewed. (Approximately 2 forms filled out by each of the 30 social workers.)

The forms will be collected and analysed at UNRWA field office (in Beirut) so that the analysis can be used in the bi-monthly monitoring meetings outlined below.

Alongside the use of the monitoring form, price increases in basic food stuffs should be monitored. This is detailed further in this chapter.

### 10.1. Regular monitoring meetings

In addition to, and informed by, the data supplied by the monitoring of prices and the food security monitoring form, regular monitoring meetings within RSSP should take place. These meetings will be central to the monitoring strategy and will discuss the appropriate response needed by UNRWA (if any). The meetings should be as regular as the distribution of the food basket, be that every month, or once every two months. After the feedback is obtained through the monitoring form and the data entered (a few days after the distribution) the meeting should be convened. Decisions on the composition of the next food basket should be made in the meeting which will enable all the social workers to understand the rationale behind a change in content.

Below are some guidelines on how to respond to information obtained through the monitoring system. These guidelines are meant to guide the discussions in the regular meetings and are not absolute. The information which will be used in the meeting as a platform for discussion is:

1. Over supply of an item

2. Under supply of an item
3. Food preference
4. External market information
5. Feedback from the social workers
6. Distribution constraints
7. Purchasing constraints
8. Budgeting

Information on the last three subjects on the above list will be supplied by UNRWA staff members who could possibly be involved in the meetings themselves or supply it in report format.

Below are suggestions to guide the monitoring of the first four of the above subjects:

## **10.2. Response required to information obtained from monitoring**

### **10.2.1. Food preference**

If more than 40% of respondents give negative feedback on a particular item then this item should be substituted with more of another desired item in the basket

### **10.2.2. Over supply of an item**

If more than 40% of respondents report leftovers from a particular item then this item should be reduced in quantity and the (caloric or financial) value saved substituted with more of another desired item in the basket. This information should be cross-referenced with information on the size of the family and the size of the basket.

### **10.2.3. Food consumption score response**

As explained above the food consumption score can be used to gage over all food consumption however it can also be aggregated by food group. As the overall level of consumption can taken as sufficient for the whole population this tool will be more useful to be analysed by food group and plotted as a trend over time.

### **10.2.4. Plotting food consumption by food groups**

Every time the data is collected from a random group of about sixty respondents it should be entered by food group and tracked over a period of time. This will give information on the changes in food consumption. Here we are looking at the trends rather than the score achieved. A fall in the consumption of a particular food group may mean that targeting that food group in the basket or in some other way enabling the population to access that food group may well be recommended.

### **10.2.5. Over all food consumption score**

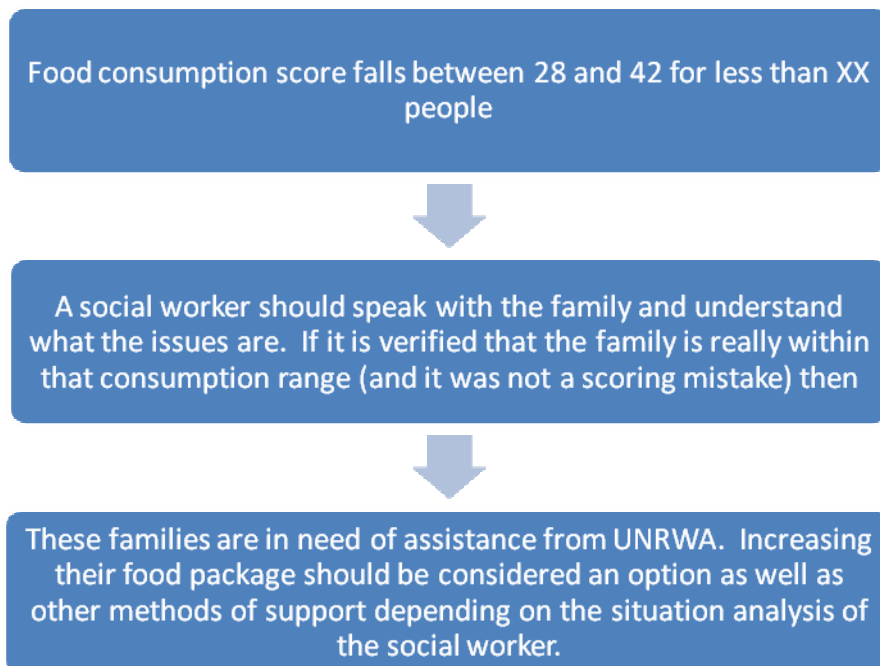
As a bench mark for over all consumption the below flow charts present responses to the overall consumption score. Internationally WFP uses a standard score of 35 and above as an adequate consumption, however in the Occupied Palestinian Territories they have corrected

the overall score to be 42. Therefore it has been deemed appropriate that we adopt this score as the population is similar in Lebanon.

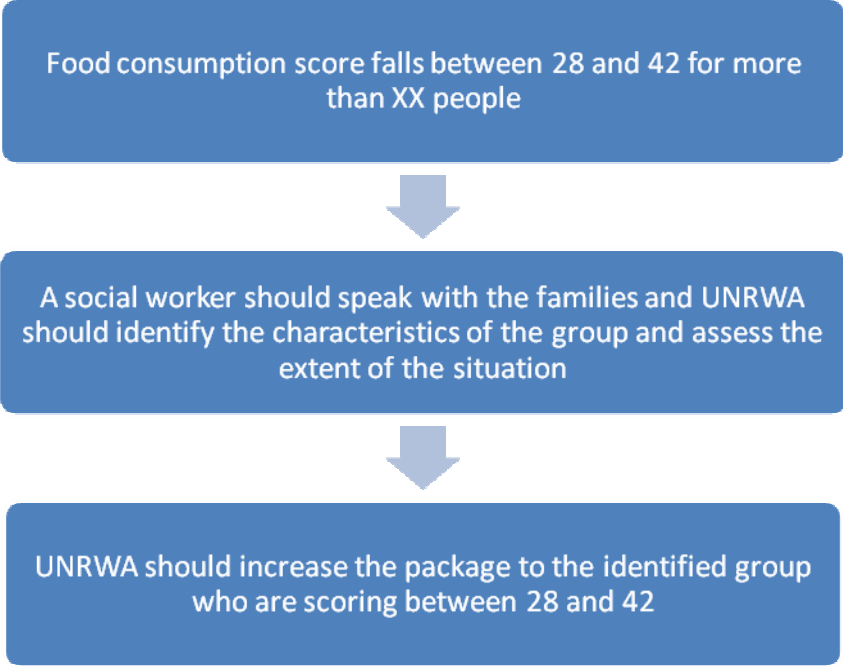
In the case that all respondents give a food score of over 42



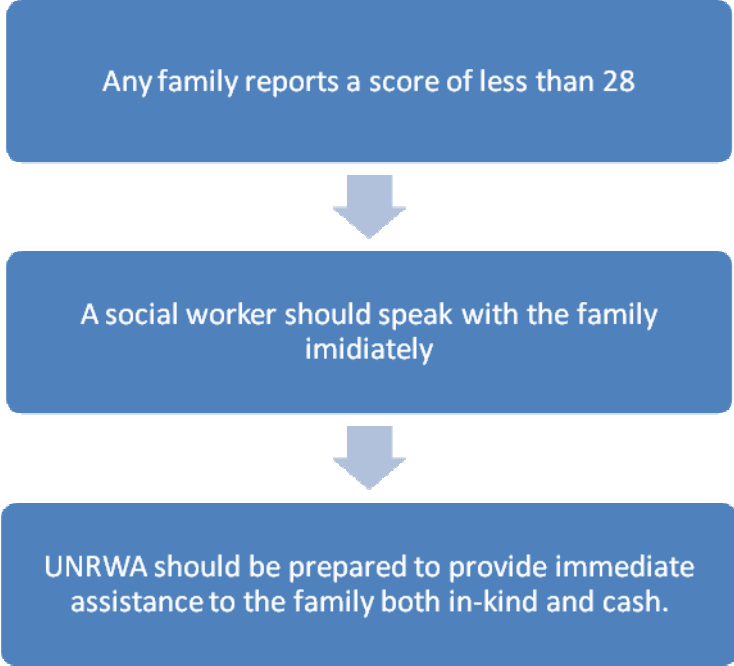
In the case that a small number (number to be defined by UNRWA with the social workers) of families give a score of between 28 and 42



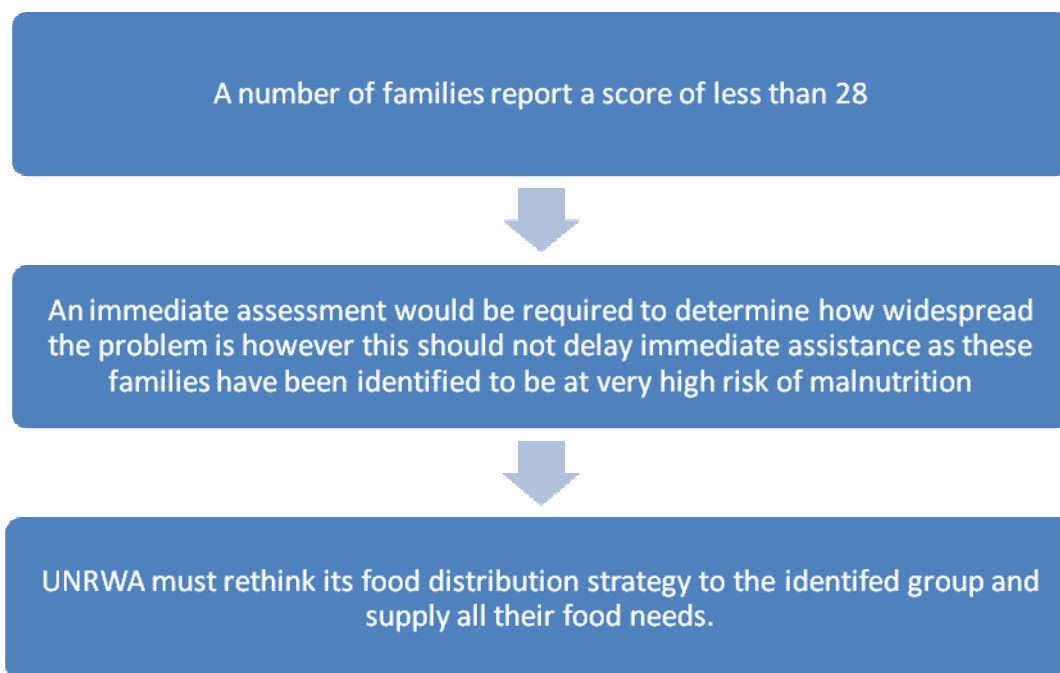
In the case that a large number (defined by UNRWA) of families give a score of between 28 and 42



In the case that ANY family is falling below 28



If a number of families report a score of less than 28

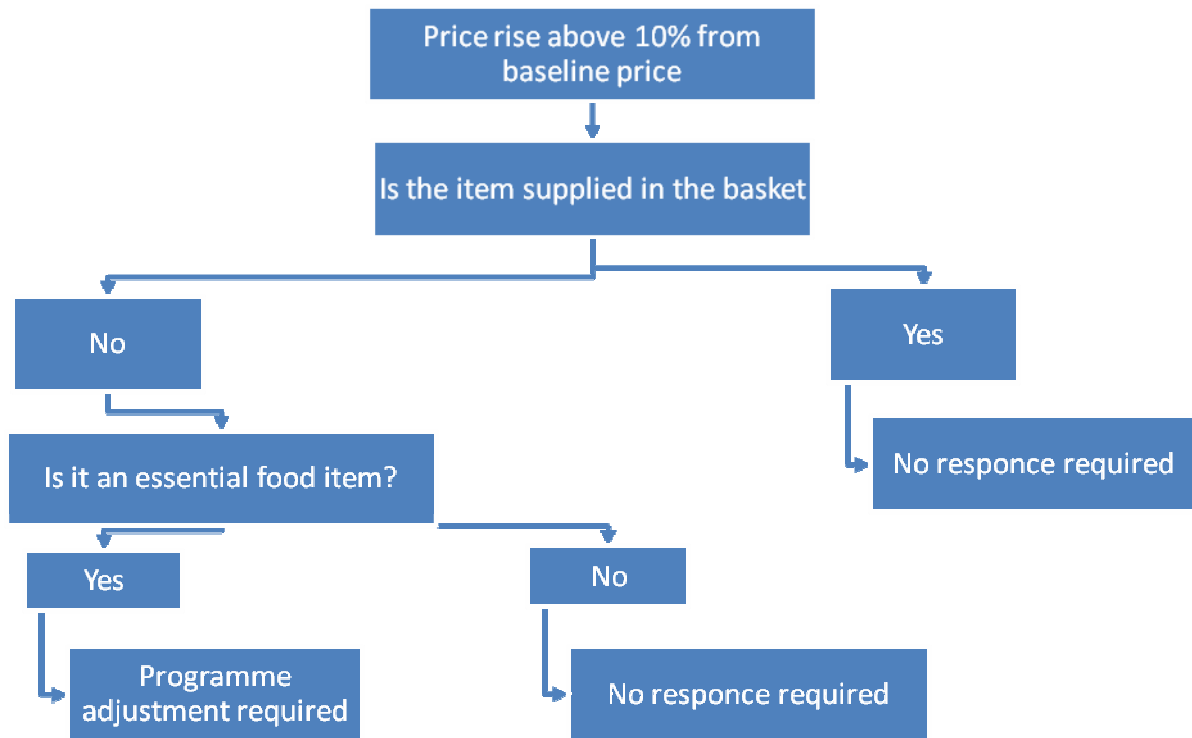


### 10.3. External Market price Increases

This study has conducted a market survey of the area where the target group purchase their food. This study can be considered a baseline for monitoring purposes. It is recommended that prices of the below list of items be monitored regularly. The complete survey is submitted as a separate document and can be used if there is a major change in over all prices. However for ease of use the number of items monitored can be reduced to the essential list below

Item	Quantity	Cost in LL
Sugar	1 kg	1000
Egyptian rice	1 kg	2000
Bulge wheat	1kg	1500
Sun flower oil	A bottle of (1 litre)	2250
Whole milk Powder	Bag of 900 grams	9500
Bread	900 gram bag containing 10 loves	1000
Chickpeas	1 kg	2000
Yogurt	1 kg	1750

**10.3.1. If the price of basic food stuffs increases above 10%:**





## **WFP technical support to UNRWA and other UN agencies**

The UNRWA medium term plan 2005-2009 focuses on four mutually reinforcing and flexible objectives: to achieve parity of UNRWA services with host authority and international standards; to address the needs of the most vulnerable refugees; to maximize the economic potential of refugees; and to build capacity within UNRWA.<sup>15</sup>

With the above in mind UNRWA requested technical assistance from WFP in assessing the food security situation of the IDPs from Nahr El Bared Camp and the role of food aid (food basket) as a response option. This mandate is complimented by WFPs Strategic Objective 3: Restore and rebuild lives and livelihoods in post-conflict, post-disaster or transition situations. The WFP Regional Office in Cairo is increasingly engaged in joint assessments with UN agencies.

In addition WFP will develop a food security assessment component to the UNRWA socio-economic survey of the Palestinian communities in the area.

Furthermore, WFP will lend technical support to the UNDP and ILO who are conducting a socio-economic survey in the surrounding area of NBC. WFP will add a food security component to the survey instrument whilst UNRWA will coordinate with ILO and UNDP in implementing the surveys.

## **TOR**

A joint WFP/UNRWA assessment mission to Lebanon was conducted between 5<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> March 2007. The mission assessed food security of Palestinians displaced due to the Nahr el-Bared Camp conflict of 2007. The Mission completed Phase I, consisting of a Rapid Appraisal, of which the following report is an outcome. Phase II will consist of a study of the Nahr el-Bared population in April 2007, and a final report with recommendations.

WFP is in the process of carrying out a food security assessment of Nahr el-Bared Camp (NBC) returnees and IDPs, which aims to:

- Assess the food support and intervention carried out by UNRWA, both in terms of quantity, composition, and calorific intake;
- Assess whether the basket is appropriate and adequate to the needs of refugees taking into consideration their current socio-economic context.

The following activities are proposed within the context of the mission:

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<sup>15</sup>This document is available on the UNRWA website. <http://www.un.org/unrwa/publications/index.html>

1. In collaboration with UNWRA, conduct a rapid assessment to determine the food security situation of returnees and displaced people. Identify sources of incomes, major expenses, diet, shortage, coping mechanisms and response options.
2. Review of the food basket in terms of adequacy and compliance with international norms; the NBC displaced and returnees' purchasing capacity; and livelihood quality.
3. To analyse the justification for continued food support and provide recommendations to the Department of Relief and Social Services (a department within UNRWA).
4. To propose a food monitoring scheme, including indicators, to be followed by UNRWA at central (headquarter) and field (camp) levels.
5. Depending on outcome and recommendations of rapid assessment, conduct a household survey

With the objective to assist and guide the Department of Relief and Social Services (RSSD) in planning the food provision, the mission shall pay particular attention to the following

- Changes needed in food ration/ basket,
- Factors (economic, market prices, political stability, other) to be monitored,
- Human resources needed to implement this plan (e.g. food aid monitors, update of food planning, post distribution monitoring etc.)

## **The objectives of this report**

This report briefly describes the situation of the IDPs from Nahr el-Bared Camp. It will summarise the findings of the initial mission conducted by WFP to UNRWA in Lebanon and the IDPs themselves. The initial mission identified key issues which need further examination before recommendations are posited. These key issues will be highlighted in this report and a methodology will be defined for the research needed to answer them (phase II of the mission).

The mission succeeded in defining the parameters of the proposed study as well as contextualising the assessment. This report aims to clarify how WFP will analyse the food security situation of the displaced refugees and describe the factors which will be taken into account when presenting recommendations for UNRWA food support.

## **Methodology of phase I**

In response to a request for technical assistance from UNWRA, WFP provided a team of assessors consisting of Regional Assessment Officer, an international consultant and a local consultant. The team conducted a secondary literature review, which included but was not limited to:

- UNRWA Website <http://www.un.org/unrwa/english.html>
- “Characteristics of Displaced Palestinian Refugees from the Nahr El-Bared Refugee Camp Business survey” A Report to UNRWA and ILO, Åge A. Tiltnes, Fafo December 2007
- Email correspondence with various UNRWA staff, notably with the Chief of Field Relief and Social Services Department
- “NBC Damaged/Destroyed Business Survey” Draft report for UNRWA, Fadia Y. Jradi January, 2008

- “Country of Lebanon Humanitarian and Emergency Qualitative Assessment”, Palestinian Crisis Response. Maya Assaf, Program Officer, World Vision Lebanon, World Vision August 2007
- “Situation Analysis and Needs Assessment” Nahr al Bared War. Nabaá – Development Action without Borders, July 2007
- Relief Services Instructions No. 1/2007 (Special Hardship Case Regulations)
- “Needs Assessment of the Vulnerable Palestinian Families Post July 2006 War on Lebanon” From the perspective of the refugee families themselves, UNWRA publication with funding from the government of Denmark.
- “A Socio-economic Profile of the Nahr El-Bared and Beddawi Refugee Camps of Lebanon” Based on the 2006 Labour Force Survey among Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon, Åge A. Tiltnes, Fafo, 2007.

The team interviewed key UNWRA Staff including but not limited to the following:

- Director of UNRWA Affairs, Lebanon
- Deputy Director of UNRWA Affairs, Lebanon
- Chief Field Relief & Social Services Program
- Senior Poverty Advisor (head office Amman)
- Deputy Field Procurement & Logistics Officer
- Supply Control Officer
- Project Manager North Lebanon Area
- Deputy Project Manager
- Field Social Services Officer
- Income Generation Officer
- Area Officer, North Lebanon
- Field Relief Services Officer
- Social Workers

In addition to UNWRA staff the team held interviews with

- UNDP
- ILO
- Director The Popular Aid for Relief and Development (local NGO)
- Head of NGO coordination committee for NBC relief and development

The Team conducted group interviews in the field with the following:

- Social Workers
- Male group in NBC
- Female group in NBC
- Male group in Beddawi
- Female group in Beddawi
- UNRWA Field staff
- Informal household interviews

Finally the team inspected some of the conditions the IDPs were living in, including concrete houses; prefab school and houses, mosques, garages.

## **Methodology of Phase II**

A combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis will be used to answer the above questions.

### **Questionnaire**

The quantitative analysis focused on people's food security and their coping strategies. An attempt will be made to simplify the process as much as possible. The "food consumption score" will be used as a tool to quantify food security and give it a rating. In addition to food security the main questions which will be asked will aim at determining the following:

1. Demographic information (size of household)
2. Current accommodation (type)
3. Main source of income – if any
4. Is there any debt
5. Expenditure
6. Food consumption score
7. Is there other support and how fragile / sustainable is it (coping strategies)

A random sample of 420 households was taken from UNRWA's list of households. This is 8% of the total target group and is therefore a statistically significant sample (with a margin of error). The respondents to the questionnaire were predominantly women in the household as they are the ones who are involved with food preparation.

UNRWA social workers were used for data collection. Data input was done by UNRWA and analysis by WFP.

A copy of the questionnaire is attached (Annex II)

## **Focus-group discussions**

Six focus group discussions were carried out on the 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of March. Focus group discussions were undertaken with "the people that cook" in the household. They discussed how they use each item in the food basket looking at the flexibility of the product supplied, how long the quantity supplied lasts them and if they have to buy more than what is given. Also the focus groups asked about what other foods are supplemented to the food basket, how much in quantity and cost. Food preferences and the impact of seasons on food choices was also be captured.

## **Focus group objectives**

1. Overall idea on the cost of feeding a family broken down into item-groups such as vegetables, etc (this will be used as a baseline to track inflation and costs of items will be double checked in the local market)
2. In-depth discussion on coping strategies and vulnerability

3. Feedback on the concept of substituting some of the value of the food basket into a cash component.
4. Feedback on preferences to the content of the food basket (including seasonal preferences)

### **Composition of the focus group discussions**

The groups were mainly made up of women as they are the best informants on food related issues. In addition a large number of the participants were SHC so already identified before the fighting as particularly vulnerable families.

Threshold for admission into SHC program

In accordance with Para 7.1 of RSI 1/2007 "the total regular family monthly income combined from all sources including regular income of working females does not exceed 2/3 of the gross remuneration of an Area staff member grade 01 step 01 with the same number of dependants up to seven children".

Family Composition	Salary + IEA	Wife Dependency Allowance	Child Dependency Allowance	Total Monthly Salary	2/3 of Monthly Salary
HOF - Head of	733,141	-	-	733,141	488,760
HOF + wife	733,141	60,000	-	793,141	528,760
HOF + child	733,141	-	33,000	766,141	510,760
Parents + 1 child	733,141	60,000	33,000	826,141	550,760
HOF + 2 children	733,141	-	66,000	799,141	532,760
Parents + 2 children	733,141	60,000	66,000	859,141	572,760
HOF + 3 children	733,141	-	99,000	832,141	554,760
Parents + 3 children	733,141	60,000	99,000	892,141	594,760
HOF + 4 children	733,141	-	132,000	865,141	576,760
Parents + 4 children	733,141	60,000	132,000	925,141	616,760
HOF + 5 children	733,141	-	165,000	898,141	598,760
Parents + 5 children	733,141	60,000	165,000	958,141	638,760
HOF + 6 children	733,141	-	198,000	931,141	620,760
Parents + 6 children	733,141	60,000	198,000	991,141	660,760
HOF + 7 children	733,141	-	231,000	964,141	642,760
Parents + 7 children	733,141	60,000	231,000	1,024,141	682,760

**NB** Age of dependent child 18 - 25 yrs for student.

Extract from UNRWA document "Relief Services Instruction 1/2007"

**7. CRITERIA FOR ENROLMENT IN THE SPECIAL HARDSHIP ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME**

7.1 A registered refugee family, a non-registered wife married to a registered person, a registered wife married to a non-registered person and their descendants, as well as adopted children may qualify, upon application (Annex 1) for enrolment in the special hardship assistance programme provided:

- 1 There is no male adult between the ages of 19 and 60 years who is listed on the same registration card (unless he qualifies for assistance under any of paras 7.1.4 to 7.1.7 of this Instruction);
- 2 The total regular family monthly income combined from all sources including regular income of working females does not exceed two-thirds of the gross remuneration of an Area Staff member Grade 01 Step 01 with the same number of dependents up to seven children. (See section above on UNRWA salary grades and steps)
- 3 Family is living in extreme distress and residing within an UNRWA's area of operations.

That one or more of the following eight categorical criteria are met:

7.1.1 Family headed by a refugee or non refugee widow, divorcee, or a woman abandoned for more than three months, or by an unmarried woman (19 years or more of age) (category 'W') or

7.1.2 Family headed by an orphan, male or female, under 19 years of age where both parents are deceased; or father deceased and mother married to a registered or non-registered person or a mother who abandoned her children (category 'O'); or

7.1.3 A male or female head of family who has completed 60 years of age and over (category 'A'). When the exact month of birth is unknown, the first month of the following year will be considered. (For example, if someone is born in 1940, month unknown, he/she is not eligible until January 2001); or

7.1.4 A male head of family or other male over the age of 19 years detained for a period exceeding three months, upon release, assistance will continue during a grace period not exceeding six months from the date of release (category 'I'); or

7.1.5 A male head of family or other male adult over the age of 19 years serving a term of compulsory military service exceeding three months (category 'C'); or

7.1.6 A male head of family or other male adult following a full-time course of study at a recognized educational establishment, up to the end of the fourth post-secondary school year or the award of the first recognized degree or the individual's 25<sup>th</sup> birthday, whichever is the earlier, followed by a grace period of six months after formal graduation (category 'E').

\* See Annex (22) for further Instructions on the eight categories

However, families of students who do not successfully pass two consecutive academic years of their studies after they are above 19 years of age, should not continue to receive special hardship assistance under (E) category. Special hardship assistance may be extended for two years only to special hardship families where the male adult justifying classification in the "E" category has been awarded a first recognized degree, provided the following two conditions are met:

7.1.6.1 The subject of specialization of the first University degree is in a teaching-related subject i.e. Arabic, English, and History, Islamic Education, Math, Science and the graduates of Medicine/law who require additional compulsory training in order to be certified as general physicians / lawyers.

7.1.6.2 Enrolment is of a maximum of two years (in fields where one year is not enough) duration in a full- time post-graduate course of study in Education at a recognized educational institution. No grace period will be allowed beyond graduation or the additional two years, whether the student graduates or not.

7.1.7 A male head of family or other male adult who is permanently physically disabled or suffers from permanent mental disorder or who is suffering from a medical condition that renders him permanently incapable of working (category 'M'). Para (17) to this instruction refers for details.

7.1.8 The Area/camp Relief and Social Services Officer shall have the authority to register any family as a special hardship case which does not fall within the listed sub-paragraphs 7.1.1-7.1.7 but which merits registration as a special hardship case (category "Z").

7.2 If a family qualifies under two of the categories listed in sub-paragraphs 7.1.1 to 7.1.7 one category of which is "male or female head of family 60 years of age and over", and if there is no other male adult registered on the same registration card who qualifies for assistance in his own right, then the family shall be registered under sub-paragraph 7.1.3. However, if there are two or more male adults registered on the same registration card who qualify for assistance, the family should be registered under the category of the male adult who becomes disqualified for assistance within a shorter period of time.



The information gained from this questionnaire will be used to inform UNRWA in its design of food aid assistance. The information will not be used for any other purpose and all information is strictly confidential.

**1. Background**

1.1. Date of interview

1.2. Enumerators name

1.3. Head of household name

1.4. Sex (tick one)

1.5. Address

1.6. Are you registered as SHC (tick one)

Male	Female	
Adjacent area	Beddawi	Other
Yes	No	

**2. House Type and Demographics**

2.1. Please tick one of the following:

Rented Room in flat	Rented Flat	Rented Garage	School	UNRWA temporary accommodation	Mosque	Other

2.2. Number of people in your family

Sex	Age in Years			
	<5	5-17	18-59	>=60
Male				
Female				

2.3. Is any member of your family suffering from disability

Yes	No
-----	----

2.4. Do you pay rent? (tick one)

Yes	No
-----	----

2.5. How much rent do you pay (tick one)

<100	100-150	150-200	200-250	>=250

2.6. Do you share accommodation with another family? (tick one)

Yes	No
-----	----

### 3. Income

3.1. What is your main source of income presently? (Tick more than one if appropriate)

	Main source	Minor Source
Casual labour		
Remittances		
Services		
Own a shop or business		
SHC money		
Pension / allowance		
Support from agencies other than UNRWA		
Other (specify)		

3.2. Do you receive a monthly rental subsidy of US\$200

Yes	No
-----	----

3.3. Is your household in Debt?

Yes	No
-----	----

3.4. If in debt what are the main reasons for debt? (if more than one then number them in order of priority)

Paying off instalments on goods	Food needs	Health needs	Educational needs	Housing	Business reasons	Other

#### 4. Expenditure

4.1. What percentage of last month's income was spent on the following: (try and make it add up to 100)

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Food	
Rent	
Utilities (Gas/electricity/water)	
Health	
Education	
Other	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

4.2. In your estimation how much in \$ does your family spend of food each month?

Less than 100	Between 100-150	Between 150-200	Between 200-250	Between 250-300
Between 300 -350	Between 350-400	Between 400-450	Between 450 -500	Over 500

## 5. Food Consumption

5.1. Over the last seven days, how many days did you consume the following food? (Circle the appropriate number)

Food Group	Food Items	Number of days							
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Cereals and tubers	Wheat (bread) rice pasta potato	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pulses	Beans/lentils/peas any type of nuts	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Vegetables	And salads	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Fruits	Fruits and fruit products	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Meat and fish	Beef, goat, sheep, poultry, eggs, fish	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Dairy	Milk, yoghurt, cheese and other	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sugar	And sugar products	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Oil	Oil, fats, butter, sammna	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## 6. Food basket

6.1. Which item(s) would you take away if the value of that item was added to the rest of the basket?

Item	Replaced with something else

Item	Replaced with something else
1. Rice	
2. Sugar	
3. Whole milk ( powder )	
4. Cheese ( spread creamy	
5. Spaghetti	
6. Jam (preferable plastic	
7. Vegetable oil	
8. Ghee	
9. Tuna	
10. Luncheon meat	
11. Lentil	
12. Fava Beans	
13. Chick peas	
14. White beans	
15. Salt	
16. Tomato paste	
17. Tea	

6.2. Are there some items you only want in summer or only in winter?

Item	Summer	Winter

Item	Summer	Winter
1. Rice		
2. Sugar		
3. Whole milk ( powder )		
4. Cheese ( spread creamy		
5. Spaghetti		
6. Jam (preferable plastic		
7. Vegetable oil		
8. Ghee		
9. Tuna		
10. Luncheon meat		
11. Lentil		
12. Fava Beans		
13. Chick peas		
14. White beans		
15. Salt		
16. Tomato paste		
17. Tea		

**7. Feedback on cash/coupon**

7.1. If the value of the basket remained the same would you like some of the basket in cash or in coupon form?

Yes	No
-----	----

If the answer is NO proceed to section 8.

If the answer is YES please continue on

7.2. would you prefer cash or coupons

Yes	No
-----	----

7.3. The current value of the basket is US\$70 how much of this would you like as cash or coupon?

\$10	\$20	\$30	\$40	\$50	\$60	\$70

## 8. Coping Strategy

8.1. In the last month, how frequently did your household resort to using one or more of the following strategies?

<b>Coping Strategy</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Seldom</b> (1-3 days/ month)	<b>Sometimes</b> (1-3 days/week)	<b>Often</b> (3-6 days/ week)	<b>Daily</b>
Skip a meal or reduce portion size					
Rely on less expensive or less preferred foods					
Save money from rent to spend on food (share with a family)					
Purchase food on credit or borrowing					
Sell some of your wedding jewellery	Yes		No		
Send the children to the neighbours to eat					
Collecting wild plants					

Thank you for your time in filling out this questionnaire!

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**1. Background**

1.1. Date of interview

1.2. Enumerators name

1.3. Head of household name

1.4. Sex (tick one)

Male

Female

1.5. Address

1.6. UNRWA ID Number

**2. Food Security**

2.1. Over the last *seven days*, how many days did you consume the following food? (Circle the appropriate number)

Food Group	Food Items	Number of days									
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Cereals and tubers	Wheat (bread) rice, pasta, potato,	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Pulses	Beans, lentils, peas any type of nuts	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Vegetables	And salads	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Fruits	Fruits and fruit products	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Meat and fish	Beef, goat, sheep, poultry, eggs, fish	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Dairy	Milk, yoghurt, cheese and other dairy products	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Sugar	And sugar products	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Oil	Oil, fats, butter, sammna	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		



2.2. Which item(s) would you take away if the value of that item was added to the rest of the basket?

Item	Replaced with something else
1. Rice	
2. Sugar	
3. Whole milk ( powder )	
4. Cheese ( spread creamy	
5. Spaghetti	
6. Jam (preferable plastic	
7. Vegetable oil	
8. Ghee	
9. Tuna	
10. Luncheon meat	
11. Lentil	
12. Fava Beans	
13. Chick peas	
14. White beans	
15. Salt	
16. Tomato paste	
17. Tea	

### 3. Distribution feedback

3.1. Did you receive your food basket in the last 2 months?

Complete	Incomplete
On time	did not receive the basket

Do you have any comment/suggestions on the quality, quantity or distribution system? If you answered incomplete in the question above please list what was missing below

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