In March 2010, 89% of the beneficiary households and 74% of the non-beneficiaries had no cereal stocks. This compares to 99% in March 2009.

In March 2010, 85% of beneficiary households indicated that food assistance was their main source of cereals while non-beneficiaries rely on casual labour (36%), own production (26%) and purchase (20%) to acquire cereals.

In all, 35% of the households reported receiving food remittances in the six months prior to the survey with no differences between groups. In addition, 27% of the households received cash remittances during that time.

In March 2010, only 9% of the households reported that adults had one meal or less per day. This compares to 12% in March 2009 and 72% in November 2008.

In all, 35% of households were accessing drinking water from unimproved sources, such as rivers and unprotected wells. In addition, 62% of households did not have access to safe sanitation.

This round showed that 7% of households sold or bartered assets to acquire food compared to 19% in March 09 and 11% in May 2008.

Food assistance plays a key role in the lives of households benefitting from WFP interventions. The Coping Strategies Index (CSI) measures the frequency and severity of actions taken by households in response to the presence or threat of shortfalls in food supply. An increase in the CSI indicates worsening food security. A lower score implies reduced stress on the household and thus, relatively better food security.

The graph below shows that the CSI for the beneficiary households (13) was significantly lower than for non-beneficiary households (22). This shows the positive impact of food assistance in reducing stress on household’s ability to meet their food needs.

By programme activity, beneficiaries receiving Cash only had the highest CSI (18), followed by households receiving a combination of Food and Cash (16). Those receiving Food only had the lowest CSI (12), indicating lower stress on these households’ ability to meet their food needs.

CSI was lowest for home-based care (6), nutrition support to anti-retroviral therapy (8), in comparison to vulnerable group feeding (13) and food-for-assets (15).

The consumption score allows comparisons of dietary quality and diversity between beneficiary and non-beneficiary populations.

The chart shows that overall, beneficiary households were more likely to have adequate consumption than non-beneficiary households. The proportion of beneficiary and non-beneficiary households with poor consumption was at its lowest level in two years.

Among beneficiary households, Cash only households had the poorest consumption. Only 26% had acceptable consumption in comparison to 59% for Cash and Food and 73% for Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF), 92% for nutrition support to anti-retroviral therapy (ART) and 94% home-based care (HBC).

Households with ‘borderline’ consumption are eating the equivalent of cereals and vegetables on a daily basis plus pulses and oils about 4 times per week. Those with ‘poor’ consumption managed to eat the equivalent of only cereals and vegetables on a daily basis. This is considered a bare minimum and is a sign of extreme household food insecurity.
Livelihoods refer to key activities undertaken by households to provide for their food and income needs. In order to better understand the relative importance of different livelihood sources households were asked to estimate the contribution of each source to the total income of the household during the past six months. The graph on the right shows that the greatest contribution to total income for non-beneficiary households is from casual labour, accounting for 34% of total livelihoods. Other main sources include food and cash crops, vegetable sales and cash crops.

The graph on the left shows that for beneficiary households, the greatest contribution to total livelihood was food assistance (32%) followed by casual labour and food and cash crops. When comparing the two groups, there were significant differences in share from food assistance, casual labour and food and cash crops.

**Main livelihood sources of households**

- **Beneficiaries**
  - Casual labour (46%)
  - Food assistance (61%)
  - Vegetable sales (11%)
  - Food and cash crops (12%)
  - Petty trade (11%)

- **Non-beneficiaries**
  - Casual labour (58%)
  - Vegetable sales (18%)
  - Food and cash crops (25%)
  - Petty trade (16%)
  - Remittances (14%)

**Livelihood Sources**

- Food assistance was a significant livelihood source for beneficiary households (61%), notably up from 33% in November 2009.
  - Casual labour was the main source of livelihood for non-beneficiary households (58%). It also formed the second most important livelihood source for beneficiary households (46%). This was followed by food and cash crops, and vegetables sales. The main food crops planted in 2009-10 summer season included maize (86%), sorghum (32%), groundnuts (44%), millet/rapoko (21%) and beans (5%). Cash crop production was lower at cotton (12%) and tobacco (0.9%).
  - Petty trade, was also a significant livelihood source for both beneficiary (11%) and non-beneficiary households (16%), as indicated by the table on the left.
  - In addition, remittances were an important livelihood source for non-beneficiary households.

**Information is collected on:**

- Household demographics
- Household livelihood strategies
- Coping strategies
- Food aid outcomes
- Food consumption & sources of food consumed
- Vulnerable Groups
  - Orphaned children
  - Chronically ill
  - Female headed households
  - Elderly headed households
  - Asset poor
  - Disabled
- Targeting observations
- Household wealth and income
- Detailed household expenditure
- Agricultural production
- Amenities (Water, Sanitation and Housing)

**Methodology**

- Bi-annual survey
- Assessment done for all districts with WFP activities
- Sample of 970 households
- Stratified random sampling of households (50 percent beneficiary, and 50 percent non-beneficiary)
- Face-to-face interviews with head of households
- Head of households provide information on the whole household

**Expenditure**

- 95% of Cash only households reported expenditure in the last 30 days in comparison to 92% of Food and Cash and 79% of vulnerable group feeding beneficiary households.
- Share expenditure for food was 66% for Cash only beneficiaries, and 56% for Food and Cash. In comparison, households receiving Food only, spent less on food with vulnerable group feeding households spending 22% of their income on food.
- 43% of households incurred expenditure for cereal, during the 30 days prior to the survey. 29% was in cash and 14% in kind payment. Of the latter, 77% was labor.
- Cereal purchase was more common in non-beneficiary households (23%) as compared to beneficiary households (9%).
- 15% of households incurred in-kind expenditure for milling, 94% in the form of grain. This was more common in non-beneficiary households (18%) as compared to beneficiary households (13%).

**Agricultural Production**

- 95% of households in the sample reported that they had access to agricultural land. Main source of draught power used was cattle (69%), and donkeys (3%). About a third of households (29%) did not use any draught power.
- 83% of households had used, or were planning to use retained seed and planting material for at least one main crop during the 2009-10 season, down from 98% in the 2009-10 season. Other sources of seed or planting material were gifts, exchange or loan (52%), Government, UN or donor agencies (46%) and purchase (25%).
- 70% of households in the sample, had not used fertilizer on any of their main crops, while 13% relied on external support (Government or donors), 9% used organic fertilizer (natural, dung, compost, etc) on at least one of their main crops, and 6% purchased their fertilizer.
**Vulnerability Characteristics**

In this round, vulnerability was assessed by considering the number of vulnerability characteristics (out of 12) each household had.

- The variables used were asset poverty, female or elderly head, chronically ill member, hosting orphans, disabled member, recent death of a member, 80% or more dependents, poor housing quality, poor access to safe drinking water and sanitation, and having no livestock.
- Households were described as having either low (0-1 characteristics), moderate (2-5) or high (6+) vulnerability.
- Significantly ($p < 0.01$) more beneficiary households had high vulnerability as compared to non-beneficiary households.
- By programme activity, the Cash only households were the most likely to have high vulnerability (33%), followed by VGF (25%) and Food and Cash (21%).
- The chart below compares the mean coping strategies index (CSI) and food consumption score (FCS) by vulnerability level and beneficiary status.
- For non-beneficiaries it is important to see that the food consumption score is much lower than for beneficiaries, regardless of vulnerability. In addition, food consumption scores increase with decreased levels of vulnerability.
- For non-beneficiaries, the CSI increased with increased vulnerability. However for beneficiaries, this pattern is not found, indicating that the food assistance has not only improved consumption but also has reduced stress in moderate and highly vulnerable households.
- In both non-beneficiary and beneficiary households, asset poverty increased with increased vulnerability. 80% of highly vulnerable households had high asset poverty and in contrast 72% of beneficiary households.
- 60% of beneficiary and non-beneficiary households earning less than US$1 per person per month had high vulnerability.

**Targeting Efficiency**

WFP Zimbabwe and partners target households who are considered vulnerable based on socio-economic and socio-demographic criteria that vary according to programme activity.

The Community Based Targeting Methodology was used in the selection of beneficiaries for the Vulnerable Group Feeding Programme. Households interviewed identified the following as the major indicators by order of importance: Household food crop production, Elderly or single headed household, Household hosting orphans, Household with no external support/remittances, and Child-headed household.

The chart on the left compares the vulnerability of beneficiary households to non-beneficiaries by Sub-office operational areas. For all, the beneficiaries have a higher percentage of highly vulnerable households compared to non-beneficiaries with the biggest differences found in Mutare.

The highest percentage of highly vulnerable beneficiaries is found in the Mashonaland and Gweru Sub-office regions. Only 3% of the non-beneficiaries in the Mutare Sub-office region were highly vulnerable and one-quarter had low vulnerability.
Preferred Type of Assistance

Beneficiary households were asked the type of assistance they prefer - Food only, Cash only or a combination of both Food and Cash.

- 60% of households stated that they preferred Food assistance only, 5% preferred Cash only, while 35% of the beneficiary households, preferred both Food and Cash. The main reasons for preferring food were: food satisfies household food shortages (91% - up from 72% in November 2009), market supply is unpredictable (31% - up from 28%) and difficulty in accessing markets (23% - down from 28%). In this round, 35% of households preferred both food and cash transfer (up from 23% in November 2009). These households noted that ability to cope is improved and that food and cash best meets seasonal needs.

- By programme type, VGF beneficiaries were the most likely to prefer Food assistance only (66%), followed by HBC (65%), ART (38%) and Food-for-assets (45%). The Cash only beneficiary households were the least likely to prefer food only (23%) but conversely only 26% of these households preferred Cash only. 51% of Cash only beneficiary households, and 60% of Food and Cash beneficiary households in the sample, preferred both food and cash. Three quarters of these households (75%) felt that food and cash should always be distributed together, while 18% preferred food in the lean season and cash in the post harvest period. Cash only preference was highest in the cash transfer beneficiary households (23%) but low overall (ART 6%, Food and Cash 3% and HBC 2%).

Sources of Food Consumed by Households

Identifying the major sources of food and monitoring these over time is critical to understanding the principal factors affecting food security of households. As illustrated below:

- Non-beneficiary households accessed most of their food through own production, and some gifts/barter/borrow. In addition, those with borderline or acceptable consumption were also relying on purchase, while those with poor consumption relied more on casual labour.

- Beneficiary households accessed most of their food through food assistance followed by some from own production. However, beneficiary households with poor consumption relied more on gifts/barter/borrow and hunting/gathering.

- Cash only beneficiary households accessed 48% of their food through purchase as compared to 16% for Food and Cash, and 9% for Food only households. Non-beneficiary households purchased close to half of their food. Food only households accessed half their food through food assistance, and Food and Cash households accessed 42% of their food through food assistance.