Key Findings

The Whole of Syria, Food Security Sector (FSS) partners comprising of FAO, WFP, ICRC, UNRWA, 35 International NGOs and 45 Syrian NGOs, assisted 5.8 million food insecure individuals¹ with regular household food assistance and 2.8 million vulnerable individuals with livelihood support in 2016. This assistance includes 496,900 MT of food, USD 37 million in cash value and USD 323,120 in voucher value over 12 months, provided as both life-saving and life-sustaining support in all 14 governorates across Syria.

In the fourth quarter of 2016, the FSS introduced an outcome monitoring initiative (OMI), with participation of sector partners to provide evidence on how the assistance to the people in need is changing their food security and livelihoods status. In other words, the sector sought to collect more evidence on how the people “reached” with food and livelihoods are benefitting from the assistance. This is required in designing sector activities and to ensure collective ownership towards Accountability to Affected Population. This was a participatory and inclusive process that involved intensive consultation with sector partners to sensitize on the importance of monitoring key livelihood and food security level indicators.

Following a survey with a single Post Distribution Monitoring tool across Syria on 11,700 households, it came out clearly that the massive support from FSS partners has helped to stabilize the food consumption of assisted households, when compared to the 2015 baseline. However, households remain under considerable stress with a severe potential to further deteriorate if interventions are not adequately sustained.

Key findings of particular concern:

- 37 percent of surveyed households had poor or borderline levels of food consumption, and are thus at risk of food insecurity.
- 47 percent of surveyed households had low or medium dietary diversity, indicating limited capacity to access nutrition rich food items.
- The mean score of the food consumption based coping strategies index (r CSI) is very high at 15.7 a two point increase from 13.6 in 2015 despite assistance.
- Close to 80 percent of surveyed households are using emergency and/ or crisis livelihood based coping strategies indicating that these households will have reduced capacity to deal with future shocks.

Immediate consideration for programming include further attention to targeting, ensuring more frequent distribution of monthly rations, supplementing monthly rations with a diverse diet by appropriate modalities, whether in kind, cash and voucher, increased and coordinated livelihoods and asset protection.

¹ The 5.8 million assisted individuals is the monthly average of assisted beneficiaries and 2.8 million individuals reached through livelihood support is a cumulative number of individuals that received various livelihood based assistance in 2016.
01 Background and Objectives

In 2016, the Whole of Syria Food Security Sector established an Outcome Monitoring Initiative with an overarching aim of measuring the outcome level results of the Sector’s activities. A further goal is to provide an accurate picture of the current food and livelihood security status of households included in the sector’s programme activities. Through the active engagement of partners, the process will contribute to enhanced ownership of data collected and analysis conducted, as well as facilitating collective discussion and decision making at Sector level.

Specific Objectives

- To provide analysis of food security indicators from households assisted by sector activities;
- To improve sector programming by utilising monitoring data to identify areas of concern as well as areas of progress, and to aid collective decision making;
- To facilitate periodic discussion and review of programme modalities and targeting, both geographically and at household level;
- To enhance Sector accountability by reporting on progress, areas of concern and adaptive measures;
- To support partner monitoring capacity through trainings in data collection and analysis of food security outcome indicators;
- To enhance advocacy capacity of the sector by improving the ability to collectively highlight key issues.
02 Measurement

Indicators used to determine the food and livelihood security status of households:

- The Food Consumption Score (FCS);
- Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS);
- Reduced (or food consumption based) Coping Strategy Index (r CSI)
- Livelihoods Coping Strategy Indicator (LCSI)

The FCS, HDDS and r CSI are all indicators presented in the 2016 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) for the sector. The LCSI was added in order to expand on information about livelihood security and the coping strategies that households may engage in order to gain access to food and other basic needs. It also provides an indication of how household coping capacities may affect future productivity.

Data was compared where possible to the 2015 Food Security Assessment undertaken by WFP from May to June 2015.

WFP Food Security Assessment Report, Syria, October 2015: A note on Comparisons

The WFP Assessment for Syria took place in May and June 2015. Data was collected from 19,800 households across the country. The same indicators were incorporated into the assessment as were used in this monitoring exercise. It is important to note that the sample for the 2015 needs assessment was taken from the general population, whereas the 2016 Sector Outcome Monitoring sample was drawn from households receiving assistance from the sector only. As a result the comparison in this report only provide an indication in changes of the various indicators values. Furthermore, the LCSI used in both cases contained mostly different strategies, and thus comparison is possible for certain strategies only.

03 Gender and Protection

All data was disaggregated by gender of the head of household. Protection aspects were integrated into the livelihood coping strategies indicator, and the main areas of protection concern related to this sector were as follows:

- The marriage of young girls (less than 16 years old) in order to ease the financial burden on the family.
- Undertaking high risk and exploitative work (age disaggregated) in order to help meet the food needs of the family.
- Children working (less than 16 years old) in order to help meet the food needs of the family.
04 Methodology

Consultations were held with partners in the three formal coordination hubs under UNSCR 2165 (south Turkey, Jordan, and Syria) to discuss data collection tools, responsibilities of partners and the sector, training needs and timeframes. Following consultations, the data collection tool was shared in both excel format and Open Data Kit (ODK) platform. Trainings were held in all three formal coordination hubs for partners on the data collection tools and process. Following completion of the data collection process trainings were held for partners on data analysis so that partners could increase their capacity in Post Distribution Monitoring.

The data collection process was aligned to each partner’s existing data collection system in order to encourage mainstreaming of the indicators, as well as to minimise parallel systems and additional burden on partner organisations. As a result, both the time frame and sampling methodology was as per each organisation’s existing plan, and each was encouraged to interview a sample of households which would be representative of their own programme area. This would ensure that partners can use these food security indicators, data collection process and analysis for their own project monitoring as guidance for activity adjustment.

In total 17 organisations (International and Syrian NGOS and UN agencies) participated in data collection, surveying 11,700 households across Syria. Data was collected between September and the end of December 2016. Figure 1 below shows the distribution of households surveyed by area of influence. The coverage map indicates that Sector partners collected outcome monitoring data from accessible locations.

Figure 1: Concentration of Households Surveyed by Sub District
05 Results

5.1 Demographics

The majority of households surveyed were single-headed (48 percent) or married (45 percent). 77 percent of households were headed by males and 23 percent by females. Just over half were classified as residents (51 percent) whilst 46 percent were displaced and three percent were returnees. The majority rent their accommodation or are hosted by others (37 percent and 29 percent respectively). 24 percent live in their own home, five percent in camps and two percent in schools (three percent reported using other types of accommodation).

Half of interviewed households were from the host community and 46 percent from the displaced households. Iraqi refugees were surveyed in Al-Hasakeh (Al Malikeyyeh, and Whole sub districts), Aleppo (Atareb sub district) and Dar’a (Dar’a sub district) governorates.

Figure 2A: Household Demographics

Figure 2B: Access to Accomodation / Proportion of Displaced, Residents,Returnees and Refugees Households
5.2 Food Consumption Score (FCS)

The food consumption score is widely used as a proxy measure of the dietary quality and calorific intake of households. It is a composite score which is based in the dietary diversity, food frequency and relative nutritional importance of the different food groups consumed. Dietary diversity refers to the number of different food groups consumed by the household over a reference period. Food frequency is the number of times that a particular food group is eaten at the household during that same reference period. Analysis presents households clustered into three groups: poor, borderline or acceptable food consumption.

**Food Consumption Score Interpretation**

**Poor food consumption:** Households that are not consuming staples and vegetables every day and never or very seldom consume protein-rich food such as meat and dairy.

**Borderline food consumption:** Households that are consuming staples and vegetables every day, accompanied by oil and pulses a few times a week.

**Acceptable food consumption:** Households that are consuming staples and vegetables every day, frequently accompanied by oil and pulses, and occasionally meat, fish and dairy.

Figure 3 below shows the overall food consumption status of the surveyed households across Syria in 2016 compared to 2015 reference data.

---

[2] In this case the 7 days before the survey was used as the reference period
37 percent of households surveyed demonstrated either poor or borderline levels of food consumption. This figure points to a stabilization in food consumption between 2015 and 2016, however, the percentage of households classified as borderline has decreased during the year, coinciding with a rise in households who classify in the more serious poor category. All households surveyed are in receipt of some form of assistance (the majority in receipt of in-kind food baskets), the results highlight the continued gravity of the situation and the pressing need to continue and expand assistance.

The percentage of households with poor or borderline food consumption per governorate is shown in Figure 4 below. Over half of the governorates have percentages of households with poor or borderline food consumption at greater than 40 percent. The governorates with the largest population of concern are Deir-ez-Zor (100 percent), Idleb (57 percent) and Al-Hasakeh (52 percent). Deir-ez-Zor governorate has been besieged since March 2014, preventing regular delivery of humanitarian assistance to feed vulnerable households. In 2016, WFP carried out high-altitude airdrops, as a last resort to feed the food insecure households in the governorate. Al-Hasakeh governorate, remained largely inaccessible by road for delivery of humanitarian assistance from within Syrian owing to insecurity and the presence of armed groups along the routes. Insecurity also contributed to disruption of livelihood sources for majority of the displaced households in the governorate. This has resulted in airlifts from Damascus to Qamishli airport, to deliver humanitarian assistance for a limited number food insecure individuals. In Idleb governorate, insecurity has resulted an increase in number of displaced households that require regular food and livelihood support from humanitarian agencies. In 2016, aid agencies reported increased movement of displaced individuals from Aleppo governorate to communities in Idleb governorate.
Household Type – Gender, Marital and Residential status

- No acute differences related to food consumption were observed between male- and female-headed households.

- Marital status does however have an effect, where Figure 5 shows that divorced and separated household heads have slightly worse food consumption than other types of households.

- Host communities, the displaced and returnees also have slightly worse food consumption than the surveyed Iraqi refugee population as illustrated in Figure 6.

When disaggregated by household accommodation type, those in camp situations have better average food consumption, particularly when compared to renters and those living in schools (Figure 5). The difference in food consumption was noted to be significant: $X^2 (8, N = 4,851) = 23.055, p = 0.003$

**Figure 5: Percentage of Households Per Food Consumption Category by Marital Status**

**Figure 6: Percentage of Households in Each Food Consumption Category by Household Status**
Food Sources
Households were asked to name the main source of each of the food groups that were included in the Food Consumption Score. Figure 8 below show the percentage share that food assistance contributed to the overall household food consumption by governorate.

In terms of other sources of food across Syria, cash was predominant and comprised 47 percent of all food sources in a week prior to the survey, compared to an overall 32 percent for food assistance. ‘Own production’ contributed a relatively small component of household food sources overall (2%) with a range of from zero percent in Lattakia, As-Sweida, Homs and Damascus to six percent in Hama.
5.3 Household Dietary Diversity Score

The Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS) provides an estimation of the quality of a household’s diet. It can also be seen as a proxy measure of a household’s access to food. Households are categorised according to whether they have low, medium or high dietary diversity based on predefined thresholds. Figure 9 below shows the results for the 2016 survey compared to 2015.

Dietary diversity has worsened since 2015, as can be seen by the decrease in the proportion of households with a high dietary diversity score, and increase in those with low or medium diversity.

With regard to the frequency of consumption of the different food groups, Figure 10 shows the number of days in a week that households consumed a particular food group. The results are shown compared to the 2015 reference.

On average, households are now consuming cereals six days a week instead of every day in 2015. There has also been a reduction in the frequency of vegetable consumption from five days to three and in dairy from four days to three. The proportion of fruit and meat has increased slightly although it still remains low at an average of two days a week for both food groups. Oils and fat remained the same at five days per week. Notably, the average consumption of sugar has also decreased from seven days to five.
Household Type – Gender, Marital and Residential status

- Male headed households were slightly better in terms of dietary diversity than female (54 percent of all males headed households were in the high diversity category as compared to 49 percent of all female headed households).

- When examined by marital status, it is observed that single headed households have a higher proportion of low and medium dietary diversity than the other groups.

- When the HDDS is disaggregated by the residence status of the household (Figure 11) it can be observed that refugees have a higher diversity than other types of households.

When disaggregated by the type of accommodation in which households are living, it can be seen that those living in camps and their own home have proportionally better dietary diversity that those who rent or live in hosted accommodation or schools (Figure 12).
5.4 Reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI)

The reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI) is a standardized measure of behaviors which may be adopted by households when they have difficulty meeting their food needs. It considers food consumption based coping mechanisms such as relying on less preferred, less expensive food, borrowing food or relying on help from friends and relatives; reducing the number of meals eaten per day and/or the portions size; and reduction in the quantities consumed by adults/mothers for young children.

The higher the CSI the more stressed the household in its attempts to secure enough food for consumption. The national mean CSI for beneficiaries’ households in 2016 was very high at 15.7 – a two point increase from 13.6 for the Syrian general population in 2015.

Increases in the mean index scores have taken place in all governorates except Damascus and Dar’a which both stayed the same, and Quneitra which had a small decrease. This indicates increasing pressure on households to meet their food consumption needs. The greatest increases are seen in Lattakia (+ 27 percent), Al-Hasakeh (+ 15 percent) and Rural Damascus (+ 14 percent). In Latakia, the increase in the rCSI is mainly due to high number of surveyed that relied on consumption based coping strategies, including nearly half of interviewed households that relied on borrowing from friends and relatives, at least once during the week prior to the survey.

Insecurity in Rural Damascus contributed to limited availability of food resulting in food insecure households applying various consumption based strategies including consumption of less preferred food items. About 42 percent of households interviewed in rural Damascus, indicated that they had reduced the number of meals consumed in a week prior the survey. In Al Hasakkeh, nine in ten of interviewed households reported consumption of less preferred or less expensive food items when faced with shortage of food or money to buy food.
Figure 14 above shows that the use of four of the five strategies contained in the r CSI increased between 2015 and 2016. The highest increase was related to reducing the number of meals eaten per day. Figure 15 below shows the number of coping strategies that households used in the week prior to the survey. The majority (68 percent) used between 1-4 strategies, 19 percent used all five and the remaining 13 percent used none.
Figure 16 shows the percentage of households across Syria that used a particular coping strategy. The predominant way to manage a lack of food for consumption was relying on less preferred or less expensive food (76 percent of households), followed by reducing the number of means eaten per day (55 percent) and reducing the portion size of meals (49 percent). Again, it is important to note that households may be relying on a number of strategies to meet their needs during the week.

Figure 17 below shows the average number of days that households across Syria are relying on the various coping strategies. It can be noted that households may be combining strategies, and using more than one per week.

In terms of calculation of the rCSI score, the two coping strategies with the highest severity weights are ‘borrowing food or relying on help from a friend or relative’, and restricting consumption by adults in order for children to eat’. The prevalence of these strategies by governorate is shown in Figure 16.

The governorates with the highest prevalence of these particular strategies are Deir-ez-Zor, Lattakia and Aleppo.
Household Type – Gender, Marital and Residential status

- The national mean r CSI for female-headed households is 16.9 compared to 15.55 for male-headed households illustrating that female headed households are employing these food based coping strategies at a higher rate and are therefore under more stress in meeting basic food needs than male-headed households.

- Figure 18 shows national level r CSI scores disaggregated by marital status, residential status and the accommodation within which the household resides. R CSI Scores are significantly higher for those households whose head is divorced/ separated showing that they are under greater stress than other households with regard to food consumption.

- In terms of accommodation status, households who are residing in schools have the highest score (19) followed by own home (17) hosted and renting (16) and those in a camp (14). (Figure 19)

- The score for refugees surveyed in Syria is better than for those who are residents, displaced or returnees (Figure 20).
5.5 Livelihood Coping Strategies Indicator (LCSI)

The LCSI provides a measure for different types of detrimental livelihood related activities that households may need to engage in order to obtain food or income to buy food. It ranks these coping mechanisms by how costly they may be to the wellbeing and livelihoods of households and their ability to cope in the future. It is a global measure in terms of number of strategies and categorization, but the strategies themselves have been adapted to the specific context. Through a consultative process with partners in all coordination hubs, following ten coping strategies and their categories were included in the Index for this 2016 survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Livelihood Coping Strategies – Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of Household Assets (non-productive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase food on credit or borrow or share food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family members have taken up alternative or socially degrading jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of other humanitarian assistance (e.g. NFIs)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Households are categorised by the worst level of coping that they have experienced during the reference period, i.e. as a stress, crisis or emergency household. Figure 21 below shows the percentage of households that fall into each Livelihood Coping Strategy Category. The majority (90 percent) of households have used at least one of the livelihood coping strategies, and 79 percent have used crisis or emergency strategies. Such high levels of coping will have detrimental effects on the livelihoods and wellbeing of the households and their family members.

**LCSI category description**

**Stress strategies:** indicate a reduced ability to deal with future shocks.

**Crisis strategies:** directly reduce future productivity of the households.

**Emergency Strategies:** They may also affect future productivity but are more difficult to reverse, or are more severe or extreme in nature for the household.
Figure 22 shows the number of livelihood coping strategies used by households during the reference period. Just over half (52 percent) used between one and three strategies, 36 percent used between four and seven strategies; and two percent between eight and ten strategies. Ten percent did not use any of the ten strategies.

Figure 23 shows the prevalence for each category of the coping strategy. Although many households are in receipt of assistance, they are still under considerable stress and the majority (71 percent) reduced expenditure on non-food essential items (water, education, health care). 59 percent of households reported purchasing food on credit or borrowing or sharing food. Many households have sold both productive and non-productive assets in order to meet food needs (42 percent and 38 percent respectively), further depleting their resource base. 45 percent reduced expenditure on productive assets, also limiting their livelihood abilities now and in the future. 43 percent of households reported selling other types of aid (non-food) in order to meet their food needs.
Figure 24 shows the results disaggregated by governorates where possible. All governorates had a high proportion of households in the crisis category. All households interviewed in Homs indicated that they had applied emergency coping strategies that have effect on future livelihood capacity of the households. High prevalence of detrimental coping were also reported in Al Hasakeh (94 percent either emergency or crisis), Aleppo (89 percent emergency or crisis) and Rural Damascus (89 percent emergency or crisis). This indicates that assisted households remain highly vulnerable to food insecurity, mainly because majority have lost their sources of income due to the conflict and also these locations remain inaccessible for regular delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Figure 25 below shows the prevalence of stress coping categories used by households during the reference period at governorate level.

[4] Note that this data shows the percentage of households that applied a particular coping strategy, and thus the total per governorate may add up to more than 100 percent.
The sale of household assets is particularly high in rural Damascus (78 percent of households), Homs (67 percent) and Quneitra (50 percent), Dar’a (41 percent) and Aleppo (43 percent).

Between 27 and 74 percent of households have purchased or borrowed food depending on the Governorate.

Households in all governorates had family members who had taken up alternative or socially degrading jobs, with the highest percentages in Damascus (67 percent) and rural Damascus (47 percent).

Between 6 percent and 67 percent of households sold some other (non-food) humanitarian assistance, with the highest rates recorded in Damascus (100 percent of households) and Rural Damascus (74 percent), Homs (50 percent), Idleb (49 percent) and Dar’a (46 percent).

High percentages of households (ranging from 40 to 100 percent) have reduced their household expenditures on non-food related basic needs (such as education and health).

The sale of productive assets was high in rural Damascus (77 percent) and in Aleppo (54 percent of households).

Households in all governorates (with the exception of Damascus) have reduced expenditure on their productive assets, with the highest in Homs (100 percent) and rural Damascus (75 percent).

Figure 26 below shows the prevalence of the different types of crisis coping categories used by households during the reference period at Governorate level.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Governorate</th>
<th>Sale of HH Assets (Non Productive)</th>
<th>Buy Food on credit or borrow or share food</th>
<th>Family members have taken up alternative or socially degrading jobs</th>
<th>Sell of other humanitarian assistance ( eg NFIs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Al-Hasakeh</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aleppo</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Damascus</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 26: Prevalence of Crisis Coping Strategies by Governorate

[5] Note that this data shows the percentage of households that applied a particular coping strategy, and thus the total per governorate may add up to more than 100 percent.
Households surveyed in Damascus reported no emergency coping strategies.

The range of households per governorate who reporting children less than 16 needing to work was 7-33 percent with Homs being the highest (33 percent).

Households reporting the marriage of young girls (less than 16 years old) due to financial stress was highest in rural Damascus (19 percent) and Aleppo (11 percent).

Household in all governorates (with the exception of Damascus) reported needing to undertake high risk or exploitative work, with the highest prevalence by far in Homs (100 percent). The other governorates ranged between 8-21 percent for this coping.
Household Type – Gender, Marital and Residential Status

- Females-headed households have a higher use of all coping strategies with the exception of reduced expenditure on productive assets, which compared similarly to male-headed households.

- Divorced/ separated households had the highest use of all coping strategies with the exception of sale of other humanitarian assistance which single households used most frequently. Both divorced/ separated and single were also more likely to take up alternative or socially degrading jobs.

- Sale of household assets was highest for refugees, household whose heads are divorced/ separated, and those who live in schools or are hosted.

- Reducing expenditure on non-food items was highest for divorced/ separated, refugees and displaced, and those living in camps and schools.

- Sale of productive assets was highest for residents, divorced/ separated and those living in their own home.

- Purchasing food on credit, borrowing and sharing food was highest for divorced/ separated, refugees, and those living in camps and host communities.

- Reducing expenditure on productive assets was highest for divorced/ separated, residents, those living in own home or hosted

- Taking up alternative and socially degrading jobs was highest for divorced/ separated (other categories were more evenly distributed)

- Children (less than 16 years old) working was more prevalent in families living in schools (and more evenly distributed across other categories). Most (92 percent) children working were aged between 12-16 years, with the remaining 8 percent aged less than 12 years.

- The marriage of young girls (less than 16 years) occurred more frequently in divorced/ separated and widowed households, the displaced and those living in camps.

- Undertaking high risk and exploitative work was slightly more common in displaced families and those living in schools, and rented accommodation. 24 percent of those undertaking high risk and exploitative work are children of 16 years or less.

- The sale of humanitarian assistance was highest for single-headed households, refugees and those living in schools and camps.
Comparison with Syria Food Security Assessment 2015

Consultations were held with partners working across Syrian in order to contextualise the list of coping strategies used for the 2015 monitoring exercise, with a view to tailoring the tool to the Syrian context and how families are coping five years into the crisis. The WFP 2015 survey used a standard set of global indicators designed to reflect livelihood stress. Thus, the different set of questions does not allow for the comparison of prevalence of livelihood categories between 2015 and 2016. However, some specific strategies used were the same or similar and changes between these are shown in Figure 28 below.

In both years households across Syria were asked whether they had needed to sell their household assets (productive or non-productive). There is a considerable increase in households reporting sale of both categories (31 percent increase). 53 percent more households reported needing to reduce their expenditure on non-food basic needs.
WFP/Syria
6. Points for Consideration

Although in receipt of some form of food and or livelihood support, 37 percent of households had poor or borderline food consumption, and 48 percent had low or medium dietary diversity. Analysis of monitoring data indicates that, the food consumption patterns have stabilised somewhat between 2015 and 2016 highlighting the acute necessity of assistance. However, the dietary diversity and the food consumption based coping strategy index (rCSI) has worsened despite the assistance, reflecting the increased vulnerability of household to food insecurity. The proportion of households with poor and medium dietary diversity is 11 and 37 percent respectively. The livelihood situation of households is of considerable concern with 79 percent utilising emergency and/ or crisis coping strategies.

Targeting

Vulnerability across groups is based on factors including marital status, accommodation type and displacement status. For example, although a smaller proportion of the population, the results data highlight divorced/ separated households and those living in schools as of particular concern. In many cases refugees have a slightly better situation than host, displaced or returnees. Care should be taken in interpreting these results – for example, this does not mean that surveyed Iraqi refugees in Syria are in a better position generally but rather that the type and frequency of support is working more effectively than it may be for the other types of households. Considering this result, organisations could examine their rotation programmes and frequency of assistance.

Although there are smaller differences between male and female-headed households in terms of food consumption and dietary diversity, female- headed households are under significantly greater pressure when it comes to coping strategies. This fits with current profiles where female-headed households are considered particularly vulnerable – although both are in receipt of food assistance, the female-headed households are still under greater stress.

Dietary Diversification

Consideration should be given to greater access to fresh food and micronutrients through appropriate modality such as in kind or cash and vouchers where the situation permits in order to bolster dietary diversity. Given the rate of sale of humanitarian assistance in some locations in order to buy food, a coordinated approach beyond the food sector towards meeting basic needs should be explored.

Frequency of Distribution

Organisations should examine the frequency of distribution of assistance and rotation schedules in order to better meet the needs of households particularly in areas demonstrating high levels of coping strategies.
Livelihood
Where possible increased support to the livelihood of families can be considered as a priority. Certain key findings related to frequency of the occurrence of various coping strategies were highlighted in this report. These strategies may vary by location, type of household, and what strategies are accessible. Thus, it is recommended that organisations consider what is appropriate to their specific context and beneficiary households.

Monitoring
- Tools to include frequency of receipt of food assistance (type and frequency).
- Increase the number of organisations participating in order to allow a greater sample and disaggregation at district (and potentially sub-district) level.
- Prepare a sampling strategy in consultation with all partners to maximise the use of the data collected and potentially have results representative at a lower geographic level (i.e. district or sub-district)

In conclusion, the outcome monitoring initiative provided an opportunity for the Food Security Sector and partners to collect information that build the evidence required in measuring performance of various activities; and thus remain accountable to Affected Populations. The four indicators collected during the monitoring exercise indicates increased vulnerability of assisted households to food insecurity, and the situation could be worse if they are not receiving humanitarian assistance. Of particular, the increase in proportion of households with low and medium dietary diversity score suggest the need for partners to develop projects that ensure access to a diverse and nutritious food items. The strategy of involving sector partners in the data collection, analysis and interpretation of results is encouraged as it contributed to ownership and appreciation of outcome monitoring activities by partners. Access constraints for regular food deliveries and continued displacements due to on-going conflict contribute worsening household’s food insecurity in assisted location.
FOOD SECURITY CLUSTER
Strengthening Humanitarian Response

Contributing FSS Partners

+ 7 Additional Partners