

COPING STRATEGIES



KEY FINDINGS

This section looks at the range of strategies households adopt to cope with a lack of food and/or the means to buy it. The coping capacity of households is examined through two dimensions: (1) Coping Strategies related to food, which refer to the frequency and severity of adoption of food-related coping behaviours, and (2) Coping Strategies related to livelihood, which describe the adoption of coping mechanisms that affect households' capacity to procure food and/or earn a sustainable income in the medium to long term.

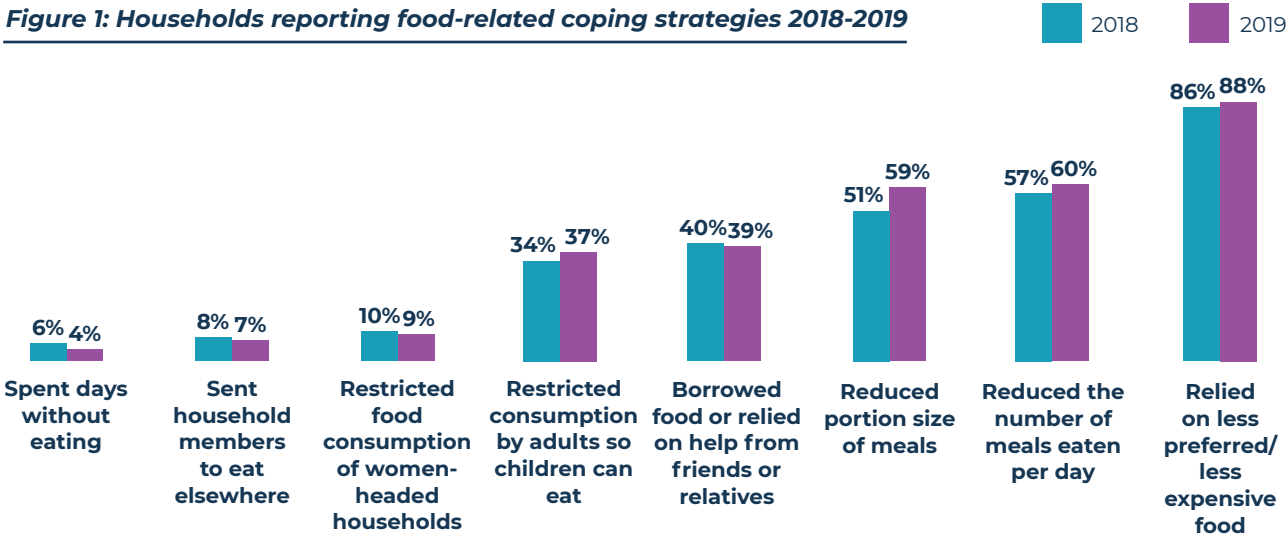
- Relying on **less preferred/less expensive food, reducing the number of meals eaten per day, reducing the portion size of meals, and restricting consumption by adults so children can eat**, are all food-related strategies that households are increasingly adopting in 2019, compared to 2018, to cope with a lack of food.
- **Households living in the North, El Nabatieh, and Mount Lebanon are adopting more food-related coping strategies in 2019**, compared to 2018. **Households in Beirut and Bekaa are adopting much less food-coping strategies in 2019**, compared to 2018.
- More households are resorting to crisis livelihood-related coping strategies in 2019, especially through **reducing expenditure on health and education and selling productive assets**.
- Level of adoption of crisis and emergency coping strategies **varies widely by district**.

FOOD-RELATED COPING STRATEGIES

Households find different ways to cope with lack of food. Some of their strategies are food-related, and others are livelihood related. The food related strategies included in the analysis are (1) relying on less preferred or less expensive food, (2) borrowing food or relying on help from friends or relatives, (3) reducing number

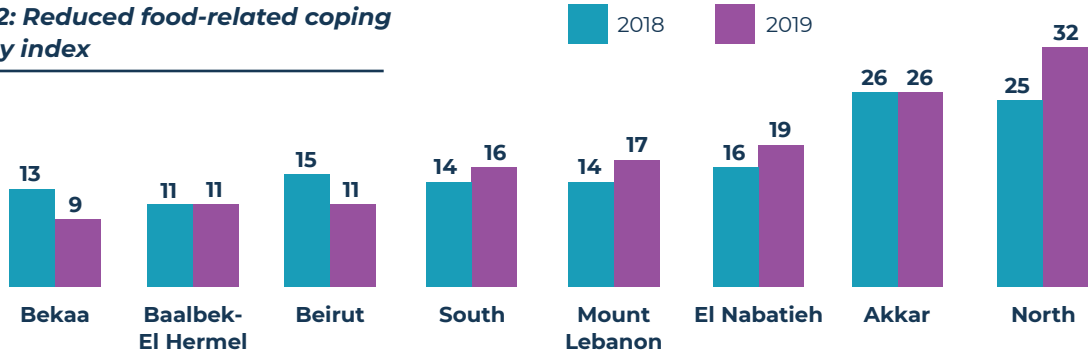
of meals eaten per day, (4) reducing portion size of meals, (5) restricting consumption by adults so children can eat, (6) restricting food consumption of female head of households, (7) spending days without eating, and (8) sending household members to eat elsewhere. Only the first five strategies are included in the calculation of the reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI).

Figure 1: Households reporting food-related coping strategies 2018-2019



A higher rCSI shows that households adopted more strategies to cope with a lack of food or access to food in the past week. A higher rCSI score also indicates adopting severe strategies more frequently. The most severe strategy is restricting consumption of adults so children can eat more, followed by borrowing food or relying on help from friends and family. There is a high increase in the reduced Coping Strategy Index in the North in 2019 compared to 2018. This increase is due to households in the North restricting consumption of adults so children can eat more frequently in 2019 (64%) versus 51% in 2018.

Figure 2: Reduced food-related coping strategy index



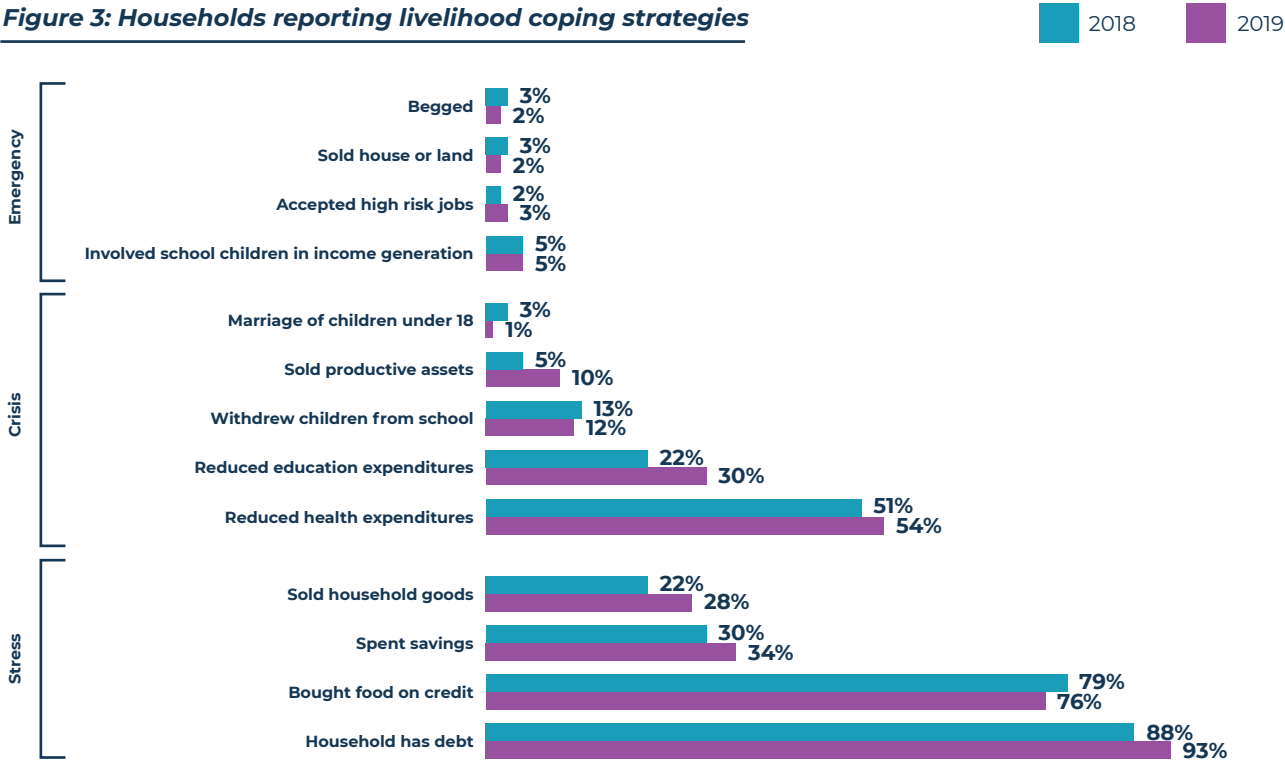
LIVELIHOOD COPING STRATEGIES

97% of households continue to resort to some type of livelihood coping strategy.

Another measure of household’s coping capacity is livelihood-based coping strategies (asset depleting coping strategies). These strategies affect a household’s longer-term coping capacity. For example, a household that sells a house or sends children to work will have a much lower coping capacity to future shocks

than a household that only spent savings to get food. Data shows that households in 2019 have been adopting less emergency coping strategies and much more crisis¹ coping strategies. Specifically, households in 2019 have reduced their education and health expenditure more commonly than in 2018 (figure 3). Additionally, households that sold productive assets in 2019 have doubled since 2018, from 5% to 10%.

Figure 3: Households reporting livelihood coping strategies

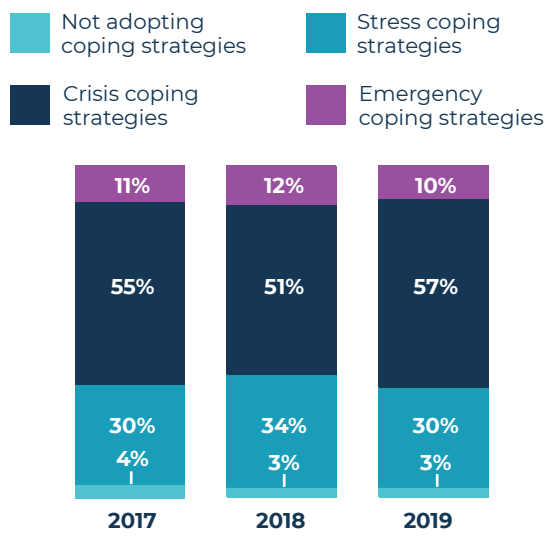


The majority of geographical districts throughout Lebanon have either maintained the same level of severity in terms of their asset depleting coping strategies or have increasingly adopted crisis or emergency coping strategies. The only districts where levels of adopting such extreme strategies have declined are Akkar (from 61-75% in 2018 to 41-60% in 2019), Baalbek (from over 75% in 2018 to 61-75% in 2019), and Jbeil (from 61-75% in 2018 to 41-60% in 2019). It is also worth noting that households living in non-permanent shelters (76%) are adopting more crisis and emergency coping strategies compared to non-residential (68%) and residential shelters (64%). Households spending

¹ Emergency coping strategies are begging, involving school children in income generation, accepting high risk jobs and sold house or land in Syria. Crisis coping strategies: withdrawing children from school, sold productive assets, marriage of children below 18 years, reduce expenditures on education and on health

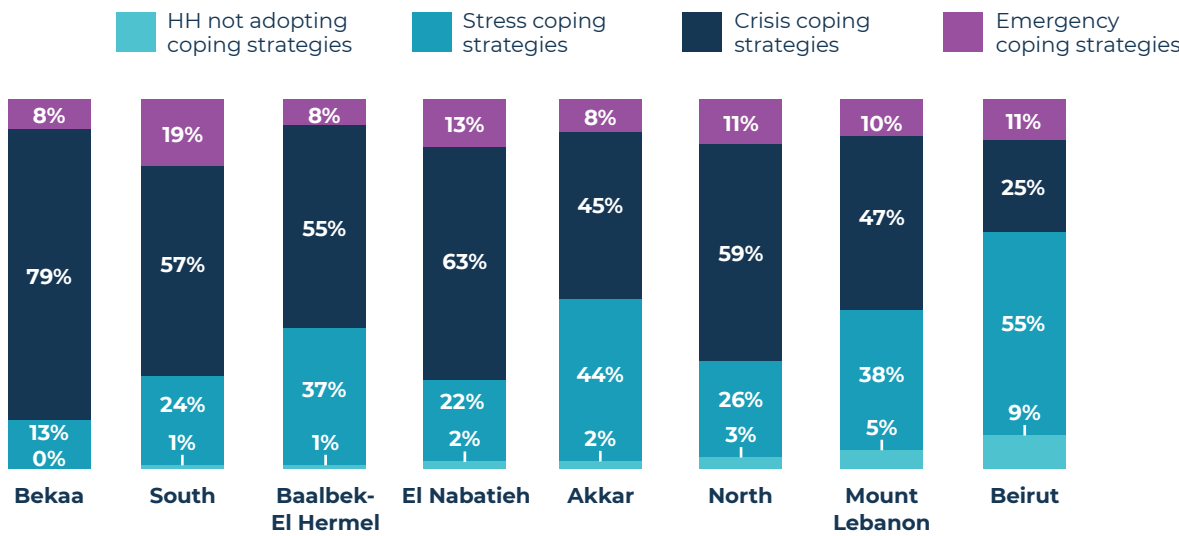
less than the SMEB (US \$87 per month) are adopting more extreme coping strategies than less economically vulnerable households that are spending more than the SMEB. For example, 61% of households under SMEB are adopting crisis coping strategies, as opposed to 56% of households spending between SMEB and MEB (US \$87 – US \$113 per month).

Figure 4: Livelihood coping strategies 2017-2019



The highest percentage of households adopting emergency coping strategies is in the South (19%); including strategies such as accepting high risk, illegal, socially degrading activities (9%) and involving school age children in income generation (8%). The highest percentage of households adopting crisis strategies to cope with the lack of food or lack of money to buy food is in Bekaa (79%). These crisis strategies involve reducing health expenditures (78%), education expenditure (31%) and withdrawing children from school (18%). Additionally, the highest percentage of households adopting stress coping strategies are in Beirut (55%) through accumulating debt (78%), buying food on credit (57%), and

Figure 5: Livelihood based coping strategies by governorate



Voices from the field

This box summarises discussions about the results of VASyR 2019 held in all field offices. It is based on the contextual knowledge of key actors in the field, as opposed to quantitative data.

In Nabatieh, which has the highest rate of children involved in income generation, as well as the highest percentage of children involved in child labour, such coping mechanisms were linked to the deterioration of the economic situation of refugees, as well as plummeting legal residency rates and restrictions on the freedom of movement.

Annex 21: Food related coping strategies

Food related coping strategies in the last 7 days								
	Restricted food consumption of female head of households	Relied on less preferred/less expensive food	Borrowed food or relied on help from friends or relatives	Reduced the number of meals eaten per day	Reduced portion size of meals	Spent days without eating	Restricted consumption by adults in order of children can eat	Sent household members to eat elsewhere
Total	9.4%	88.2%	38.6%	59.9%	58.6%	4.4%	37.0%	6.8%
Governorate								
Akkar	8.0%	96.7%	20.9%	78.9%	57.1%	2.7%	50.7%	3.3%
Baalbek-El Hermel	18.9%	95.4%	66.4%	61.7%	55.6%	1.4%	29.6%	19.4%
Beirut	5.2%	77.3%	27.9%	52.4%	56.1%	9.3%	24.5%	3.2%
Bekaa	18.8%	92.6%	49.9%	40.8%	49.6%	0.0%	27.8%	10.1%
El Nabatieh	2.1%	90.9%	65.2%	62.9%	71.9%	5.1%	27.3%	4.7%
Mount Lebanon	5.9%	79.5%	30.0%	56.3%	51.2%	7.4%	30.3%	4.3%
North	3.3%	93.7%	26.5%	84.8%	84.3%	3.4%	63.9%	1.6%
South	3.0%	82.2%	39.4%	51.8%	62.8%	11.0%	40.1%	7.7%
Expenditure								
>=125% MEB (>=143US\$)	3.2%	78.9%	29.5%	51.5%	49.5%	6.1%	17.9%	3.7%
MEB- 125% MEB (114 - 142US\$)	5.6%	82.7%	36.3%	61.2%	55.0%	6.7%	32.5%	4.7%
SMEB-MEB (87-113US\$)	7.3%	88.8%	35.3%	57.3%	60.1%	3.1%	38.4%	5.3%
< SMEB (87US\$)	12.7%	91.8%	42.1%	62.7%	61.1%	3.9%	43.2%	8.3%
Food security classification								
Food secure	2.0%	54.7%	9.3%	12.8%	12.8%	.6%	4.8%	.7%
Mild food insecurity	9.2%	91.4%	37.9%	59.2%	57.3%	2.4%	35.9%	5.4%
Moderate food insecurity	11.0%	92.2%	48.4%	74.2%	74.0%	7.7%	48.8%	11.4%
Severe food insecurity	16.0%	80.1%	56.7%	80.0%	83.7%	27.5%	39.7%	8.8%
Gender of the head of household								
Female	15.1%	91.4%	52.0%	62.0%	61.6%	4.4%	34.7%	12.5%
Male	8.1%	87.5%	35.7%	59.4%	57.9%	4.4%	37.5%	5.5%
Shelter type								
Non-permanent shelter	15.6%	93.7%	54.1%	55.1%	57.1%	1.7%	35.2%	11.4%
Non-residential	11.3%	89.0%	34.6%	61.2%	57.5%	6.9%	37.0%	7.0%
Residential	7.2%	86.5%	34.8%	61.1%	59.2%	4.8%	37.5%	5.4%

Annex 22: Average number of days food related copings were applied

	Average number of days food related copings were applied							
	Less expensive food	Borrowed food	Reduced meals	Reduced portions	Spent days without food	Restricted consumption by adults	Sent HH members to eat elsewhere	Other
Total	4.5	1.3	2.8	2.7	0.1	1.8	2	2
Governorate								
Akkar	6.4	.8	4.8	3.5	.1	3.3	.1	.4
Baalbek-El Hermel	3.0	1.6	1.5	1.1	.0	.9	.4	.4
Beirut	3.8	.7	1.5	1.8	.2	.9	.1	.1
Bekaa	3.2	1.1	1.0	1.1	0.0	.5	.2	.3
El Nabatieh	4.8	2.6	2.7	3.3	.1	1.1	.1	.1
Mount Lebanon	4.5	1.3	2.7	2.6	.1	1.5	.1	.2
North	6.4	1.0	5.5	5.6	.1	4.3	.1	.2
South	3.8	1.4	2.1	2.7	.2	1.5	.2	.1
Expenditure								
>=125% MEB (>=143US\$)	4.3	1.1	2.4	2.4	.1	1.0	.1	.1
MEB- 125% MEB (114 - 142US\$)	4.4	1.3	3.1	2.8	.1	1.7	.1	.2
SMEB-MEB (87-113US\$)	4.7	1.1	2.8	2.8	.1	1.9	.1	.2
< SMEB (87US\$)	4.5	1.3	2.8	2.6	.1	2.0	.2	.3
Food security classification								
Food secure	2.5	.3	.5	.5	.0	.2	.0	.1
Mild food insecurity	4.6	1.2	2.7	2.6	.0	1.7	.1	.3
Moderate food insecurity	5.0	1.7	3.6	3.6	.1	2.4	.3	.3
Severe food insecurity	5.3	2.4	4.3	4.8	.5	2.1	.1	.4
Gender of the head of household								
Female	4.4	1.7	2.7	2.6	.1	1.5	.2	.4
Male	4.5	1.2	2.8	2.7	.1	1.8	.1	.2
Shelter type								
Non-permanent shelter	3.8	1.4	1.9	.2 1.9	.0	1.3	.2	.3
Non-residential	4.6	1.3	2.9	2.8	.1	1.9	.2	.4
Residential	4.7	1.2	3.0	2.9	.1	1.9	.1	.2

Annex 23: Livelihood-related coping strategies in the last 30 days

	Livelihood-related coping strategies in the last 30 days													
	Sold household goods (radio, furniture, television, jewelry etc..)	Sold productive assets or means of transport (sewing machine, row, bicycle, car, livestock..)	Reduced essential non-food: education	Reduced essential non-food: health	Spent savings	Bought food on credit or borrowed money to purchase food	Sold house or land	Withdrew children from school	Begged	Marriage of children under 19	Accepted high risk, illegal, socially degrading activities	Had school children (6-15 years old) involved in income generation	Household has debt	Bought food on credit or borrowed money to purchase food
Total	27.8%	9.7%	30.1%	54.5%	33.8%	76.1%	2.1%	11.6%	2.1%	1.3%	2.6%	4.9%	92.7%	76.1%
Governorate														
Akkar	25.2%	7.0%	22.1%	35.6%	22.5%	65.4%	1.0%	11.2%	2.2%	1.2%	1.8%	3.7%	92.6%	65.4%
Baalbek-El Hermel	21.8%	16.7%	14.7%	35.9%	26.2%	88.8%	1.7%	14.5%	2.6%	.4%	.8%	2.5%	98.3%	88.8%
Beirut	15.8%	4.5%	11.7%	23.4%	50.9%	56.9%	2.6%	5.6%	5.8%	1.3%	3.0%	3.0%	77.9%	56.9%
Bekaa	40.2%	13.3%	30.8%	78.2%	50.3%	92.3%	2.1%	18.1%	.7%	.4%	1.4%	4.0%	97.7%	92.3%
El Nabatieh	24.0%	13.6%	30.4%	68.2%	33.2%	86.1%	1.5%	12.0%	.8%	1.6%	4.6%	8.1%	95.2%	86.1%
Mount Lebanon	24.8%	3.6%	31.4%	46.6%	31.1%	67.5%	1.6%	8.3%	2.8%	1.6%	2.7%	4.6%	88.3%	67.5%
North	29.4%	13.9%	47.7%	60.3%	27.4%	69.3%	3.7%	10.4%	2.2%	2.3%	2.5%	7.1%	92.5%	69.3%
South	22.0%	9.9%	27.5%	66.2%	30.1%	78.5%	2.3%	8.7%	1.4%	1.9%	8.9%	7.8%	93.9%	78.5%
Expenditure														
>=125% MEB (>=143US\$)	23.4%	7.1%	20.9%	43.4%	34.5%	62.0%	2.8%	4.3%	1.8%	1.9%	2.0%	3.5%	85.3%	62.0%
MEB- 125% MEB (114 - 142US\$)	26.1%	7.6%	33.1%	52.3%	36.8%	71.1%	1.8%	8.1%	1.8%	1.3%	3.5%	2.9%	90.1%	71.1%
SMEB-MEB (87-113US\$)	26.4%	10.8%	30.4%	53.0%	35.0%	76.8%	1.3%	10.5%	1.3%	1.8%	3.1%	5.3%	93.1%	76.8%
< SMEB (87US\$)	30.5%	10.4%	32.6%	59.1%	32.8%	81.6%	2.2%	14.8%	2.3%	1.0%	2.6%	5.5%	95.7%	81.6%
Food security classification														
Food secure	11.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25.1%	37.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	72.8%	37.5%
Mild food insecurity	29.1%	10.0%	31.1%	55.6%	35.4%	79.9%	1.9%	12.1%	1.1%	1.5%	2.2%	4.1%	94.6%	79.9%
Moderate food insecurity	31.6%	12.5%	37.8%	69.2%	30.4%	80.8%	2.9%	14.6%	3.6%	.9%	4.2%	7.8%	95.0%	80.8%
Severe food insecurity	22.4%	9.4%	31.7%	64.9%	28.6%	75.2%	0.0%	16.9%	23.9%	0.0%	11.7%	11.9%	88.9%	75.2%
Gender of the head of household														
Female	29.3%	9.2%	29.8%	58.0%	29.1%	73.8%	1.7%	14.8%	3.1%	.7%	2.2%	6.7%	90.6%	73.8%
Male	27.5%	9.8%	30.2%	53.7%	34.8%	76.7%	2.1%	10.9%	1.9%	1.4%	2.7%	4.4%	93.2%	76.7%
Shelter type														
Non-permanent shelter	29.5%	9.8%	31.1%	60.3%	32.6%	88.8%	2.6%	20.0%	1.9%	.4%	1.2%	6.2%	98.4%	88.8%
Non-residential	20.1%	10.9%	31.2%	54.8%	31.9%	67.1%	1.9%	13.2%	3.0%	1.9%	3.4%	3.9%	88.4%	67.1%
Residential	28.6%	9.4%	29.6%	52.7%	34.4%	73.9%	1.9%	8.9%	2.0%	1.5%	3.0%	4.6%	91.7%	73.9%

Annex 24: Summary of asset depletion coping strategies

	Summary of asset depletion coping strategies			
	HH not adopting coping strategies	Stress coping strategies	Crisis coping strategies	Emergencies coping strategies
Total	2.9%	30.3%	56.7%	10.1%
Governorate				
Akkar	2.5%	44.2%	45.4%	8.0%
Baalbek-El Hermel	.9%	36.9%	54.6%	7.6%
Beirut	9.1%	54.8%	24.9%	11.3%
Bekaa	.1%	12.6%	79.1%	8.2%
El Nabatieh	1.6%	22.4%	62.9%	13.2%
Mount Lebanon	5.4%	37.6%	47.1%	9.9%
North	3.3%	26.5%	59.2%	11.0%
South	.6%	24.2%	56.6%	18.6%
Expenditure				
>=125% MEB (>=143US\$)	8.2%	40.3%	43.5%	8.1%
MEB- 125% MEB (114 - 142US\$)	2.5%	35.8%	55.5%	6.2%
SMEB-MEB (87-113US\$)	2.5%	31.6%	56.2%	9.6%
< SMEB (87US\$)	1.2%	26.0%	61.4%	11.4%
Food security classification				
Food secure	20.4%	79.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Mild food insecurity	1.5%	30.0%	60.3%	8.1%
Moderate food insecurity	.7%	16.2%	67.3%	15.8%
Severe food insecurity	0.0%	13.3%	43.3%	43.4%
Gender of the head of household				
Female	2.9%	26.9%	58.6%	11.7%
Male	2.9%	31.1%	56.3%	9.7%
Shelter type				
Non-permanent shelter	.3%	23.7%	64.3%	11.6%
Non-residential	4.0%	28.4%	58.1%	9.4%
Residential	3.4%	32.6%	54.2%	9.7%