



Inter-Agency
Coordination
Lebanon



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency



WFP
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FOOD CONSUMPTION

This chapter considers the patterns of food consumption among Syrian refugee households. Various parameters of food consumption have been analysed, including food consumption score (FCS), number of meals per day (adults and children), dietary diversity scores (daily and weekly), and the nutrition FCS. Food consumption is the main pillar of food security, and is used to classify households' food security level.

KEY FINDINGS

- Six out of ten Syrian refugee households (57 per cent) had poor or borderline food consumption, an increase of 11 percentage points compared to 2021.
- FCSs indicated that refugees in North Lebanon (72 per cent), Baalbek El-Hermel (62 per cent), Bekaa (62 per cent) and Akkar (59 per cent) had the highest rates of inadequate food intake. El Nabatieh (60 per cent), South Lebanon (56 per cent) and Mount Lebanon (52 per cent) governorates had the highest rates of adequate food intake. Non-residential shelters had the highest percentage of refugees with poor FCSs (25 per cent).
- Households below the survival minimum expenditure basket (SMEB) had a 9-point percentage increase for inadequate food consumption compared to households living above the SMEB. Similarly, female-headed households had a 10-point increased percentage of inadequate food consumption.
- Adult and child Syrian refugees were on average consuming 2.1 and 2.7 meals per day respectively, denoting a slight increase since 2021. The lowest number of meals consumed per day was recorded in South Lebanon (1.5 for adults and 2.1 for children).
- Only 14 per cent of refugee households had high daily dietary diversity scores and were consuming more than 6.5 food groups per day, as opposed to 21 per cent in 2021. Similarly, weekly dietary diversity scores also slightly decreased in 2022: 46 per cent were consuming ≥ 9 food groups per week, compared to 48 per cent.
- Households in non-residential shelters, households receiving assistance, households with at least one working member and male-headed households had the highest rates of daily and weekly dietary diversity.
- In 2022, 24 per cent of refugee households were consuming vitamin A-rich food on a daily basis, 12 percentage point lower than 2021 figures (36 per cent). Likewise, daily intake of protein-rich foods decreased 10 percentage points in 2022 (34 per cent versus 44 per cent in 2021).

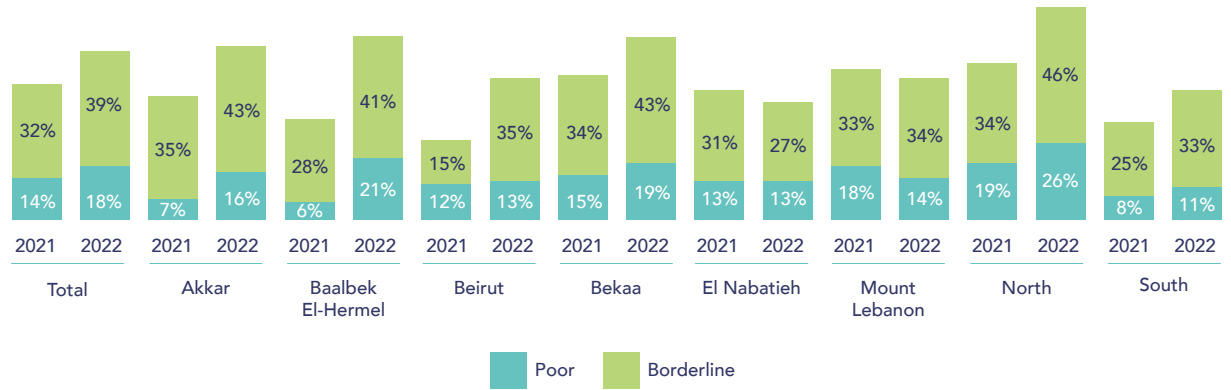
FOOD CONSUMPTION

FCSs showed that 57 per cent of Syrian refugees have inadequate food intake. A total of 18 per cent and 39 per cent respectively had poor and borderline food consumption scores. In 2021, the percentage of refugees with inadequate food intake was 46 per cent as opposed to 57 per cent this year, an increase of 11 percentage-points

Governorates with the highest prevalence of poor and borderline food consumption were North Lebanon (72 per cent), Baalbek-El

Hermel (62 per cent), Bekaa (62 per cent) and Akkar (59 per cent). El Nabatieh, South Lebanon and Mount Lebanon governorates had the lowest rates of inadequate food intake. In Akkar and Baalbek-El Hermel, the rates of refugees with poor FCSs more than doubled from 2021 to 2022. Likewise, all governorates, except for El Nabatieh and Mount Lebanon, experienced a 10-point plus increase in rates of inadequate dietary intake. El Nabatieh and Mount Lebanon had a slight decrease in the percentage of refugees with poor/borderline FCSs.

Figure 1: Households with poor, borderline and acceptable food consumption scores, by governorate



Non-residential shelters had the highest percentage of refugees with poor FCSs at 25 per cent, compared to 20 per cent in non-permanent shelters and 16 per cent in residential shelters. A total of 18 per cent of households below the SMEB had poor FCSs, compared to 11 per cent of households above the SMEB. The prevalence of inadequate food intake among female-headed households was 65 per cent, compared to 55 per cent of male-headed households.

NUMBER OF MEALS PER DAY

Adults

In 2022, Syrian refugee adults consumed on average 2.1 meals per day. This number denotes a slight increase in number of meals per day compared to 2021 figures. Akkar showed the highest increase, from 1.4 meals in 2021 to 2.2 meals in 2022. Refugees in Baalbek-El Hermel, El Nabatieh, South Lebanon and Bekaa reported consuming 0.1–0.4 fewer meals per day compared to 2021. Refugees in South Lebanon consumed the lowest number of

meals per day, 1.5, while refugees in Baalbek-El Hermel and Bekaa had the highest number, 2.3. Refugees living in non-permanent shelters reported consuming more meals per day (2.3) than those living in residential and non-residential shelters (2.1). Similarly, male-headed households also consumed a slightly higher numbers of meals per day (2.1) than female-headed households (2).

Children

Compared to 2021, Syrian refugee children under 5 consumed almost the same number of meals per day in 2022 (2.6 meals per day in 2021 versus 2.7 meals/day in 2021). The highest increase in number of meals consumed among children was in Akkar (0.7 increase) followed by North Lebanon (0.5 increase). Households in the Bekaa, El Nabatieh and South Lebanon regions all reported a 0.2 decrease in the number of meals consumed per day compared to 2021 figures. Children in Baalbek-El Hermel and Bekaa consumed

the highest number of meals per day, 3.2 and 3 respectively. Even with the increase from 2021, Akkar still reported the second lowest number of meals per day (2.4), only preceded by South Lebanon (2.1). Children living in non-permanent shelters consumed more meals per day, 3, than those living in residential and non-residential shelters, 2.6 and 2.7 meals per day respectively. Children in female-headed households reported a 0.3 deficit in number of meals consumed compared to those in male-headed households.

Figure 2: Number of meals consumed by adults per day

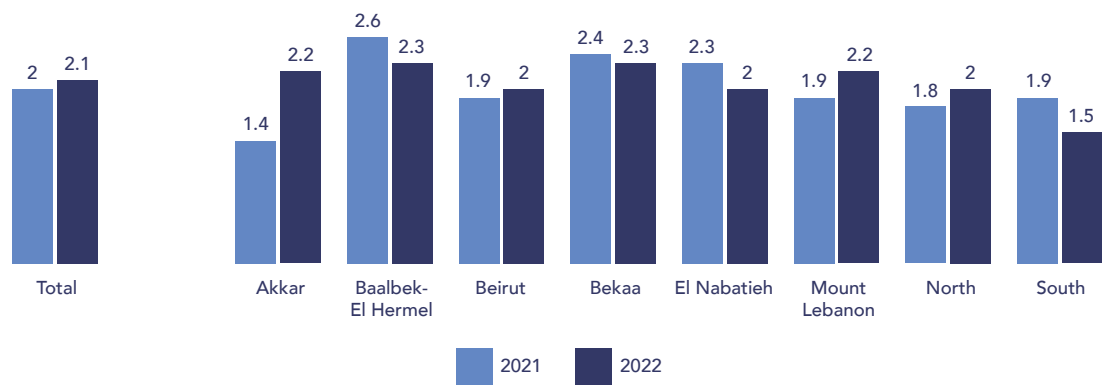
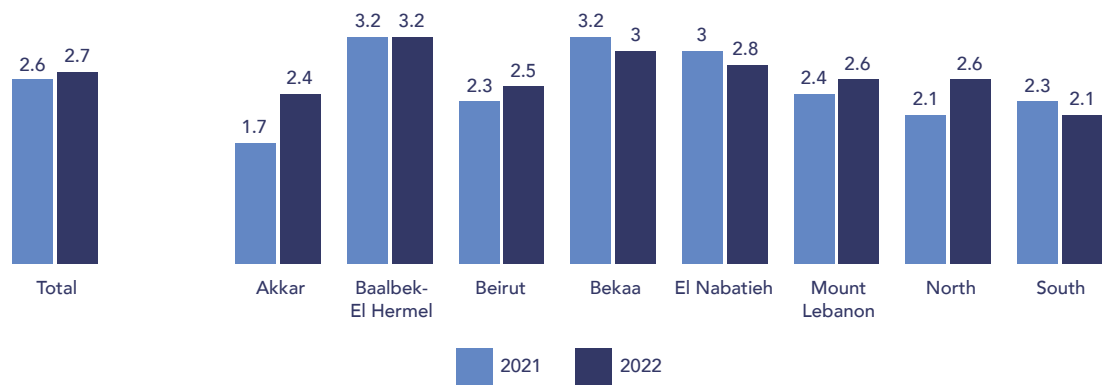


Figure 3: Number of meals consumed by children under 5 per day



DIETARY DIVERSITY

The average daily and weekly dietary diversity scores for households were the same in 2021 and 2022; refugees were consuming 5 food groups daily and 8 food groups weekly. However, the percentage of Syrian refugees consuming a high dietary diversity has decreased. Only 14 per cent of refugee households were consuming more than 6.5 food groups per day. However, weekly dietary diversity scores were better, with 46 per cent of households consuming 9 or more food groups per week. Beirut was the governorate with the highest percentage of refugees consuming less than 4.5 food groups per day at 32 per cent, whereas South Lebanon governorate had the lowest percentage at 8 per cent. As for the weekly dietary diversity score, North Lebanon, Baalbek-El Hermel and Bekaa hosted the highest percentage of refugees consuming 6 or fewer food groups per week (17 per cent, 14 per cent and 13 per cent respectively).

Households receiving assistance had higher daily and weekly dietary diversity scores. A total of 15 per cent of households receiving assistance consumed ≥ 6.5 food groups per day, compared to 12 per cent of refugees not receiving assistance. Similarly, 47 per cent of refugees receiving assistance consumed ≥ 9 food groups per week, compared to 41 per cent of refugees not receiving assistance.

Refugees living in non-residential and non-permanent shelters had the lowest rates of high weekly dietary diversity, 37 per cent each; whereas, refugees in residential shelters had the highest rates of high weekly dietary diversity, 50 per cent.

A total of 24 per cent of refugees above the SMEB had high daily dietary diversity scores (versus 13 per cent of refugees below the SMEB), and 61 per cent had high weekly diversity scores (versus 45 per cent of refugees below the SMEB).

Households with at least one member with a disability had higher daily dietary diversity scores compared to households with no members with a disability (16 per cent versus 13 per cent); however, no differences between the two groups were observed in terms of weekly dietary diversity.

Both daily and weekly dietary diversity scores were higher among households with at least one working member versus households with no working members. The rate of high daily dietary diversity was 16 per cent of households with at least one working member, compared to 10 per cent in households with no working members. The difference was even higher in terms of weekly dietary diversity: 50 per cent of households with working members had high scores, versus 38 per cent in households with no working members.

Similarly, male-headed households had higher dietary diversity scores. Only 8 per cent of female-headed households were consuming more than 6.5 food groups per day, compared to 15 per cent for male-headed households. This difference is even higher in terms of weekly dietary diversity: 48 per cent of male-headed households had high dietary diversity compared to 36 per cent of female-headed households.

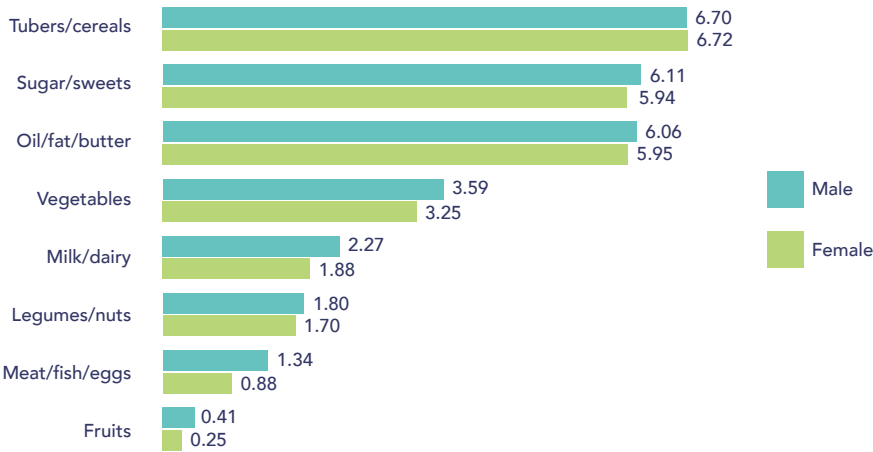
Table 1: HDADD and HWDD groups and mean, 2020–2022

		HDADD categories					HWDD categories		
	Household daily diet diversity (HDADD)	< 4.5 food groups	4.5–6.4 food groups	≥ 6.5 food groups		Household weekly diet diversity (HWDD)	≤ 6 food groups	7–8 food groups	≥ 9 food groups
2020	5	21%	56%	23%		8	16%	40%	44%
2021	5	22%	57%	21%		8	11%	41%	48%
2022	5	20%	66%	14%		8	12%	42%	46%

On a weekly basis, the most consumed food groups among Syrian refugees were tubers and cereals (daily), oil/fat/butter (6 days per week), sugar/sweets (6 days per week) and vegetables (4 days per week). On the other hand, fruits and meat/fish/eggs were the least consumed food groups, less than once a week and once a week respectively. Compared to 2021, these figures remain unchanged. Akkar was the governorate with the lowest consumption of four food groups: tubers/cereals, meat/fish/eggs, fruits and vegetables. Refugees in Baalbek-El Hermel had the lowest consumption of legumes/nuts, refugees in Beirut had the lowest consumption of sugar/sweets, refugees in Mount Lebanon had the lowest consumption of oil/fat/butter, and refugees in North Lebanon had

the lowest consumption of milk/dairy products. While male- and female-headed households consumed tubers and cereals at the same frequency (daily), male-headed households consumed all other food groups at a higher frequency. The greatest difference was observed in the meat/fish/eggs food group; male-headed Syrian refugee households consumed it 1.3 days per week, whereas female-headed households consumed it 0.8 days per week. Refugees living in non-permanent shelters consumed the least amounts of legumes/nuts, milk/dairy, meat/fish/eggs and fruits, and the highest amounts of sugar/sweets and oil/fat/butter. Those living in non-residential shelters consumed the least amounts of vegetables.

Figure 4: Household mean of weekly consumption of food groups, by gender of the head of household

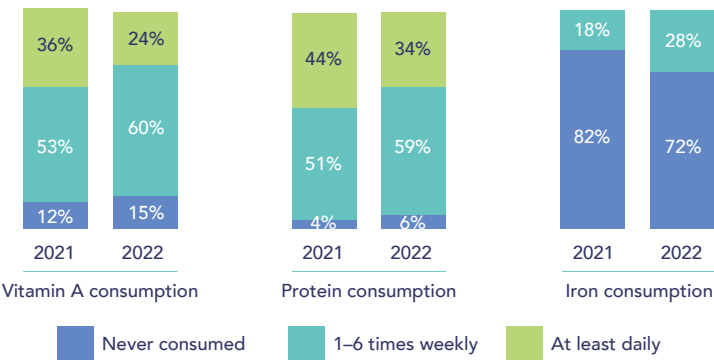


FOOD CONSUMPTION SCORE: NUTRITION

In terms of nutritional FCSs three key elements were measured: the consumption of vitamin A, of protein and of iron. Although 24 per cent and 34 per cent of Syrian refugees respectively were consuming vitamin A- and protein-rich foods on a daily basis, only 0.2 per cent of refugees were consuming iron-rich foods daily. A total of 72 per cent of Syrian refugees reported having “never

consumed” iron-rich foods, mainly meat/organ meat/fish, in the previous week. The percentage of refugees consuming vitamin A-rich foods decreased from 36 per cent in 2021 to 24 per cent in 2022. Similarly, the percentage of refugees consuming protein-rich foods daily also decreased by 10 percentage points, from 44 per cent to 34 per cent.

Figure 5: Food consumption score (nutrition), by category



The governorates of Akkar and North Lebanon hosted the highest rates of refugees reporting having never consumed iron-rich foods within the previous week, 86 per cent and 83 per cent respectively. On the other hand, refugees in El Nabatieh and Mount Lebanon had the highest rates of moderate intake of iron-rich foods (1–6 times per week) at 39 per cent. South Lebanon had the highest rates of consumption of vitamin A-rich foods: 46 per cent of refugee households consuming vitamin A-rich foods daily. North Lebanon had the lowest rates of households consuming vitamin A-rich foods daily, 12 per cent, followed by Bekaa, 13 per cent. El Nabatieh and South Lebanon had the highest shares of refugees consuming protein-rich foods daily at 50 per cent, compared to only 24 per cent and 23 per cent of refugees in Baalbek-El Hermel and Bekaa respectively.

A total of 16 per cent households below the SMEB reported having never consumed vitamin A-rich foods during the previous week, compared to 8 per cent in households above the SMEB. Similarly, households below the SMEB had a higher percentage of refugees who have never consumed protein-rich foods during the previous week (7 per cent versus 4 per cent in households above the SMEB). Households below the SMEB also reported a higher frequency of never consuming iron-rich foods during the previous week (73 per cent versus 58 per cent in households above the SMEB). This indicates the refugees below the SMEB are more vulnerable to nutritional deficiencies, because they were consuming fewer foods rich in vitamin A, protein and iron compared to those above the SMEB.

Non-residential shelters had the highest share of refugees who had never consumed vitamin A-rich foods during the previous week at 23 per cent, compared to 19 per cent and 13 per cent in non-permanent and residential shelters respectively. In residential shelters, 28 per cent of refugees consumed vitamin A-rich foods daily. Households in non-residential shelters also had the highest rates of refugees who had never consumed protein-rich foods during the previous week, at 10 per cent versus 8 per cent and 5 per cent in non-permanent and residential shelters. Non-permanent shelters hosted the highest percentage of refugees to have never consumed iron-rich foods at 81 per cent, followed by 75 per cent of refugees residing in non-residential shelters.

A total of 27 per cent of male-headed households consumed vitamin A-rich foods daily compared to 14 per cent of female-headed households. Likewise, male-headed households reported higher consumption of protein-rich foods: 36 per cent consumed protein-rich foods daily, compared to 25 per cent of female-headed households. While 70 per cent of male-headed households reported low iron consumption, 77 per cent of female-headed households reported having never consumed iron-rich foods during the previous week.

A total of 32 per cent of refugees not receiving assistance consumed protein-rich foods daily, whereas 35 per cent of refugees receiving assistance consumed protein-rich foods daily. Similarly, 75 per cent of refugees not receiving assistance reported having never consumed iron-rich sources during the previous week, compared to 71 per cent of refugees receiving assistance.

Annex 1: Food consumption (1/4)

	FCS	Food consumption groups			Number of meals - adults	Number of meals - children	HDADD
		Poor	Borderline	Acceptable			
Total	42.6	18%	39%	43%	2.1	2.7	5.3
Governorate							
Akkar	41.3	16%	43%	41%	2.2	2.4	5.4
Baalbek-El Hermel	40.7	21%	41%	38%	2.3	3.2	5.4
Beirut	46.6	13%	35%	52%	2.0	2.5	5.2
Bekaa	39.7	19%	43%	38%	2.3	3.0	5.1
El Nabatieh	50.1	13%	27%	60%	2.0	2.8	6.0
Mount Lebanon	46.2	14%	34%	52%	2.2	2.6	5.2
North	37.2	26%	46%	28%	2.0	2.6	5.2
South	46.8	11%	33%	56%	1.5	2.1	5.6
Food security status							
Food secure	61.9	0%	0%	100%	2.2	2.5	6.5
Marginally food secure	55.3	0%	9%	91%	2.2	2.8	6.0
Moderately food insecure	37.1	21%	58%	21%	2.1	2.7	5.0
Severely food insecure	24.8	91%	9%	0%	1.9	2.5	4.2
SMEB							
Below SMEB	41.9	18%	39%	4230%	2.1	2.7	5.2
Above SMEB	48.3	11%	37%	52%	2.1	2.7	5.6
Shelter type							
Residential	44.0	16%	38%	47%	2.1	2.6	5.3
Non-residential	40.4	25%	36%	39%	2.1	2.7	5.2
Non-permanent	39.0	20%	46%	34%	2.3	3.0	5.2
Gender of the head of household							
Male	43.3	16%	39%	45%	2.1	2.7	5.3
Female	39.0	24%	41%	35%	2.0	2.4	5.0
At least one member of the household has disability							
No	42.7	18%	39%	43%	2.1	2.7	5.3
Yes	42.3	18%	38%	44%	2.1	2.7	5.3

Annex 1: Food consumption (2/4)

	HDADD categories			HWDD	HWDD categories		
	<4.5 food groups	4.5-6.4 food groups	≥6.5 food groups		≤ 6 food groups	7-8 food groups	≥ 9 food groups
Total	20%	66%	14%	8.4	12%	42%	46%
Governorate							
Akkar	19%	70%	11%	8.0	8%	61%	31%
Baalbek-El Hermel	13%	73%	14%	8.2	14%	42%	44%
Beirut	32%	47%	21%	8.7	10%	35%	55%
Bekaa	17%	76%	7%	8.3	13%	43%	44%
El Nabatieh	11%	54%	35%	8.7	11%	37%	52%
Mount Lebanon	28%	53%	19%	8.6	11%	33%	56%
North	22%	68%	11%	7.8	17%	52%	31%
South	8%	79%	13%	8.9	5%	35%	60%
Food security status							
Food secure	1%	44%	55%	10.0	0%	18%	82%
Marginally food secure	7%	64%	29%	9.4	2%	24%	74%
Moderately food insecure	24%	69%	7%	7.9	14%	51%	34%
Severely food insecure	55%	45%	0%	6.6	44%	52%	4%
SMEB							
Below SMEB	20%	67%	13%	8.3	12%	43%	45%
Above SMEB	19%	57%	24%	8.9	8%	31%	61%
Shelter type							
Residential	22%	63%	16%	8.5	11%	39%	50%
Non-residential	21%	70%	10%	8.0	19%	45%	37%
Non-permanent	15%	75%	10%	8.1	14%	50%	37%
Gender of the head of household							
Male	19%	66%	15%	8.4	11%	41%	48%
Female	27%	65%	8%	8.0	16%	48%	36%
At least one member of the household has disability							
No	20%	67%	14%	8.4	12%	41%	47%
Yes	20%	64%	16%	8.3	11%	43%	46%

Annex 1: Food consumption (3/4)

	Weekly consumption							
	Tubers and cereals	Legumes and nuts	Milk and other dairy products	Meat, fish and eggs	Fruits	Vegetables and leaves	Oil/fat/butter	Sugar or sweets
Total	6.7	1.8	2.2	1.3	0.4	3.5	6.0	6.1
Governorate								
Akkar	6.4	2.4	2.2	0.7	0.1	3.1	6.5	6.5
Baalbek-El Hermel	7.0	1.4	1.9	1.0	0.3	3.8	6.6	6.8
Beirut	6.6	1.7	2.9	1.7	0.6	4.0	5.5	5.2
Bekaa	6.7	1.6	1.7	1.2	0.4	3.3	6.3	6.2
El Nabatieh	6.8	2.5	2.4	1.9	0.8	4.4	6.4	6.5
Mount Lebanon	6.8	1.7	2.7	1.8	0.5	3.6	5.3	5.4
North	6.6	1.8	1.5	0.7	0.2	3.5	5.9	6.1
South	6.7	2.1	3.1	1.1	0.5	3.2	6.7	6.8
Food security status								
Food secure	6.8	2.7	4.3	2.5	1.5	5.2	6.5	6.6
Marginally food secure	6.9	2.2	3.8	2.1	0.7	4.4	6.2	6.2
Moderately food insecure	6.7	1.6	1.5	0.9	0.2	3.2	6.0	6.0
Severely food insecure	6.0	0.8	0.4	0.1	0.1	2.4	5.7	5.7
SMEB								
Below SMEB	6.7	1.8	2.1	1.2	0.3	3.5	6.1	6.1
Above SMEB	6.7	1.8	2.9	1.9	0.8	4.0	5.9	5.9
Shelter type								
Residential	6.7	1.8	2.4	1.4	0.4	3.6	5.9	5.9
Non-residential	6.7	1.7	2.0	1.0	0.3	3.3	6.0	6.1
Non-permanent	6.7	1.7	1.8	0.8	0.2	3.5	6.4	6.5
Gender of the head of household								
Male	6.7	1.8	2.3	1.3	0.4	3.6	6.1	6.1
Female	6.7	1.7	1.9	0.9	0.2	3.2	5.9	5.9
At least one member of the household has disability								
No	6.7	1.8	2.2	1.2	0.4	3.5	6.1	6.1
Yes	6.8	1.7	2.1	1.3	0.4	3.6	6.0	6.1

Annex 1: Food consumption (4/4)

	Vitamin A consumption			Protein consumption			Iron consumption		
	Never consumed	1-6 times a week	At least daily	Never consumed	1-6 times a week	At least daily	Never consumed	1-6 times a week	At least daily
Total	15%	60%	24%	6%	59%	34%	72%	28%	0%
Governorate									
Akkar	17%	67%	16%	3%	65%	32%	86%	14%	0%
Baalbek-El Hermel	20%	64%	16%	11%	64%	24%	79%	21%	0%
Beirut	7%	53%	40%	4%	49%	47%	64%	36%	0%
Bekaa	15%	72%	13%	7%	70%	23%	74%	26%	0%
El Nabatieh	17%	43%	39%	5%	45%	50%	61%	39%	0%
Mount Lebanon	10%	53%	37%	5%	48%	48%	61%	39%	0%
North	27%	61%	12%	10%	70%	20%	83%	17%	0%
South	7%	48%	46%	3%	47%	50%	65%	35%	0%
Food security status									
Food secure	0%	42%	58%	0%	21%	79%	28%	71%	1%
Marginally food secure	1%	48%	51%	0%	28%	72%	50%	49%	0%
Moderately food insecure	20%	68%	12%	7%	76%	16%	82%	18%	0%
Severely food insecure	53%	46%	0%	33%	67%	0%	96%	4%	0%
SMEB									
Below SMEB	16%	61%	23%	7%	61%	33%	73%	26%	0%
Above SMEB	8%	53%	39%	4%	49%	47%	58%	41%	1%
Shelter type									
Residential	13%	59%	28%	5%	56%	39%	69%	31%	0%
Non-residential	23%	55%	22%	10%	59%	31%	75%	24%	0%
Non-permanent	19%	68%	13%	8%	71%	21%	81%	19%	0%
Gender of the head of household									
Male	15%	59%	27%	6%	58%	36%	71%	29%	0%
Female	19%	67%	14%	7%	68%	25%	78%	22%	0%
At least one member of the household has disability									
No	15%	61%	25%	7%	58%	35%	71%	29%	0%
Yes	17%	59%	24%	6%	61%	33%	74%	26%	0%