

Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment in Armenia

In December 2020, the World Food Programme (WFP) carried out a second Food Security assessment in Armenia amidst COVID-19 and the conflict in the adjoining region of Nagorno-Karabakh to compare the situation with the baseline study of July, 2020 and assess how the food security in the country has impacted and identify most vulnerable population groups. The data collection was conducted nationwide among 4,238 Armenian national households including some hosting families of spontaneous arrivals, using the Food Consumption Score (FCS) methodology: a composite score based on dietary diversity, food intake frequency, and relative nutritional importance of different food groups. The assessment was funded by the British Embassy in Yerevan. WFP will repeat its assessment in March, 2021 to capture seasonal trends and lean seasons. Through recurrent exercises such as Food Security Assessments, WFP supports Government's policy makers and partners to design evidence-based interventions in support to the most vulnerable.

Key Findings

In December, 19 percent of households in Armenia were food insecure, of which 1 percent were severely food insecure and 18 percent moderately food insecure. This represents a two percent improvement compared to July.

About 59 percent of households applied crisis (41 percent) or emergency (18 percent) coping mechanisms and this percentage remains equally high since July.

1 out of 3 households were worried about not having enough food because of limited resources including financial resources.

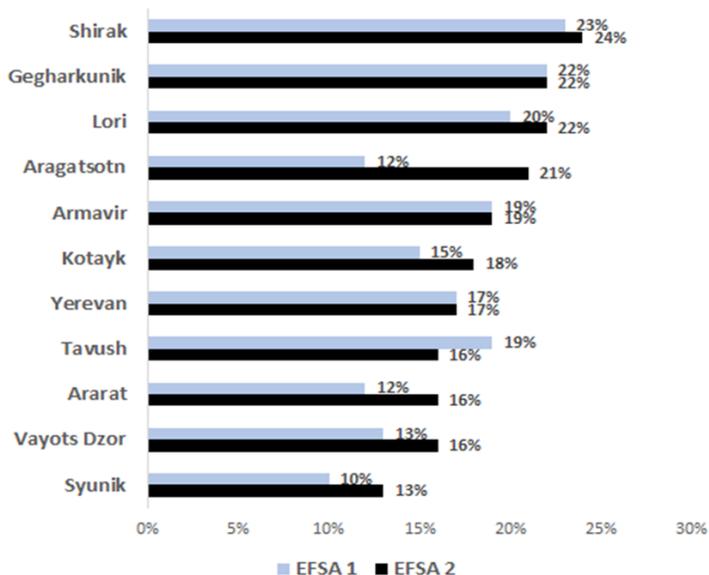
Among households hosting spontaneous arrivals from Nagorno-Karabakh, 75 percent applied crisis and emergency coping mechanisms, while for household not hosting spontaneous arrivals the share was 58 percent.

Geographic Representation of Food Security in Armenia

According to the comprehensive food security indicator based on food consumption score, livelihood coping strategies, income sources and changes in income due to the shocks, comprehensive food security level was at the similar levels of moderately and severely food insecurity in July and December with 17 percent and 19 percent respectively.

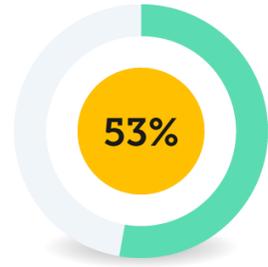
Compared to July, food security levels across regions remained at similar rates. The most significant deterioration was shown in Aragatsotn region from 12 percent in July with an increase to 21 percent in December. Overall, despite the expectation that the situation would have deteriorated due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the conflict in the adjoining region of Nagorno-Karabakh, households have maintained their food security level since July.

Figure 1. Levels of Food Security by regions*

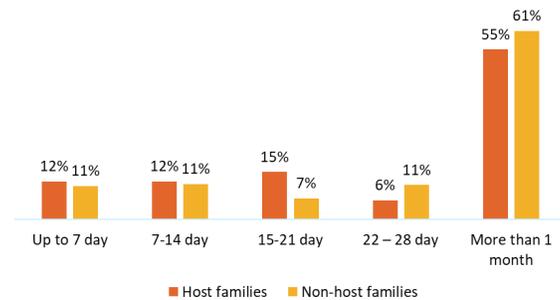


Availability of Food Stocks

Since July 2020 the share of households having food stock **have increased by 21.1 percentage points** in December **reaching to 53 percent** in December 2020.



About 3 out of 5 households reported that their food stock would last more than one month, which is almost twice as high as in July 2020.

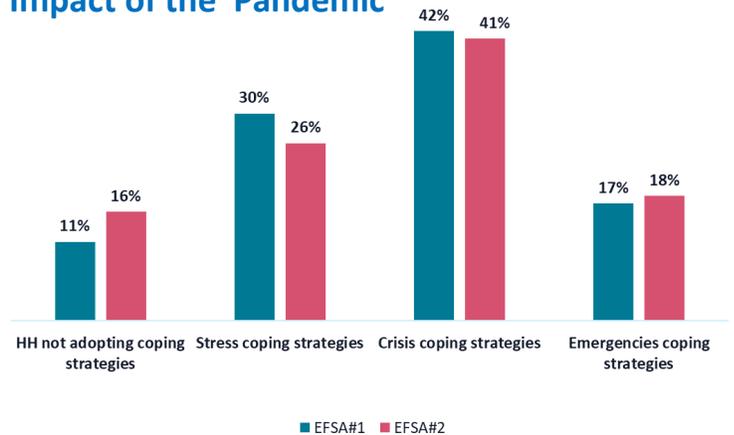


Availability of Food Stock at Hosting

Only 49 percent of hosting families reported they have food stocks, of which 45 percent reported that their food stock would run out within one month.

Coping Mechanisms Used to Minimize the Impact of the Pandemic

The application of crisis and emergency coping strategies has not been changed: it remained 59 percent among general population. Considering the already high share of households applying emergency coping strategy since July 2020 even the slight increasing trend is worrying



Main concerns and priorities

The list of main concerns among the general population drastically changed from the ones in July. In December, 29 percent of the households were concerned about NK crisis in the country, followed by its consequences, and the political situation. Unemployment, and sickness were reported as less concerning in December.

