



World Food Programme

wfp.org

Bulletin 11 – October 2015

IRAQ

October 2015: Food security indicators continue to be poor in Anbar and Ninewa governorates, and for IDPs

Highlights

- **Food consumption indicators deteriorated for Baghdad and remained worse than the national average for Anbar, where 18 percent of households reported consuming an 'inadequate' diet.**
- **Internally displaced (IDP) households – particularly those living in camps – continued to show poorer food security indicators than the general population. About 15 percent of all IDPs had 'inadequate' consumption – five times higher than the average for non-displaced households. Almost 28 percent of the IDPs were using negative food-related coping strategies.**
- **Above-average use of food-related coping continued for households in Anbar (20%) and Ninewa (18%) and declined by 11 percent in Salah Al-Din.**
- **The average cost of a standard food basket remained similar to August across all monitored governorates. However, food basket costs were remarkably high in the besieged district of Haditha in Anbar.**
- **Respondents identify low access to the Public Distribution System (PDS); irregular salary payments; and displacement as the main causes of food insecurity. Restricted PDS access is linked to displacement status.**

Fighting hunger worldwide

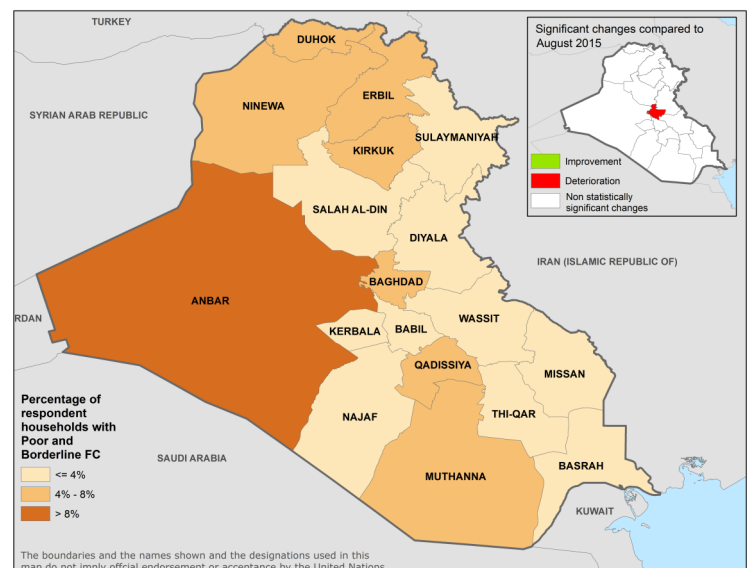
Food consumption indicators deteriorate for Baghdad and remain poor for Anbar

In September, more households reported consuming an inadequate ('poor' or 'borderline') diet in Baghdad, where the proportion of food insecure jumped from 2 percent of all surveyed households in August to 6 percent in September* (Map 1).

The number of households with inadequate consumption remained well above the national average in Anbar governorate, a trend that has regularly been observed since April (Figure 1); 18.5 percent of households had 'poor' and 'borderline' food consumption in September, compared with 4.4 percent nationally.

September data also indicates that IDPs continue to have considerably worse consumption than non-displaced households; 15 percent of all IDP respondents reported consuming an inadequate diet in September, a prevalence that is five times higher than the average for non-displaced households. Moreover, mVAM data shows that IDPs living in camps are relatively more vulnerable as they tend to report a higher rate of inadequate consumption than those living outside of camps (Figure 2).

Map 1: Iraq - Percentage of respondent households with 'poor' and 'borderline' Food Consumption Score (FCS) - September 2015



Source: WFP mVAM, September 2015



vam
food security analysis

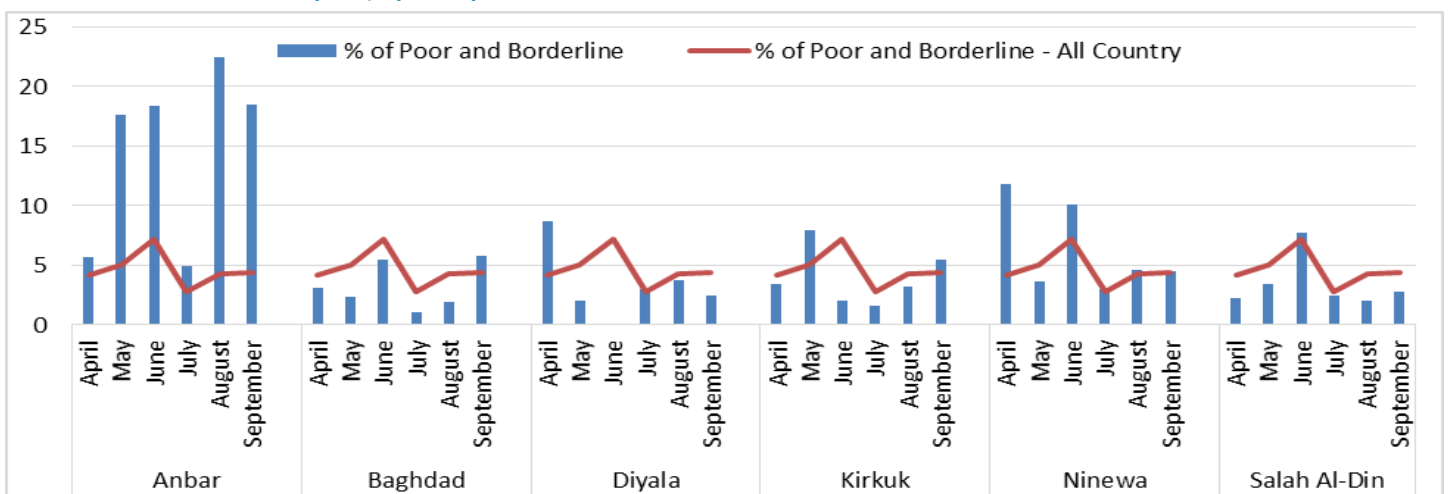
Box 1. Situation update

Continuing conflict between armed opposition groups and pro-government forces has forced nearly 3.2 million people to flee their homes and spread to over 3,000 different locations across Iraq between January 2014 and the end of September 2015. According to recent WFP and FAO joint assessments, about 4.4 million people are currently food insecure. Population flows are now increasingly becoming varied; of the 3.2 million displaced, about 375,000 people had returned to their home areas by the end of September. Salah Al-Din in particular has experienced a great wave of returnees, with over 142,000 people repatriating to the governorate between mid-June and the end of September, of which about 75 percent went to Tikrit, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

The protracted insecurity in Anbar governorate continues to cause displacement and restrict access to safety for displaced people, particularly from Falluja, Ramadi, al-Ameriyat and Haditha districts. People in these areas are reportedly either being prevented from leaving insecure areas or are unable to cross checkpoints to areas perceived as safer. Blocked access routes also continue to limit supplies reaching the civilian population. However, for the nearly 3,500 Iraqis who have fled Anbar governorate in recent months, two new IDP camps have opened in Baghdad to provide shelter for them.

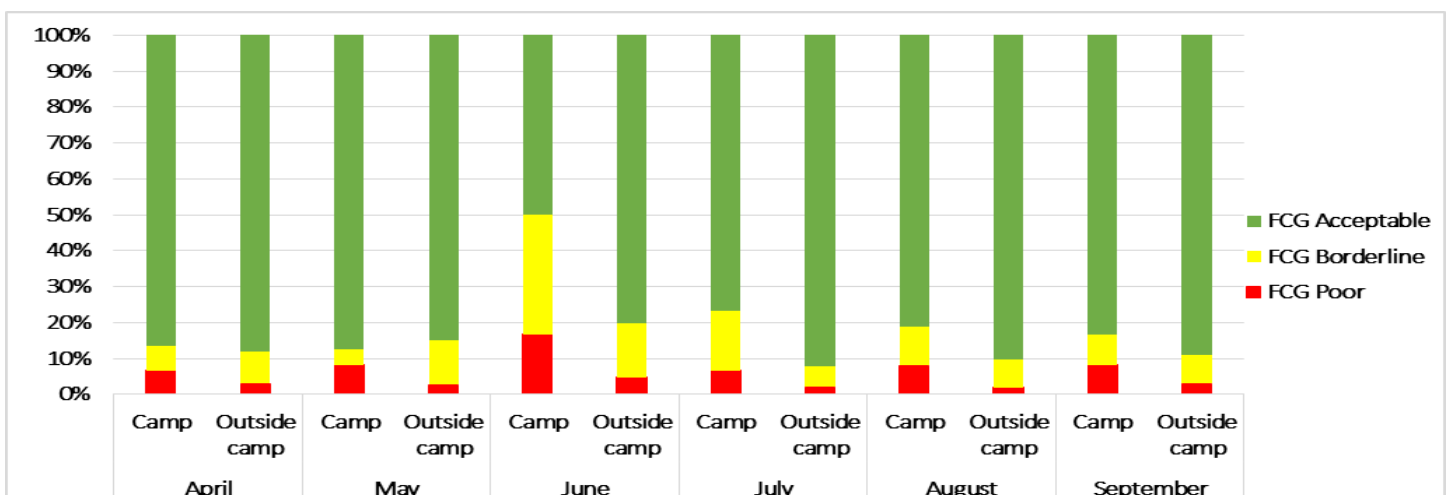
Sources: WFP, OCHA and IOM

Figure 1: Percentage of 'all country' and respondent households from key conflict and displacement-affected governorates with 'poor' and 'borderline' food consumption, April–September 2015



Source: WFP mVAM, September 2015

Figure 2: Percentage of IDP respondent households living in and outside camps with 'poor' and 'borderline' food consumption, April–September 2015



Source: WFP mVAM, September 2015

Several statistically significant changes were observed in the overall dietary diversity of IDP respondents consuming specific food groups more than three times in the week: the proportion of households consuming proteins (meat, fish and eggs) increased from 76 percent in August to 83 percent in September; and decreased from 79 percent to 72 percent for vegetables, and from 98 percent to 94 percent for staples**.

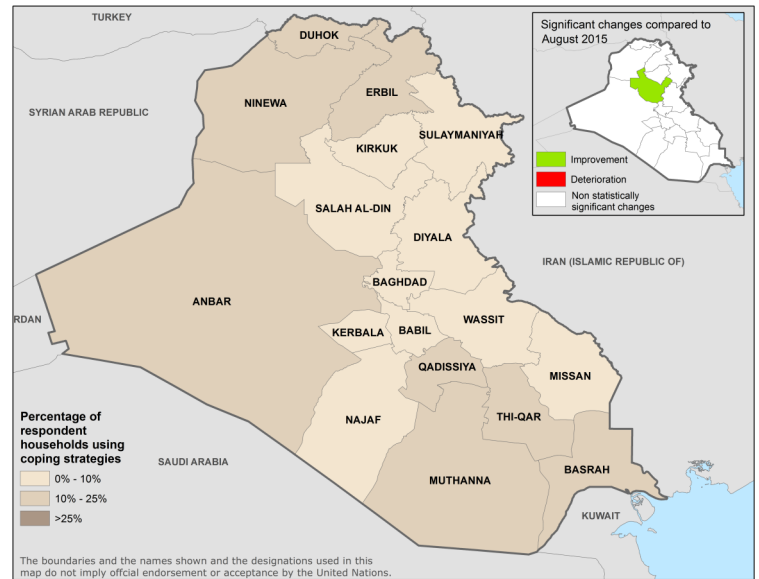
The prevalence of negative consumption-based coping falls to levels last seen in April

In September, the overall prevalence of negative food-related coping decreased from 13 percent in August to 10 percent in September reporting not having enough food or enough money to buy food**. This is the lowest average level recorded since April. A significant change was recorded in Salah Al-Din governorate, where reported prevalence of coping fell by 11 percent from August (16%) to September (5%)*** (Map 2).

However, above-average use of negative food-related coping persisted among households in Anbar (20%) and Ninewa (18%) governorates (Figure 3).

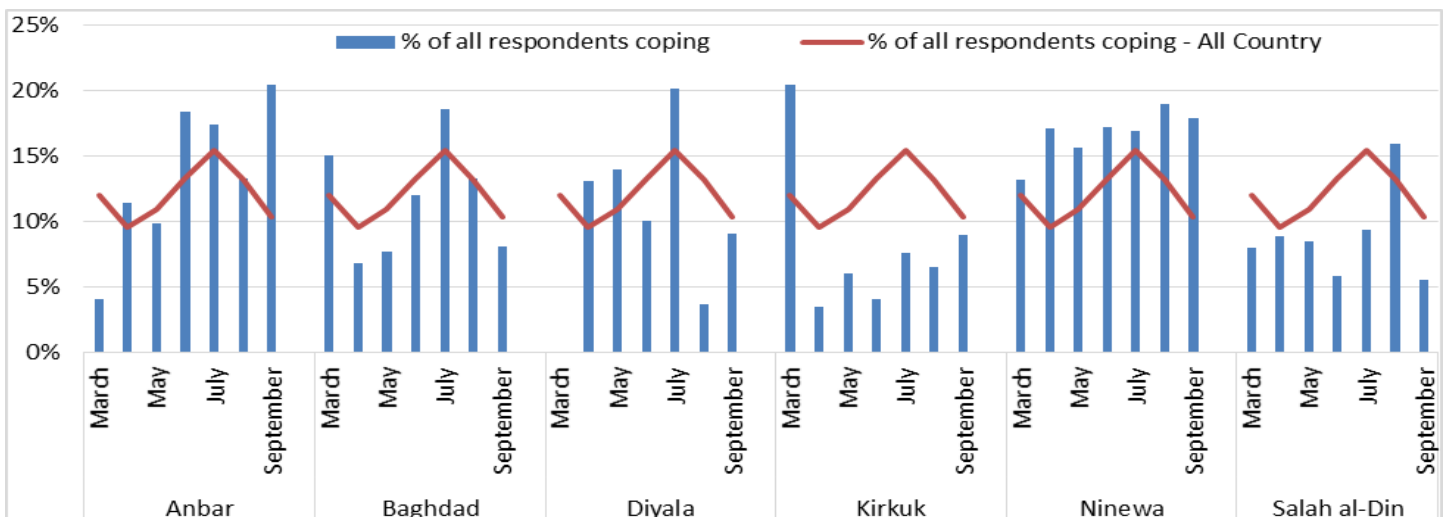
The prevalence of coping among IDPs remained in line with levels reported in July and August – over a quarter of all IDP respondents (28%) reported using negative food-based coping strategies in September. However, there is a noteworthy difference between the propensity of coping between IDPs living in and outside of camps - those living in camps are more likely to employ negative food-based coping than those living outside camps (Figure 4).

Map 2: Iraq – reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI) - September 2015



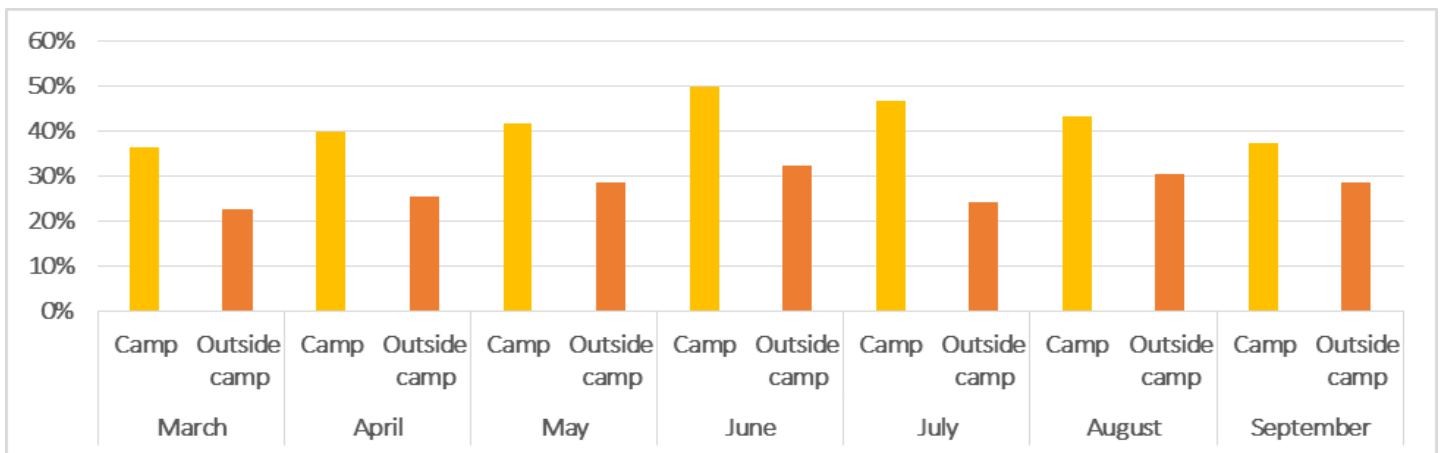
Source: WFP mVAM, September 2015

Figure 3: Percentage of 'all country' and respondent households from key conflict and displacement-affected governorates using consumption based coping strategies, March – September 2015



Source: WFP mVAM, September 2015

Figure 4: Percentage of IDP respondent households living in and outside camps using food related negative coping strategies, March – September 2015



Source: WFP mVAM, September 2015

Markets, food supply and purchasing power

In September, average prices of monitored food commodities did not significantly change from those reported in [August](#). The average cost of a standard food basket slightly increased in Baghdad (5%), Diyala (2%) and Salah Al-Din (7%), and increased in Anbar (4%), Kirkuk (1%) and Ninewa (6%) (Figure 5).

In Haditha, the average cost of the standard food basket decreased marginally from IQD 4,512 to IQD 4,390 in September, yet it was still four times higher than the overall average cost in Anbar, the most expensive of all monitored governorates.

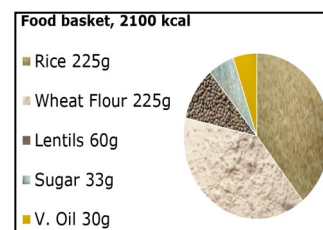
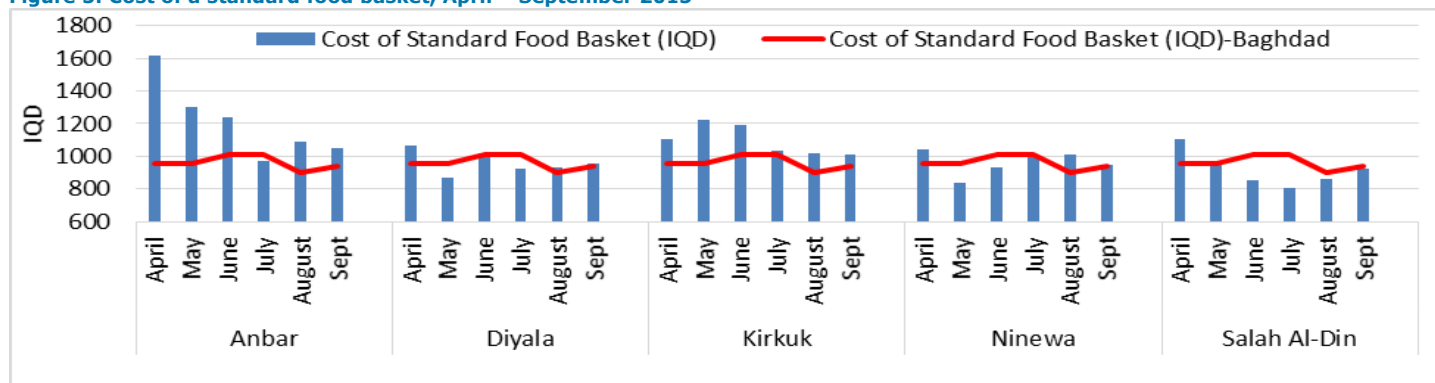


Figure 5: Cost of a standard food basket, April – September 2015



Source: WFP mVAM, September 2015

The prices for wheat and sugar in almost all monitored governorates continue to be higher than in Baghdad (Table 1). However, it is worth noting that the price differential with Baghdad has decreased by 17 percent in Ninewa and by 8 percent in Kirkuk. Similarly the price differential has increased by 12 percent in Anbar and 6 percent in Diyala when compared to August.

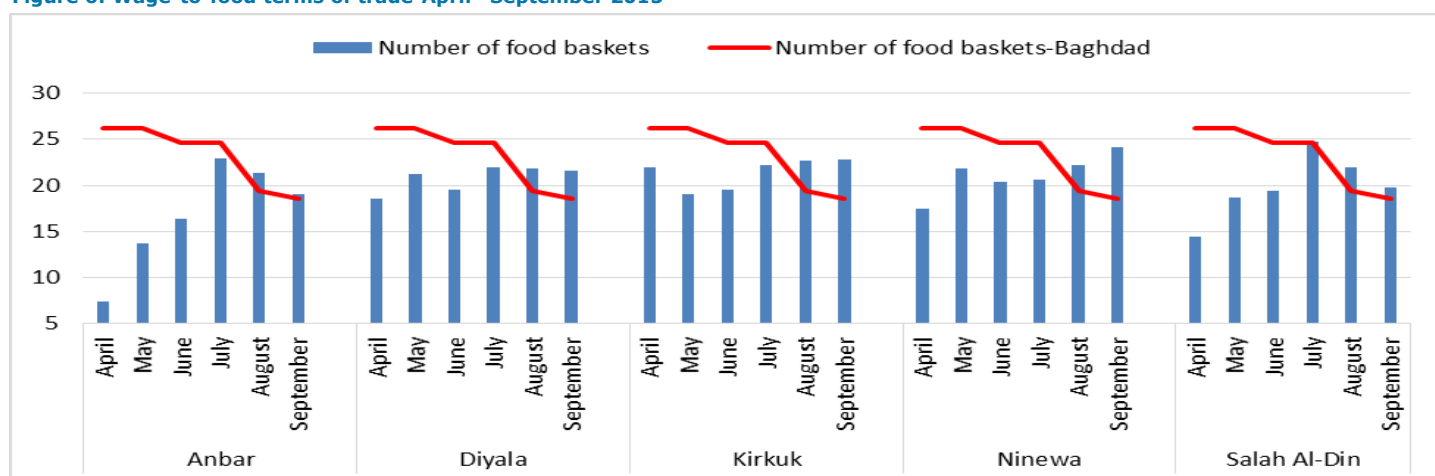
Table 1. Commodity price differentials with Baghdad, September 2015 (IQD)

Commodity	Anbar	Diyala	Kirkuk	Ninewa	Salah Al-Din
Rice	-7%	-13%	-6%	-6%	-16%
Wheat flour	60%	47%	43%	15%	33%
Lentils	-5%	-8%	2%	5%	-9%
Sugar	55%	2%	41%	13%	35%
Vegetable oil	12%	-9%	-7%	-1%	6%

Source: WFP mVAM, September 2015

The household wage-to-food purchasing power in September was similar to what was observed in August (Figure 6). While the purchasing power remained stable in Diyala and Kirkuk; there was a slight increase in Ninewa from 22 food baskets in August to 24 in September; and a decrease of 2 food baskets in both Anbar and Salah Al-Din. The decrease in Anbar however – unlike the one observed in August that was purely tied to increased food prices – was attributed to a reduction in the average daily wage for unskilled labour, which fell from IQD 23,280 to IQD 20,000.

Figure 6: Wage-to-food terms of trade April–September 2015



Source: WFP mVAM, September 2015

Household access to the Public Distribution System (PDS)

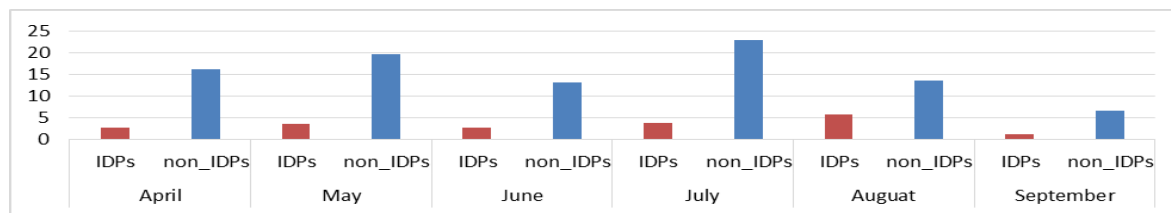
September data indicated a deterioration in household access to PDS rations. Only 8 percent of all respondents said they received a full or partial PDS ration in September which is a notable decline from August (18.5%)***.

When asked about the overall food security situation, most respondents noted a lack of PDS; concerns about the payment of salaries (government salaries are reportedly being delayed in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq [KRI]); and displacement (Figure 7). Indeed, restricted PDS access seems to be closely linked with displacement (Figure 8).

Figure 7: Word Cloud



Figure 8: Percentage of all non-IDP and IDP respondent households that received PDS during April - September



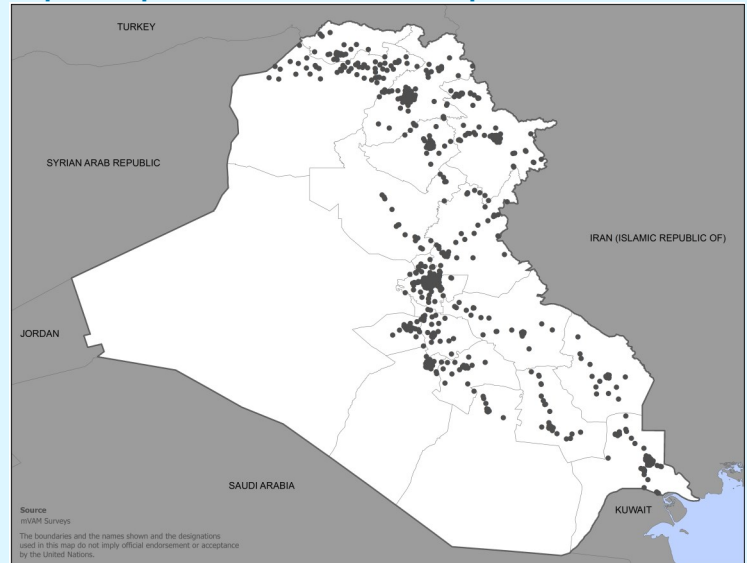
Source: WFP mVAM, September 2015

Methodology - mVAM remote data collection

In September 2015, mVAM conducted the sixth round of household food security monitoring using live telephone interviews throughout Iraq. Data was collected from a sample of 1,415 respondents, through Korek, a major mobile network operator. WFP is monitoring a panel of respondents drawn from Korek's database living in Iraq's 18 governorates. Map 2 shows the cellphone towers from which live telephone interview responses were received. Further details on survey methodology are available [online](#).

In addition to monitoring household food security, WFP has been collecting market information in central and northern governorates of Iraq, using live telephone interviews. In collaboration with Islamic Relief and Muslim Aid, information was obtained in September from 58 locations in five governorates: Anbar (19), Diyala (7), Kirkuk (9), Ninewa (5), and Salah Al-Din (18) using a simplified market questionnaire.

Map 3. Iraq mVAM data collection - September 2015



Source: WFP mVAM, September 2015

The [Food Consumption Score](#) (FCS) is a proxy indicator for food security that measures the diversity of household diets, and how frequently food is consumed. The FCS classifies households as having 'poor', 'borderline' or 'acceptable' food consumption. Households with 'poor' or 'borderline' consumption are considered to be consuming an inadequate diet and to be food insecure.

For further information please contact:

Jane Pearce jane.pearce@wfp.org
 Arif Husain arif.husain@wfp.org
 Jean-Martin Bauer jean-martin.bauer@wfp.org



Financial support to mVAM provided by USAID

