Lebanon

DIEM – Data in Emergencies Monitoring brief, round 2

Results and recommendations
June 2022

Data collection 23 March to 13 April 2022
Methodology

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in partnership with Lebanon’s Ministry of Agriculture, conducted a household survey using computer-assisted telephone interviews from 23 March to 13 April 2022.

The survey targeted agricultural households using contact information from the Lebanon Agricultural Production Survey, a large survey of farming households drawn from the Agricultural Census. It took place across seven governorates — Akkar, Baalbeck El Hermel, Bekaa, El Nabatieh, North, Mount Lebanon and South — with 150 households selected in each governorate using probability-proportional-to-size based on the Agricultural Production Survey. A total of 1,050 interviews were completed, in which 99 percent of respondents identified as agricultural households. Data were weighted at the analytical stage to ensure that farm size and regional population distribution were adequately represented.

Figure 1. Countries with established DIEM-Monitoring Systems


Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties. Final boundary between the Sudan and South Sudan has not yet been determined. Final status of the Abyei area is not yet determined.

About DIEM-Monitoring

FAO established the DIEM-Monitoring System to collect, analyse and disseminate data on shocks and livelihoods in countries prone to multiple shocks. DIEM-Monitoring aims to inform decision making by providing regularly updated information on how different shocks are affecting the livelihoods and food security of agricultural populations.

At the core of the DIEM-Monitoring System are country-level dashboards. Readers are encouraged to explore these dashboards to gain more insight into the context of Lebanon and other countries.

> Learn more at https://data-in-emergencies.fao.org/pages/monitoring
Income and shocks

Approximately 93 percent of households surveyed reported facing at least one shock in the three months preceding the survey. Eighty-five percent of respondents cited much higher than usual fuel and food prices (Figure 2). These findings, which are similar to those from the first-round survey conducted in August and September 2021, are a result of the ongoing economic and financial crisis in Lebanon, which has been exacerbated by COVID-19 and the 2020 Beirut port explosion.

Figure 2. Main shocks experienced (percentage of respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shock</th>
<th>Round 1</th>
<th>Round 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Higher food prices</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher fuel prices</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold temperatures</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sickness/death</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of employment</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant disease</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal disease</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other economic shock</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External event</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pest outbreak</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other crop and livestock shock</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The surging inflation and large dependency on imports have driven an exponential increase in food and fuel prices. Agricultural production was cited as the main source of income by approximately one-third of the households surveyed. Compared to the same period in a typical year, the main income decreased for 80 percent of all surveyed households. Households in Baalbek El-Hermel reported the greatest decline (Figure 3). About 33 percent of the surveyed households reported the continued effects of COVID-19 restrictions in the three months preceding the survey.
Crops

Over 80 percent of respondent households were engaged in crop production, with most (70 percent) being smallholder farmers with a cultivated land size of less than one ha. Difficulties with crop production were experienced by approximately two-thirds of these households. The lack of access to agricultural inputs such as fertilizers (74 percent) and pesticides (55 percent), and to fuel or electricity (36 percent) were the main reasons cited for the low expected harvest with 54 percent of households expecting a harvest lower than that of a typical year (Figure 4).

Crop area decreased for 26 percent of agricultural households, who were using less costly inputs to maintain agricultural activities. Crop sale difficulties affected 44 percent of crop producers who attributed the difficulties to increased marketing costs (70 percent), lower prices (55 percent) and lower demand (44 percent). Crop production and sale difficulties were primarily driven by the depreciation of the Lebanese pound (and resulting hyperinflation crisis) combined with the country’s large dependency on imports, including the import of agricultural inputs.
Fluctuations in crop sale prices from round 2 and round 1 cannot be compared because some sales prices were collected in nominal values during round 1 while others were collected in real values.

**Figure 4. Main crop production difficulties (percentage of respondents)**

Livestock

Most livestock producers cited difficulties purchasing feed (85 percent) and accessing veterinary inputs (63 percent) and services (53 percent) over the three months preceding the survey. Poultry producers reported more difficulties than cattle producers.

Approximately 62 percent of livestock producers reported a decrease in the number of animals they owned compared to the previous year mostly as a result of distress sales (39 percent) and animals dying from disease or malnutrition (27 percent). Distress sales were predominantly reported by cattle (47 percent), goat (32 percent) and sheep (21 percent) producers.

The most cited difficulties for marketing animal products were lower prices (73 percent), smaller profits (60 percent) and low demand (55 percent). The North and South governorates reported the highest decreases in sale prices. The sale difficulties were likely a consequence of high marketing costs and the declining purchasing power of consumers. Livestock prices decreased for 63 percent of respondents compared to the three-year average due to the continued depreciation of the Lebanese pound.
Fluctuations in livestock sale prices from round 2 and round 1 cannot be compared because some sales prices were collected in nominal values during round 1 while others were collected in real values.

Figure 5. Main reasons for the decrease in number of livestock (percentage of respondents)

Food security

The prevalence of recent moderate or severe food insecurity (RFI), assessed with the food insecurity experience scale (FIERS), was around 21 percent. By governorate, it was the highest in Baalbeck-El Hermel, El Nabatieh and the South. The prevalence of RFI with severity levels equivalent to IPC Phase 3 or more was 5.2 percent (± 1.9 % margin of error). Overall, above 90 percent of households experienced little to no hunger.
Nearly all households adopted coping strategies to access food, with the most common being decreased expenses on agricultural inputs (91 percent), reduced health expenses (67 percent) and spent savings (66 percent). The most common coping strategies were highly associated with the increase of fuel, food prices and loss of employment. Close to 86 percent of households reported employing crisis-level coping strategies and 9 percent reported employing emergency-level coping strategies. Respondents from Baalbeck-El Hermel and Akkar, two governorates with limited sources of income and job opportunities, recorded the lowest Household Dietary Diversity Score (25 percent and 20 percent respectively). Low dietary diversity was highly associated with the increase of food prices.

Needs

Nearly all households surveyed (92 percent) indicated a need for assistance in the coming three to six months. The needs of each livelihood group were aligned with the production difficulties reported. Fertilizer (75 percent), pesticides (69 percent) and seeds (40 percent) were the most common needs indicated by crop producers, while animal feed (34 percent), veterinary services (27 percent) and inputs (26 percent) were reported by livestock producers. Moreover, half (50 percent) of the respondents expressed a need for cash support. About 22 percent of households received assistance in the three months preceding the survey, and the most frequent types of assistance received were cash vouchers (10 percent) and food (9 percent).
Recommendations

Short-term recommendations (1–6 months)

➢ Increase the supply of crop inputs (seeds, fertilizer, etc.) by providing cash, vouchers or in-kind assistance. Strengthen the capacity of existing agricultural extension services to improve yields.

➢ Provide cash, vouchers or in-kind assistance to support the supply of livestock feed and veterinary inputs. Strengthen the capacity of existing agricultural extension services to improve prevention and control of the spread of animal diseases.

➢ Target food and/or cash assistance to vulnerable agricultural households in collaboration with ongoing food assistance programmes. Continue to closely monitor the food security status of agricultural households and support the development of a food security surveillance system.

Medium/long-term recommendations (6 months and beyond)

➢ Provide technical and financial assistance and support programmes designed for small to medium holders (including but not limited to the promotion of good agricultural practices, grant schemes, etc.) to increase outcomes and agricultural productivity, and to improve food availability and access.

➢ Encourage farmers to transition to solar energy and decrease their reliance on fossil fuels. Support the adoption of good agricultural practices and modern technology in agricultural production.

➢ Adopt good agricultural practices and modern technology in livestock production.
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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

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