

## *Food Sector Gender Analysis*

2 July 2013

Outside of the camps, women expressed frustration about waiting in line for hours to receive food vouchers and other basic necessities; some reported 8-12 hours of wait and even having to return the following day to wait again. Women with children (e.g. 10 children or young children) find it particularly difficult to wait long periods in line for distributions.<sup>1</sup>

In the camp, key informants thought women (particularly those heading households because they could not rely on a man to collect distributions) were at risk of violence at food and NFI distribution points.<sup>2</sup>

Civil violence was reported far more prevalent among both adolescent boys and young men in Za'atri Camp. Men are subjected to violence at the camp gates and at food and NFI distribution points. Men usually take on the task of waiting in line during food and NFI distributions.<sup>3</sup>

In January 2013, among the refugees outside of camps there are 6.3% malnourished<sup>4</sup> women aged 15-49 years (child-bearing age), including 0.9% severely malnourished<sup>5</sup>. In Za'atri camp, there are 6.1% of women are malnourished<sup>6</sup> and aged 15-49 years, including 1.1% severely malnourished<sup>7,8</sup>.

Households adopt a wide range of coping strategies in efforts to cover their food gaps when faced with acute food decline. The survey findings showed that more families (77%) of the refugees outside of camps use at least one coping strategy to cover their food gaps than families in Za'atri camp (67%). Outside of camps, families have a high rate of daily use of credit. However, in Za'atri camp, the findings showed that adults are restricting their consumption. The food assistance was reported by 42% of the families as their main food sources in Za'atri camp in comparison with 19.2% for refugee families outside of camps. However, families outside of camps received 25.5% of their food from charity as gift. For refugees inside as well as outside of camps, food assistance represented an important source of their food. In order to complement their meals with some fresh food, some families (32%) needed to buy other food items.<sup>9</sup>

According to IRC's surveys in Ramtha and Mafrag, the majority of households receive in-kind food support from a range of aid agencies. However, the significant amount of expenditures occurring for food, placed at around 125 JOD per month by the surveys indicates that supply is inadequate. Refugees in focus groups mentioned that the food received is often spoiled and not sufficient for the size of households. In addition, it was strongly felt that the in-kind support provided is inappropriate for the requirements of Syrians' nutritional preferences. In addition, the need to cover recurrent and expensive household expenditures such as rent and utilities, forces refugees more and more to revert to selling parts of their food rations and limiting their daily food intake. The majority of those surveyed expressed a preference for cash over in-kind assistance because it provides refugees with an increased sense of independence and dignity.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> UN Women (July 2013) *Interagency Assessment of Gender-Based Violence and Child Protection among urban Syrian refugees in Jordan, with a focus on early marriage*

<sup>2</sup> CP&GBV SWG Jordan (Jan 2013) *Findings from the Interagency Child Protection and Gender-Based Violence Assessment in the Za'atri Refugee Camp*

<sup>3</sup> CP&GBV SWG Jordan 2013

<sup>4</sup> MUAC < 23 cm

<sup>5</sup> MUAC < 21 cm

<sup>6</sup> MUAC < 23 cm

<sup>7</sup> MUAC < 21 cm

<sup>8</sup> Interagency Nutrition SWG (January 2013) *Nutrition Assessment Report for Syrian Refugees in host communities and in Za'atri camp in Jordan, using SMART methodology.*

<sup>9</sup> Interagency Nutrition SWG (January 2013)

<sup>10</sup> IRC (Nov 2012) *Assessment Report Cash Transfer Program to Syrian Refugees in Jordan*