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Introduction

The National Poverty Targeting Programme (NPTP) implemented the 21st electronic voucher (e-card) distribution in September 2016. Since November, the NPTP was able to provide assistance to 5,076 Lebanese households. They consist of around 5 percent of the total beneficiary households. Each member in the household is entitled to receive US\$ 30 capped at six people. Households can redeem e-cards at around 450 shops contracted by WFP throughout Lebanon.

The NPTP decided to expand its service by increasing the number of households to 10,008 by the end of 2016. That decision was due to positive impact of the programme on beneficiaries. In August, the voucher value was decreased from US\$ 30 to US\$ 27 capped at six individuals per household.

In September 2016, the total number of households reached 7,027 of which 49.4 percent were females, more than 50% were below the age of 15 and 17% were below the age of 5. The beneficiary households redeemed US\$ 15.1 million from November 2014 until September 2016 which through the e-card service which was financed by generous contributions from UNHCR, WFP and the World Bank.

The Central Management Unit and the Ministry of Social Affairs monitored the e-card service through post-distribution monitoring questionnaires on a monthly basis using a randomly selected sample. Data was analysed at the Central Management Unit at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. This report assesses the food security situation of the e-card beneficiary households from May to September 2016 for two cycles: May-June and July-September¹. This report studies the three food security indicators and compares them with the baseline survey (PAB) from November 2014 prior to the implementation of the e-card programme.

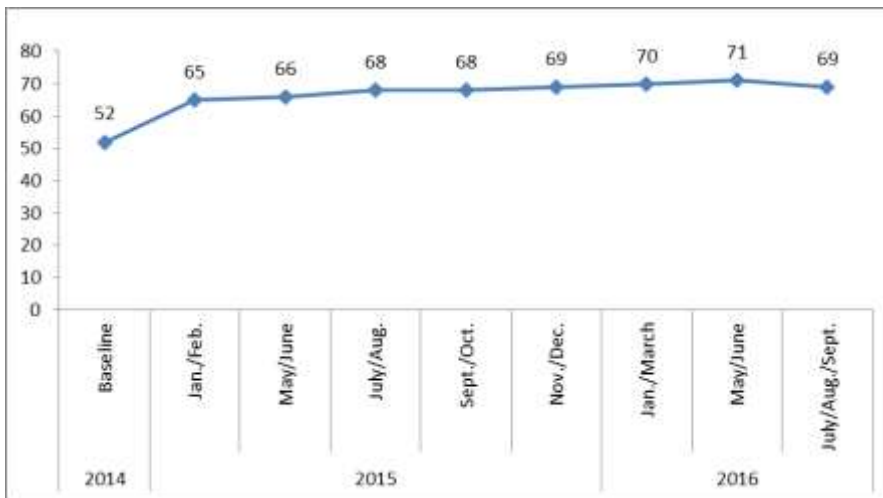


¹Due to technical problems in the PDM data collection.

Food consumption score

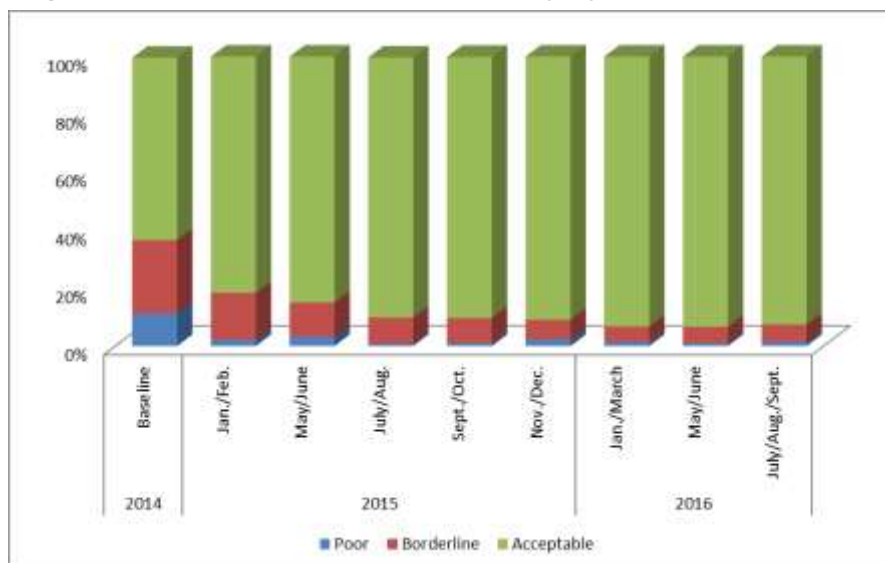
In the first cycle, the average food consumption score among beneficiaries receiving assistance increased from 69 to 71; a 33 percent increase compared to the baseline. This shows that households consumed more food than they used to prior to the provision of assistance. Since the beginning of 2016, the FCS has stabilized.

Figure 1: average food consumption score by cycle



More than 90 percent of households had an acceptable food consumption score in the last five cycles. An increase was noticed in the last two cycles when it reached 93.3 percent and 92.5 percent respectively. The acceptable food consumption score increased by 47 percent compared to the baseline.

Figure 2: food consumption score by cycle



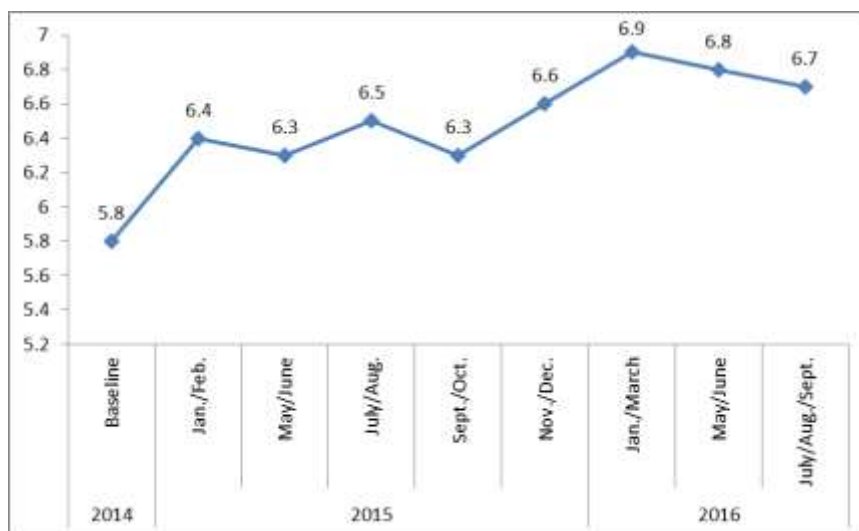
Dietary diversity score

Analysis of the average dietary diversity showed an improvement of 16 percent compared to the baseline. In May-June, the score was 6.8 and then dropped to 6.7 in the second cycle. With the addition of new beneficiaries in August, new beneficiaries with lower food security situation joined the programme and have thus influenced the results slightly as compared to previous cycles.

Table 1: average dietary diversity score by cycle

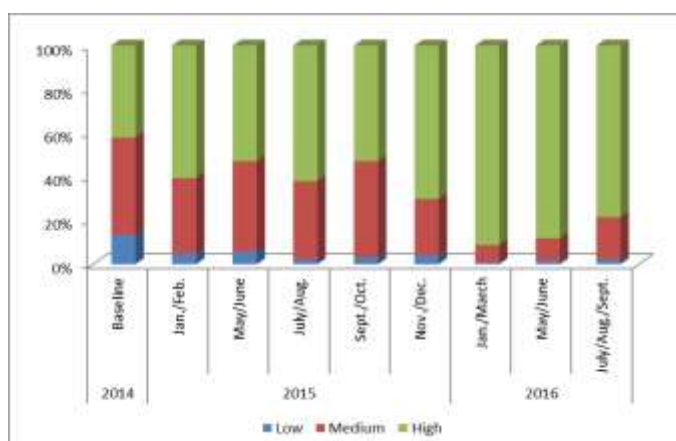
Year	Cycle	Average DDS	Standard Deviation	% change from Baseline
2014	Baseline	5.8	1.3	16%
2015	Jan./Feb.	6.4	0.9	
	May/June	6.3	0.9	
	July/Aug.	6.5	0.8	
	Sept./Oct.	6.3	0.9	
	Nov./Dec.	6.6	0.8	
2016	Jan./March	6.9	0.5	
	May/June	6.8	0.6	
	July/Aug./Sept.	6.7	0.8	

Figure 3: average dietary diversity score by cycle



The number of households with a high dietary diversity score decreased from 88.1 percent to 78.4 percent in the last two cycles.

Figure 4: dietary diversity score by cycle



Coping strategy index

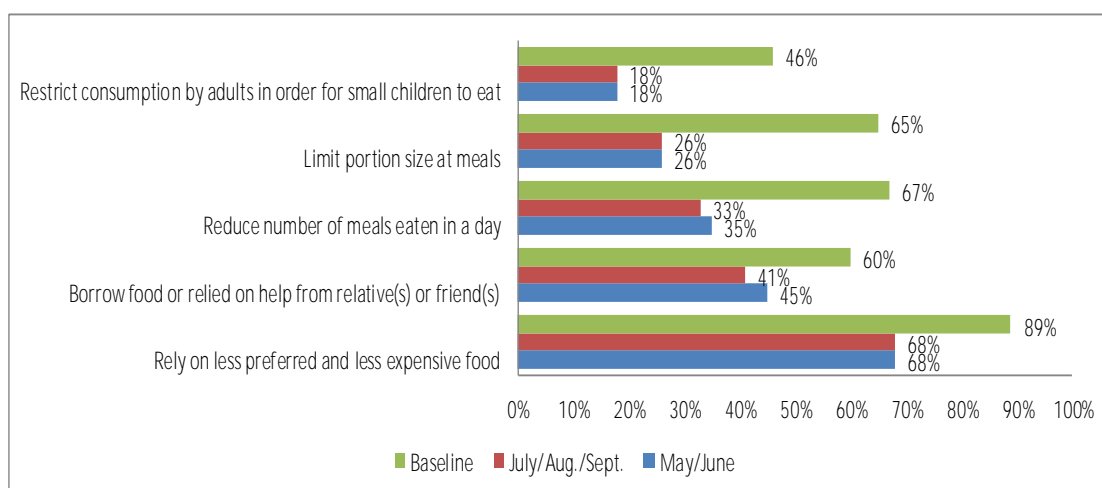
This index is an indicator of coping mechanisms applied to deal with a lack of food or money to buy food. During the monitoring period (May-September), households used fewer coping strategies when facing food shortages; 63 percent less compared to the baseline. The latest average coping strategy index value was 6.6, the lowest since the programme began.

Table 2: average coping strategy index by cycle

Year	Cycle	Average CSI	Standard Deviation	% change from Baseline
2014	Baseline	18	13.2	
2015	Jan./Feb.	11.2	10.3	-63%
	May/June	11.9	11.2	
	July/Aug.	9.6	10.3	
	Sept./Oct.	9.2	9.6	
	Nov./Dec.	8.5	9.5	
2016	Jan./March	8.1	9	
	May/June	7.1	8.9	
	July/Aug./Sept.	6.6	8.6	

This shows that due to the assistance, less households have to rely on negative coping strategies. They are last two cycles of 2016 recorded the lowest CSI (7.1 and 6.6), a decrease of 20 percent respectively compared to the first cycle of 2016.

Figure 5: Coping strategies by cycle



Basic needs

When asked about the three main basic needs, households reported that “More/better food” was their primary need (39 percent in the first cycle and 32 percent in the second), followed by health and education (21 percent in both cycles). The third need was “work” (19 percent for both cycles).

Table 3: basic needs assessment

Cycle	First Need	Second Need	Third Need
	More/Better Food	Medication/Health Books/Education	Work
May/June	39.4%	21.0%	19.0%
July/Aug./Sept.	31.7%	21.0%	18.7%

Uploaded and redeemed amounts

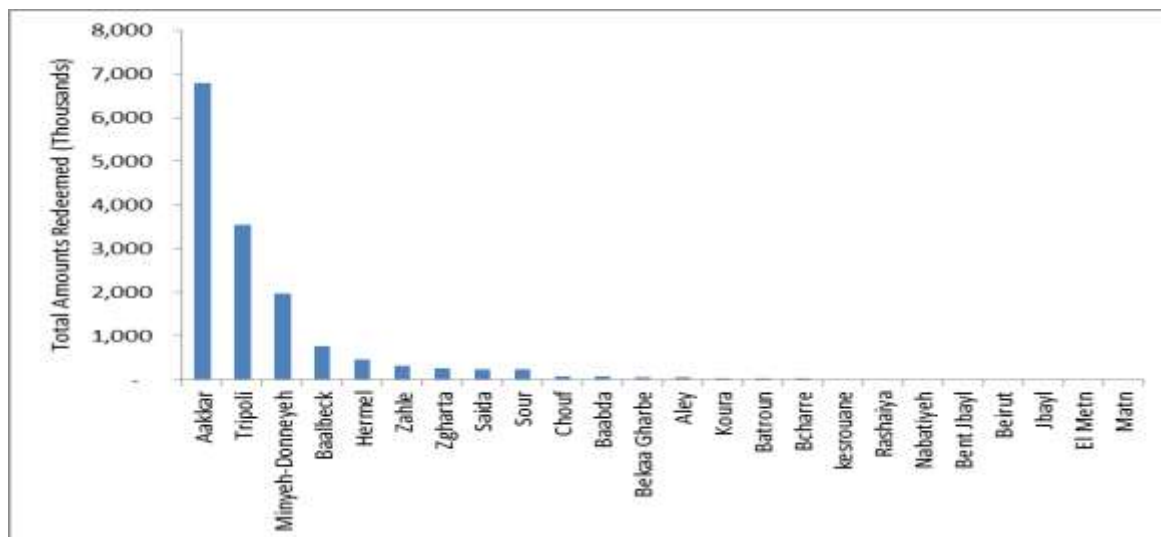
E-cards were uploaded with US\$ 17.2 million from November 2014 to September 2016, and around 88 percent of that was redeemed thus far. 145,761 transactions were made in WFP-contracted shops. The average amount per transaction was US\$ 103.

During the first nine months of 2016, households made 52,866 transactions totaling US\$ 5.4 million. Most transactions were made in Aakkar, Minyeh-Donneyeh and Tripoli.

Table 4: total transactions and redeemed amounts per year

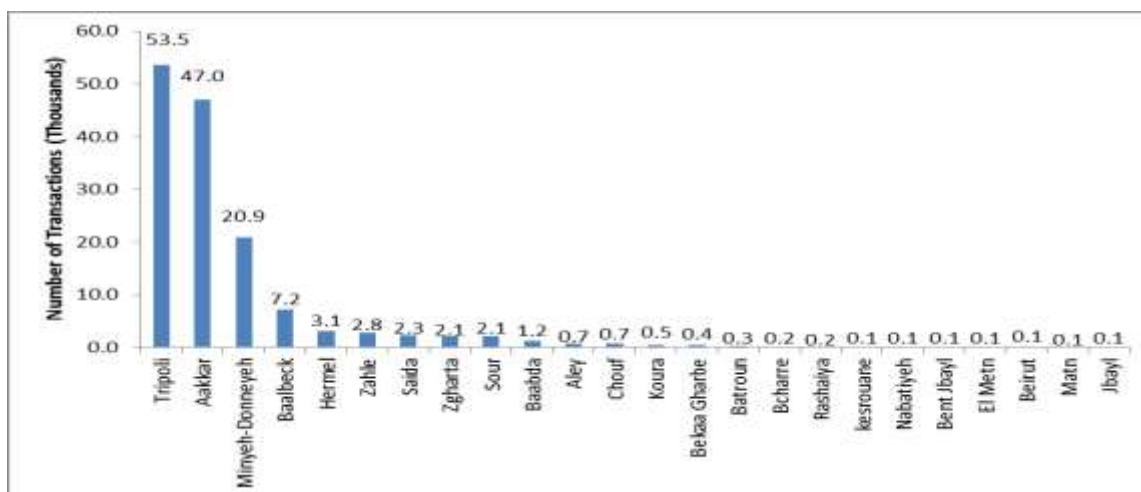
Year	Number of Transactions	Amounts Redeemed	Average Amount per Transaction (US\$)
2014	13,879	1,579,530	113.8
2015	79,016	8,057,740	101.9
2016 (to September)	52,886	5,436,153	102.7
TOTAL	145,761	15,073,424	103.4

Figure 6: redeemed amounts by caza (November 2014—September 2016)



Transactions were made in 490 WFP contracted shops. Each shop sold an average of US\$ 400,000 of food through 400 transactions. The majority of transaction (58 percent) of transactions were in the afternoon.

Figure 7: distribution of transactions by Caza (November 2014-September 2016)



Conclusion

Food security indicators monitored through regular monthly PDMs indicate an improvement followed by a stabilization in the situation of Lebanese households assisted through the NPTP programme. Additionally the programme has contributed positively to decrease the use of negative coping strategies by households over the monitored cycles. As compared to the baseline, the assistance has a large impact in the improvement of the food security situation of Lebanese assisted by the program. The consistent provision of assistance in 2016 has led to the stabilization of the results as compared to previous cycles.

A total of US\$ 17.2 million was uploaded to the e-cards between November 2014 and September 2016 with a redemption rate of 88 percent. The amounts were redeemed through 145,761 transactions; an average of US\$ 103.4 per transaction. Those transactions were made in 364 WFP contracted shops across Lebanon . Most of the redeemed amounts and transactions done were made in the cazas of Aakkar, Minnyeh-Donneyeh and Tripoli.

Presidency of the Council of Ministers

Emergency National Poverty Targeting Programme
Central Management Unit, January 2017