

# Iraq Knowledge Network

## FOOD SECURITY AND EXPENDITURE FACTSHEET

December 2011

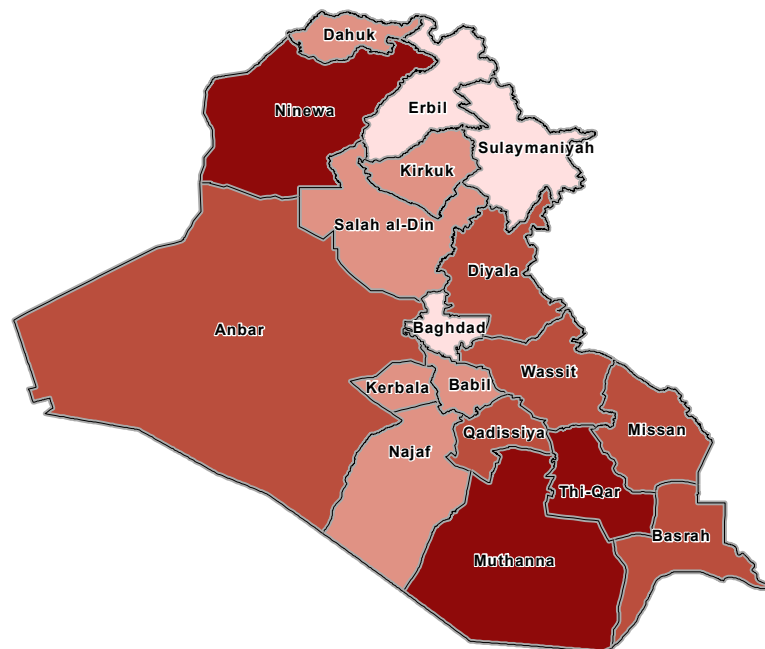
### Introduction

The Iraq Knowledge Network (IKN) survey is part of a Socio-Economic Monitoring System being developed by the Iraqi Ministry of Planning to advance evidence based planning and improve services provided to Iraqi citizens. The IKN survey data was collected in the first quarter of 2011 from 28,875 Iraqi households. The sample was designed to provide statistics at the district and governorate levels and nationally by urban and rural areas. This factsheet is a brief analysis of food security and consumption expenditures data from the IKN.

### Consumption Expenditures

Average expenditures valued at market prices reached 180,673 Iraqi Dinars (IDs) per person per month in the first quarter of 2011. The highest averages were recorded in Sulaymaniya governorate with 318,710 IDs, followed by Erbil and Baghdad governorates with 271,227 and 217,054 IDs per person per month respectively. The lowest averages were recorded in Thi Qar Governorate with 96,778 IDs, followed by Muthanna and Ninewa governorates with 118,158 and 123,842 IDs per person per month respectively. The map below shows the percent of individuals falling within the lowest expenditure quintile by governorate.

Percent of individuals within the lowest expenditure quintile by Governorate



Source: IKN 2011

At the district level, the highest average expenditures were recorded in Mergasur district in Erbil governorate (467,323 Iraqi Dinars), Sulaymaniya governorate centre (426,415 IDs) and Soran district in Erbil governorate (380,868 IDs). The lowest expenditures were recorded in Al Ba'aj district in Ninewa governorate where expenditures averaged 70,131 IDs per person per month followed by Sinjar district in the same governorate (72,337 IDs) and Al Khidhir district in Muthanna governorate (77,490 IDs).

### Expenditure Patterns

The pattern of individual consumption expenditures reveals a slight improvement in living conditions compared to 2007. In 2011, the ratio of expenditures on food is 34.5 percent of total expenditures compared to 2007 when the ratio of expenditures on food from total expenditures was 35.6 percent. A significant increase in the proportion of expenditures on health is observed in 2011 where the ratio increased by 90 percent compared to 2007 and the ratio of expenditures clothes and shoes increased by 12 percent.

The proportion of individual expenditures on food is lowest in Dohuk (27.7%) and Erbil (30.1%) governorates and highest in Thi Qar (44.2%) and Muthanna (40.8%) governorates. At the district level, the lowest ratio was observed in Erbil governorate centre (20.3%) followed by Al-Shikhan district in Ninewa governorate (23.4%) and the highest ratio was observed in Al Tarmia district in Baghdad governorate (50.1%) and Al Shamiya district in Qadissiya governorate (54.7%).

The second highest expenditure category after food is the dwelling and utilities, water, gas, electricity and fuel on which the average household spends 333,664 IDs per household per month,

representing 29.1 percent of total consumption expenditures on average. Households in both Baghdad and Dohuk governorates spend proportionally more per month on this category than on food.

While 19.4 percent of households with an unemployed head of household fall within the lowest expenditure group (i.e. spend less than 60,000 IDs per person per month), it is worth noting that 20 percent of households with a household head working in the agriculture, hunting, aquaculture and forestry sector also fall within the lowest expenditure group.

### Dietary Diversity

Dietary diversity is measured by the number of food groups represented in the daily consumption. The survey results reveal that, on average, Iraqi diets are diverse as they consume food representing over six different food groups on a daily basis from a total of eight possible food groups. The average dietary diversity score for Iraq is 6.4 – representing a 2.6% increase from 2007. The highest averages were recorded in Baghdad and Sulaymaniya governorates with average dietary diversity scores of 6.7. The lowest averages were recorded in Mosul and Thi-Qar governorates, both with below six food groups daily.

Compared to 2007, the largest improvements in dietary diversity are among households in Qadissiya governorate with a 16.5 percent increase followed by Dohuk, and Sulaymaniya governorates with increases of 9.7 and 8.3 percent respectively. The dietary diversity score decreased during the same period among households in Thi-Qar governorate (6.9 percent reduction) followed by households in Basrah and Missan governorates with 5.5 and 2.7 percent reductions respectively.

Percent of Households consuming food groups by number of days of consumption per week

	At least 1 day	At least 2 days	At least 3 days	At least 4 days	At least 5 days	At least 6 days
CEREAL	100	100	100	99	99	98
MEAT	99	96	85	67	53	40
DAIRY	94	89	76	58	48	40
OILS	95	93	91	89	87	84
FRUITS	93	81	61	43	33	25
VEGETABLES	99	98	92	80	69	59
PULSES	99	95	79	52	38	25
SUGAR	98	97	95	92	90	88

Public Distribution System

Iraq maintains a universal food ration distribution mechanism established in the early 1990s, known as the Public Distribution System (PDS). Eighty percent of households indicated receiving at least one PDS item between July 2010 and January 2011; 64percent received at least two items; and 25percent received at least three. Less than five percent of households receive the complete commodity package each month.

The most widely distributed foods in the PDS are wheat and rice at 71 and 64 percent, respectively. Only five percent of households received sugar, over 30 percent received oils and fats, and five percent of households with children under two years of age received infant formula between July

2010 and January 2011.

Government workers tend to receive less PDS items than other work sectors. For all months under consideration, households headed by government workers receive wheat and rice at a rate below the national average; for sugar, oil, and fat, the results are mixed.

Over 90 percent of households in Muthanna and Anbar governorates received wheat flour; whereas only 42 and 57 percent of households in Wassit and Dohuk respectively received wheat flour. Similarly, about 90 percent of households in Kerbala and Babil governorates received rice but this ratio falls

as low as 27 percent among households in Wassit and 44 percent in Al Najaf governorates.

Sugar was received on average by five percent of households although again, there is variation between governorateswith the highest rate in Kerbala governorate where one quarter of households received sugar (24.5%). Oil and fat had an average rate of receipt at over 30 percent. Erbil, Sulaymaniya and Kerbala governorates received one of the two commodities in over half of the households on average. About a third of the eligible households in Qadissiya governorate received infant formula and 20% in Erbil.

The PDS is the primary source for some frequently used commodities: it is cited by 72 percent of households as the primary source for wheat flour; and by 64 percent of households as the primary source of rice. In addition, over one quarter of householdsreportthePDSastheirsecondsource of rice (27%) vegetable oil (31%), and sugar (34%).

Food Consumption Coping Strategies

Twenty two percent of households indicated that they had used coping strategies to smooth their food consumption in 2011 compared to 29 percent of households in 2007. Rural households

are more prone to using coping strategies in 2011 although the use of coping strategies decreased in both urban and rural households since 2007.

Nineteen percent of households indicated having to purchase cheaper or less quality food items, while 12 percent consumed less food during meals. Nearly eight percent of households reduced the food consumption of adult members in the household in favor of children's consumption and the same percent reduced the number of meals eaten.

The governorates with the highest use of coping strategies are Salah al-Din (36%), Anbar (34%) and Wassit (31%). The governorate with the lowest use of coping strategies is Muthanna at 8.5 percent, closely followed by Dohuk at 10.9 percent, Kirkuk and Maysan, both at 12 percent.

The use of coping strategies increased by more than 10% in Sulaymaniya, Erbil, Salah al-Din, and Basrah since 2007; whereas the greatest reduction in coping strategy use is observed in Babil with a reduction of 42.2 percent compared to 2007),Kerbala and Kirkuk governorates with 57.1 and 26.6 percent reductions respectively between 2007 and 2011.

Percent of Households receiving PDS by Item

