

# Rwanda: Joint Post Distribution Monitoring & Needs Assessment

## Technical Note

### Background

The Rwanda Joint Post Distribution Monitoring (JPDM) and Needs Assessment aimed to generate updated information on household needs, livelihood and vulnerability in all six refugee camps in Rwanda by optimizing the available monitoring resources of UNHCR and WFP. The assessment was part of the UNHCR-WFP Programme Excellence and Targeting Hub (the Hub) support to the Rwanda country teams to transition towards needs-based targeted assistance. The assessment was a joint effort carried out by UNHCR and WFP, with the coordination and technical and financial support of the Hub.

### Scope and Objectives

To define the scope of the assessment, the Hub first reviewed the assessment reports in recent two years and analyzed the WFP PDM data from July 2019 to June 2020 to identify relevant variables indicating household vulnerability levels. As no statistically significant variables were detected from this analysis, the Hub proposed to conduct an expanded joint PDM assessment adding thematic areas to better inform household vulnerability and the development of a targeting approach.

Upon discussion and agreement among UNHCR, WFP, and the Hub, the specific objectives of this exercise were defined as:

- To ensure corporate continuity in the monitoring of food security outcomes, income situation, and livelihood, with a special emphasis on COVID-19 impact; and
- To inform the programmatic decisions and the development of the targeting approach.

### Key Steps and Process

The technical preparation kicked off in October 2020 and the data collection took place in December 2020 across six refugee camps in Rwanda. Below are the key steps of the collaborative process.

#### Questionnaire design

The assessment questionnaire was co-developed by the Hub and the country teams with inputs from the regional bureau and headquarter experts of both agencies. The outline of the questionnaire was built upon the review of previous PDM questionnaires of two agencies, existing knowledge gaps and identified information needs. Mapping of key/essential corporate indicators was conducted by each agency to ensure full coverage in the assessment. On the other hand, additional sections such as household expenditure, livelihood and income, assets ownership, access to the market and basic services were added. Technical focal points covering assessment, monitoring, cash-based interventions, livelihood and protection contributed to the Terms of Reference (TOR) development, questionnaire design, and analysis plan development phases. After the draft was initiated by the Hub and reviewed by all parties for two rounds, a 3-hour online meeting was called to finalize the questionnaire.

#### Thematic areas covered

1. Household characteristics and demographics;
2. Livelihood, expenditure, and asset ownership;
3. Food consumption and coping strategies;
4. Water and sanitation;
5. Market access;
6. Assistance access and challenges;
7. Beneficiary satisfaction, complaints, and feedback channel.

Questionnaire available in the report.

## Sampling

The assessment was designed to achieve representative findings at refugee camp level. The sample size was calculated based on the total number of refugee groups (as the proxy to the total number of households) registered in UNHCR ProGres database as of November 2020, using 95% confidence interval, 4% margin of error and 15% estimated non-response rate. Systematic random sampling with a fixed periodic interval was conducted in the camps to select the households. In total, 2501 completed household surveys were achieved in all six camps.

Refugee Camp	Sample size
Mugombwa	409
Kiziba	410
Gihembe	403
Nyabiheke	389
Kigeme	433
Mahama	457
Total	2,501

## Data collection

The questionnaire was programmed in ODK by WFP to enable data collection on **mobile devices**. ODK and KOBO are the most common data collection software used in humanitarian contexts. ODK was selected over KOBO as the final data collection tool largely because it was the primary software of WFP CO, as the leading agency for data collection for this exercise. Benefiting from having a team of experienced enumerators with WFP monitoring exercises, a 2.5-day **training**, and a half-day pilot survey were quickly organized with the goal of enhancing the team's deep understanding of the assessment objectives and best practices for questionnaire administration on the field. The enumeration team was led by the WFP national monitoring associate with the coordination of the Joint Hub Country Coordinator and input from the Hub Joint Assessment Officer. Technical focal points (WFP – M&E, Gender & Protection, UNHCR – CBI, Protection, Livelihood) led different sessions of the training with the Hub Country Coordinator's support. Such joint efforts proved effective in enhancing the quality and efficiency of the training. Improvements to the tools and survey implementation were made during training sessions and **pilot** surveys. Training and discussion were conducted in local language which created certain communication barriers for the Hub to identify discussion that may need intervention timely.

Following the pilot survey on December 4, the **data collection** was jointly conducted by WFP and UNHCR between December 5-14, 2020. To ensure participation in the assessment, **field sensitization** was conducted by the Hub and country teams, which also included Joint Country coordinator's briefing with the camp managers in 3 of 5 camps. In addition, UNHCR field staff joined the field visit to ensure the purpose of the survey was properly communicated to the households and the exercise was conducted smoothly.

## Data analysis

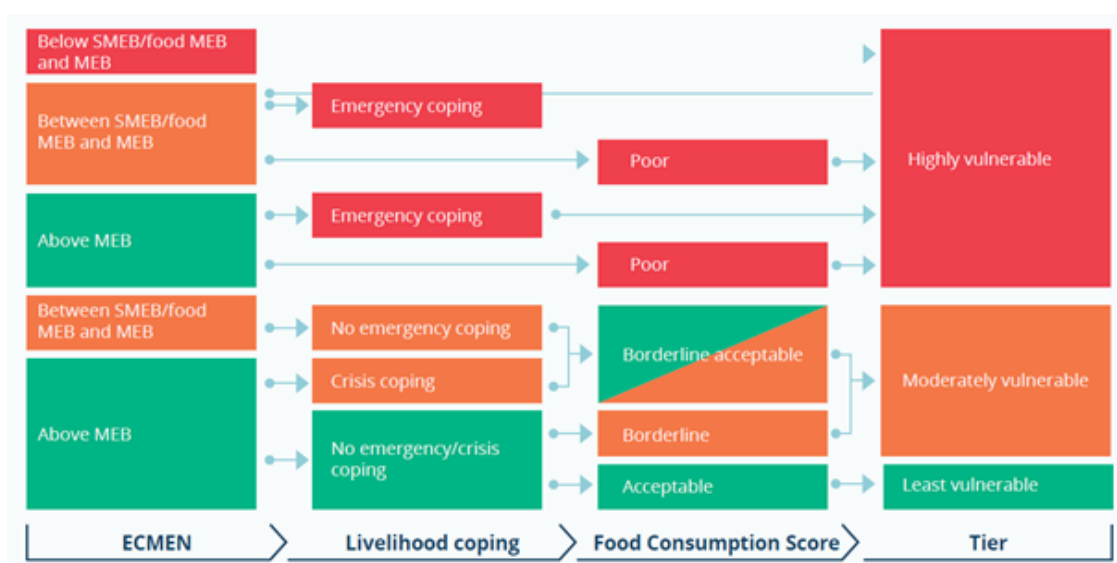
Based on the questionnaire, the **analysis plan** was developed and responsibilities were shared among UNHCR, WFP, and the Hub. The data analysis took place in January 2021 and lasted for approximately 4 weeks. To address the country offices' needs to generate representative analysis not only by camp but also by the gender of the household heads, corresponding weights were applied. Descriptive analysis of **corporate and core indicators** of both agencies was conducted for all refugee households, and disaggregated by camp as well as by gender of household heads.



In addition, given to the level of detail collected on expenditure, essential needs analysis covering Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) and **Economic Capacity to Meet Essential Needs** (ECMEN) was conducted. ECMEN is a monetary measurement of a household's economic capacity to meet its essential needs expressed by the percentage of households with expenditures above specific thresholds (MEB and Food MEB). This was calculated excluding expenditures in the form of either assistance or credit. In Rwanda's context, the equivalent monetary value of the WFP December 2020 food basket was used as the food MEB while the average monthly expenditure among households who reported acceptable food consumption and did not need to adopt high-risk coping was used as total MEB value/threshold. If a household's monthly expenditure fell below the food MEB, it was regarded as severely insufficient economic capacity; if a household's expenditure was above the food MEB but below the total MEB, it was still regarded as insufficient economically.

To explore different levels of household vulnerability across refugees, the Hub followed the WFP corporate Essential Needs Assessment (ENA) guidance<sup>1</sup> to set three **vulnerability tiers**. Indicators including ECMEN, Livelihood Coping Strategy, and Food Consumption Score were combined to classify households into different vulnerability groups: highly vulnerable, moderately vulnerable and least vulnerable. The vulnerability analysis took into consideration protection needs and reliance on high-risk coping strategies that expose refugees to protection risks.

### Vulnerability Framework



### Results dissemination

The analysis results were presented by the Hub several times targeting different stakeholders including technical colleagues of the country- and regional- level, senior management of both agencies as well as technical team of the Ministry in Charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA). Upon consultation and verification, the results were used as the knowledge base for the targeting process. The statistical validity, the representativeness of the findings, as well as the approach to defining vulnerability tiers were further discussed during dissemination sessions.

The Joint PDM report was drafted and reviewed by the Hub and country teams. The consultation with field colleagues during the report drafting and finding verification phase proved helpful to contextualize the information and to aid the interpretation of the quantitative results. The report has been designed and shared publicly .

1. WFP Essential Needs Guidelines <https://www.wfp.org/publications/essential-needs-guidelines-july-2018>

## Best Practices

- I. An inherently **participatory process** was key to the successful implementation of the joint assessment. The country teams composed of focal points covering a wide range of programmatic areas including assessment, monitoring, protection, cash-based interventions, education and others proved helpful to form a comprehensive, accurate and programme-relevant assessment.
- II. Replicable and adaptable **tool development** yielded high-quality data as well as reliable results, which were also comparable over time.
- III. A **joint discussion** on the thematic areas and questions to prioritize during the survey was key. As the length of the questionnaires was controlled, the team ensured reasonable time needed to administer each survey and minimized the level of respondent fatigue among visited households.
- IV. **Full engagement** of in-house experienced staff and field colleagues throughout the preparatory phase, including questionnaire review, sensitization in the camps, and ground-truthing of statistical analysis was critical for quality control and accuracy of results.

## Lessons Learnt

### 1. It is critical to ensure the inclusion and analysis of **core corporate indicators** accurately:

- Both country teams need to identify the **core** corporate indicators that fall under the scope of the assessment at the initial stage of questionnaire drafting. This will efficiently inform the questionnaire design phase.
- It's important that the indicator modules (eg. Food Consumption Score) are in line with corporate modules and/or the one used in previous assessments in order to guarantee comparison of results. The CO teams should pay sufficient attention and guide the team in this regard.

### 2. It will always be beneficial to establish a team to supervise the **data quality** as data collection goes by:

- The joint team need to agree on the responsibility of data quality control during the assessment preparation phase. The necessary roles include a questionnaire manager managing the coding, a field mission leader supervising the data collection and reporting any changes needed to improve the questionnaire, and a data quality assurance officer to check the incoming data on a regular (or daily) basis and to develop quality protocols to be used in the field. Agreement on how to update the tools based on pilot survey and formal survey feedback should be in place before the field visit and carefully communicated to the enumerators in the training.
- The manager of questionnaire programming should share the accessible link with other team members in advance, for field-testing, review and finalization.
- Data quality protocols (including tips and guidelines on common mistakes observed during training and pilot, as well as an established system of data checks to be conducted and corrected while the data collection is still ongoing) should be developed and finalized before the start of data collection.

### 3. All parties need to respect the established **roles and responsibilities** throughout the process:

- The assessment process calls for close collaboration from all parties over a relatively long period. To ensure the responsibilities are evenly distributed and feedback from both agencies is incorporated in the analysis and the final report, both country teams should commit through the process, especially in the post-data collection and data analysis stage.
- Beyond data collection and analysis, greater CO involvement in defining the recommendations and agreeing on how the assessment results will be used to influence programme design/implementation is important.

4. It is worth exploring a sustainable and optimal manner of utilizing the **Hub's resource** to strengthen the CO's capacity :

- The recruitment of a temporary consultant for report writing and design was not optimal. The Hub and the country office, instead of delivering the support and supervisory role, spent a substantive additional amount of time improving the deliverable.
- It may be worth exploring if there are any established rosters or in-house resources on report writing and design.

5. When linking the joint assessment analysis to ProGres for targeting purpose, considerations should be made through the assessment process:

- It is important to know when the ProGres was last updated and evaluate the relevance of using it as the sample frame.
- The fact the more than 1 refugee groups registered in ProGres live in the same household should be fully considered during questionnaire development phase. Questionnaire should capture sufficient information which will enable to team to understand the prevalence of the households with multiple refugee ProGres groups, the demographic characteristics of these households and the primary reason why.



[Link to JPDM report](#)

[Link to JPDM brief](#)

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For further information please contact:

WFP.UNHCR.hub@wfp.org

Cinzia Papavero, Senior Targeting Advisor

Yingci Sun, Joint Assessment officer



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