Arab food security monitoring framework

Country reviews

Djibouti
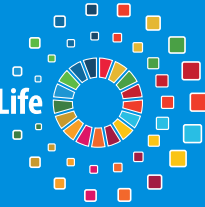
VISION

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Arab food security monitoring framework
Country reviews
Djibouti

UNITED NATIONS
Beirut

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Contents

Key Messages

AVAILABILITY

ACCESS

UTILIZATION

STABILITY

A monitoring framework to track food security in the Arab region was developed by ESCWA in collaboration with member States and other partners. It assesses the food security status through **3** outcome and **21** causal indicators distributed across the main food security dimensions, i.e.

The monitoring framework highlights that Djibouti has elevated rates of undernourishment as well as child stunting and wasting and anaemia among women. The country is highly dependent on food imports and lacks adequate natural resources, further weakening its food security. The country profile reviews the impact of COVID-19, early measures against it and their effect on the food situation.

CHILD STUNTING

CHILD WASTING

ANAEMIA

Introduction

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and its partners developed the Arab Food Security Monitoring Framework that helps countries assess their food security situation despite its complex and multidimensional nature.[1] The Monitoring Framework is an outcome of the project entitled "Promoting Food and Water Security through Cooperation and Capacity Development in the Arab Region", implemented in collaboration and partnership with Arab countries, the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), academia and other experts, and with the support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

The framework builds on the globally agreed upon definition of food security as existing "when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life",[2] which, as defined, comprises four dimensions, namely availability, access, utilization, and stability, can be evaluated at individual, household, national, regional, or global levels and can be seasonal, transitory or chronic. The framework was developed over a period of three years and involved consultations with more than 200 Arab and international experts. It involved a wide-ranging literature review to account for the latest thinking and experiences in assessing and monitoring food security at national, regional and global levels as well as a mapping of past and present policies, strategies and action plans.

The encompassing review led to the development of a comprehensive monitoring framework that tracks food security at different spatial levels, considers its four dimensions and accounts for both individual and household food security while facilitating a follow-up of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The end result was the Monitoring Framework that expresses food security and nutrition as a function of a multitude of indicators spread in its four dimensions, though approximately five to six indicators under each dimension account for most of the variations and thus are more consequential than the rest. Most of the selected indicators are already widely used globally to monitor aspects of the food system, and the SDGs and other plans of actions are used by major global institutions as development, economic, social, health, or environmental indicators. It was also ensured that the indicators are measurable, relevant to the Arab context and available for at least 50 per cent of Arab countries or the regional population, or both.

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1 Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), 2019. Tracking Food Security in the Arab Region (E/ESCWA/SDPD/2019/4). Beirut. Available at https://www.unescwa.org/publications/tracking-food-security-arab-region.

2 Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), 2009. Report of the Committee on World Food Security: Final version. Agenda item III, Thirty-fifth Session of the Committee on World Food Security, 14, 15 and 17 October 2009, CFS:2009/2 Rev.2. Rome.

The 24 indicators that were selected are split into a core pillar with three ex post or outcome indicators — prevalence of undernourishment, moderate or severe food insecurity and obesity, while the remaining 21 ex ante or causal indicators were further split into the four food security dimensions as shown below. All the indicators are global in nature while catering to regional specificities and are grouped as follows:

- **The Core Pillar** comprises three outcome indicators that provide a picture of the prevailing food security and nutrition situation resulting from policies and programmes being implemented as reflected in the form of malnutrition – undernutrition (low caloric intake), overnutrition (excess caloric intake) or nutrient deficiency (low nutrient intake);

1 Core Indicators (CO)			
Code	**Indicator description**	**Short name**	**SDG linkage**
CO1	Prevalence of undernourishment ®️ %	Undernourishment	2.1.1
CO2	Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity measured using FIES ®️ %	Food insecurity	2.1.2
CO3	Prevalence of obesity in the adult population (18 years and older) ®️ %	Obesity	

®️ : Reversed During Normalization

- **The Availability** dimension comprises six indicators reflecting the supply side of food, namely, physical food inflow and outflow at macro and micro levels through production, trade, distribution, and others;

2 Food Availability Indicators (AV)			
Code	**Indicator description**	**Short name**	**SDG linkage**
AV1	Primary wheat yield as a percentage of potential achievable yield - %	Yields	2.3.1
AV2	Agriculture Orientation index for government expenditures - Index	Agriculture expenditure	2.a.1
AV3	Food losses (% total food available) ®️ %	Food loss	12.3
AV4	Average dietary energy supply adequacy - %	Dietary energy supply	
AV5	Wheat import dependency ratio ®️ %	Import dependency	
AV6	Share of water resources used in agriculture out of total renewable water resources ®️ %	Agriculture water	6.4.2

- **The Access** dimension comprises five indicators reflecting the ability of the population to acquire needed food through financial means and/or socioeconomic strengths with determinants including income/revenues, prices and supply-chain infrastructure;

3	Food Access Indicators (AC)		
Code	**Indicator description**	**Short name**	**SDG linkage**
AC1	Poverty headcount ratio Ⓡ %	Poverty	1.1.1/1.2.1/1.2.2
AC2	Share of food consumption expenditure in total household consumption expenditure Ⓡ %	Food consumption	
AC3	Unemployment rate Ⓡ %	Unemployment	8.5.2
AC4	Logistics performance - index	Logistics	
AC5	Inflation, consumer prices Ⓡ %	Inflation	

- **The Utilization** dimension comprises five indicators touching on nutrition impact or factors affecting it such as availability of basic water and sanitation infrastructure and critical health parameters showing the impact of food unavailability or nutrient deficiency, namely, stunting, wasting and anaemia;

4	Food Utilization Indicators (UT)		
Code	**Indicator description**	**Short name**	**SDG linkage**
UT1	The population using at least basic drinking water services - %	Drinking water access	1.4.1/6.1.1
UT2	The population using at least basic sanitation services - %	Sanitation access	1.4.1/6.2.1
UT3	Children under 5 years of age affected by stunting Ⓡ %	Child stunting	2.2.1
UT4	Children under 5 years of age affected by wasting Ⓡ %	Child wasting	2.2.2
UT5	Anaemia among women of reproductive age (15-49 years) Ⓡ %	Women anaemia	

- **The Stability** dimension comprises five indicators highlighting the variability in food production or supply factors that might affect these such as climate change, weather events, price shocks and sociopolitical conditions, all of which might impact the other food security dimensions and the core pillar as well;

5	Stability Indicators (ST)		
Code	**Indicator description**	**Short name**	**SDG linkage**
ST1	Climate change vulnerability index Ⓡ	Climate change	
ST2	Food price anomalies standard deviation Ⓡ	Price anomalies	2.c.1
ST3	Political stability and absence of violence - ranking	Political stability	
ST4	Per capita food production variability - $1,000/capita Ⓡ	Production variability	
ST5	Per capita food supply variability - kcal/capita/day Ⓡ	Supply variability	

Data are collected and computed using a dedicated Excel template. The results are presented in the form of a dashboard with two overlapping doughnut charts whose ten rings represent the data normalized to score between 0 (worst performance) and 10 (best performance), as depicted in the graph below. The inner doughnut displays the results of the core indicators while the outer doughnut shows those of the four food security dimension indicators. During the normalization process, indicators with a low value indicating good performance were reversed and are represented with an (R). The doughnut chart is always accompanied by a table presenting the raw indicator data together with the year of data collection and the overall trend between two time periods.

By design, the framework is mechanistic for two reasons: (i) indicators are set and distributed across the food security core pillar and four dimensions; and (ii) the interpretation of results follows a determined path consisting, first, in evaluating results of the three core indicators to identify food security and/or nutritional outcome, and second, in examining the 21 dimension indicators to identify hotspot areas that need immediate action. Stakeholders only need to enter data into the provided Excel template to generate the doughnut graph and related table containing raw data and trends. The data can be sourced at the regional, national and, if available, sub-national levels and disaggregated along gender lines or others noting, however, that a great majority of indicators cannot be disaggregated below the national level.

A complete description of the framework, which was endorsed by the Executive Council of AOAD in March 2019, was published and is available at ESCWA official publication website[3] under the title "Tracking Food Security in the Arab Region".[4] In addition to providing a full background on the framework, the publication presents the key results of tracking food security at the Arab regional level and the trend over the considered years and reviews selected policies and actions that might be considered under each of the indicators to remedy arising concerns. The publication is accompanied by a technical document entitled "Manual for Monitoring Food Security in the Arab Region", which provides a more detailed description for each of the 24 indicators comprising the monitoring framework including, when applicable, computation methodology, justification for selection, linkage to SDGs, potential data sources, and normalization process. It also overviews the use of the accompanying Excel template. Since the completion of the Food Security Monitoring Framework, numerous national agricultural and statistics experts from Arab countries have received in-depth training that took place in Tunis[5] and Beirut[6] and which focused on how to utilize the framework and interpret results for maximum impact for policy and programme design and development.

This report provides a series of food security overviews for the 22 Arab countries, which build on the above-described Arab Food Security Monitoring Framework. Its aim is to further highlight how to use the framework as well as to build capacity on its use with a focus on the national level. As such, it supports Arab countries in their endeavours to utilize the framework in the implementation of food security programmes, to assess the prevailing situation and

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3 See https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/publications/files/tracking-food-security-arab-region-english_1.pdf.

4 See https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/publications/files/manual-monitoring-food-security-arab-region-english_1.pdf.

5 See https://www.unescwa.org/events/training1-food-security-monitoring-framework-arab.

6 See https://www.unescwa.org/events/training2-food-security-monitoring-framework-arab.

to follow up on progress achieved towards the implementation of selected SDGs. It should further enhance capacity at country level and support efforts of national experts to collect focused data, analyse them using a dedicated framework and interpret meaningfully the results to provide policymakers with an overall view of their respective country's food security situation while also outlining alternative paths to address the situation.

The country overviews were produced by ESCWA with data delivered by national experts who provided or reviewed the underlying data (see attached list) and from global databases, as appropriate. For some countries, critical data are still missing, which should serve as a call to action to collect and provide the necessary data as the basis of more accurate and focused advice. The data were collected prior to the COVID-19 pandemic; thus, some results might not reflect the current situation. It is hoped that the report will raise the necessary awareness so that countries can make additional efforts to remediate the lack of data.

Food security dashboard

Arab region
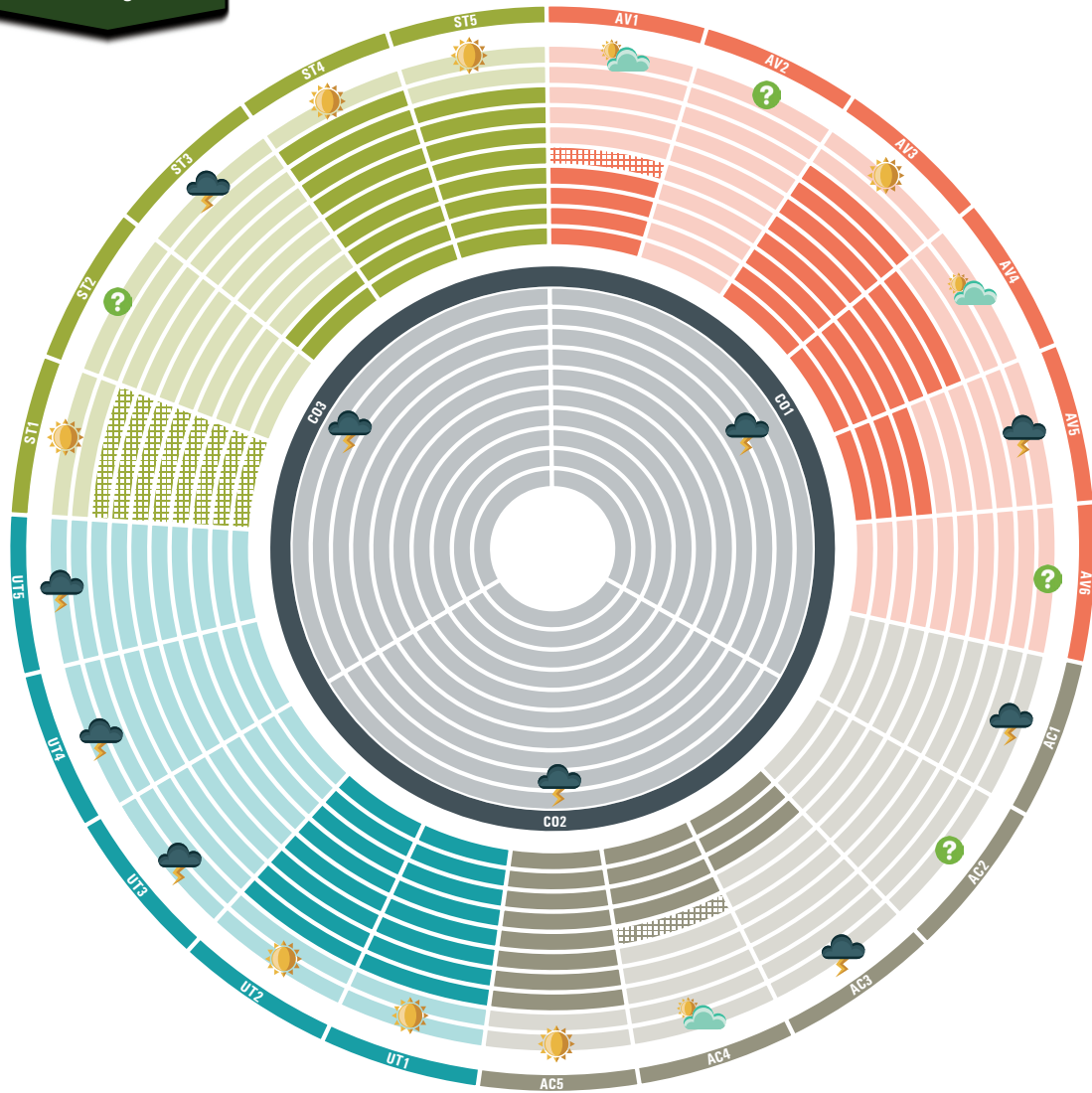
2010 Data:

Latest Data:

Performance: ☀ High: Proceed Action | ⛅ Average: More Action | ⛈ Low: Urgent Action | ❓ No Data

Food security indicators, world vs. Arab region

Indicators		World		Arab region			Trend
		Latest		2010	Latest		
Code	Description	Value	Year	Value	Value	Year	
CORE INDICATORS							
CO1	Undernourishment Ⓡ %	10.8	2016	11.5	12.1	2016	🟡
CO2	Food insecurity Ⓡ %	9.2	2018	n.a.	12.2	2016	
CO3	Obesity Ⓡ %	13.0	2016	24.6	28.4	2016	🔴
AVAILABILITY INDICATORS							
AV1	Wheat yields - %	n.a.		76.5	82.2	2017	🟢
AV2	Agriculture expenditure - index	n.a.		n.a.	n.a.		
AV3	Food loss Ⓡ %	n.a.		7.3	6.8	2013	🟢
AV4	Dietary energy supply - %	n.a.		131	131	2017	🟡
AV5	Wheat Import dependency Ⓡ %	n.a.		62.5	65.0	2012	🟡
AV6	Agriculture water Ⓡ %	n.a.		n.a.	n.a.		
ACCESS INDICATORS							
AC1	Poverty Ⓡ %	26.2	2015	n.a.	16.6	mult.	
AC2	Food consumption Ⓡ %	n.a.		n.a.	n.a.		
AC3	Unemployment Ⓡ %	5.0	2018	9.6	10.4	mult.	🔴
AC4	Logistics - index	2.8	2016	2.6	2.7	2016	🟢
AC5	Inflation Ⓡ %	2.5	2018	5.7	12.8	mult.	🔴
UTILIZATION INDICATORS							
UT1	Drinking water access - %	88.5	2015	84.3	86.9	2015	🟡
UT2	Sanitation access - %	68.0	2015	78.9	80.8	2015	🟡
UT3	Child stunting Ⓡ %	22.2	2017	n.a.	22.9	mult.	
UT4	Child wasting Ⓡ %	7.5	2017	n.a.	8.7	mult.	
UT5	Women anaemia Ⓡ %	32.8	2016	34.2	35.5	2016	🟡
STABILITY INDICATORS							
ST1	Climate change Ⓡ - index	n.a.		n.a.	0.1	2019	
ST2	Price Anomalies Ⓡ - index	n.a.		n.a.	n.a.		
ST3	Political stability - ranking	n.a.		20	14	2017	🔴
ST4	Production variability Ⓡ - $1,000/capita	n.a.		10.3	10.1	2016	🟡
ST5	Supply variability Ⓡ - kcal/cap/day	n.a.		32.8	29.8	2013	🟢

Ⓡ : Reversed During Normalization   n.a.= Not Available   mult.= Multiple years
🔴 Red: Negative Trend   🟡 Yellow: Neutral Trend   🟢 Green: Positive Trend

Source: Computed by ESCWA.

Country background

A. Natural resources

Djibouti has an area of about 23,000 km^2 and is located on the littoral of the Horn of Africa. It is one of the driest and least fertile among Arab nations. Rainfall is limited in quantity and timing and does not exceed 380 mm in areas where it rains most. Arable land is limited to a few wadis.[1]

Box 1. Refugees in a poor country

The turbulent geopolitical situation of the countries of the Horn of Africa has resulted in a refugee population estimated at 30,000, half of whom are from Somalia, one third Ethiopians and 15 per cent Yemenis. There are also refugees from Eritrea and other African nationalities. About 80 per cent of the refugees live in camps and are cared for by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), while their food security is the responsibility of the World Food Programme (WFP), which provides them with a combination of food and cash-based assistance.

The country has recently legislated in favour of integrating the refugees into the national health and education system. This change was a result of the implementation of Djibouti's Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), which emphasizes on promoting refugee self-reliance and inclusion together with the provision of adequate support to communities hosting refugees. Previously, the health care of refugees was primarily assured by international organizations. Various restrictions existed for the employment of refugees omit in the informal sector where they were mostly involved in domestic assistance, fishing, restaurants and general labour.

To support Djibouti, international aid was also stepped up through innovative initiatives such as promoting the use of renewable energy technologies in the camps.

Source: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 2017; and World Food Programme (WFP), 2011.

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1 Cutbill, C. C. and P. J. Schraeder, 2019; and World Food Programme (WFP), 2011.

B. **Socioeconomy**

Urbanization is very pronounced, and up to 75 per cent of the population of 900,000 live in cities. Nearly 80 per cent of the rural people live below the poverty line.

The economy relies mostly on the services sector, which makes up about four-fifths of the gross domestic product (GDP), which amounted to about $2 billion in 2019 or about $1,600 per capita.[2] However, the country's location on the interface

between Red Sea and Indian Ocean, and a well-protected gulf confer the port of Djibouti a special importance. A new Chinese-Djiboutian joint venture has resulted in a new multipurpose terminal in Doraleh, which contributes to turning Djibouti into a true hub for all merchandise transiting to inland countries, especially for humanitarian aid of which Djibouti is a main recipient.

C. **Agriculture and food security**

Djibouti heavily depends on food imports, and, according to WFP, 34 per cent of all households suffered from chronic food insecurity in 2017, while in rural areas the figure is closer to 60 per cent.

Limited agriculture is practiced in the wadis and consists of a few vegetables and dates. The remaining agricultural production consist of nomadic pastoralism on meagre rangelands and forests covering 1 per cent of the land.[3] A quasi-drought in 2018 resulted in a further decline of the sector and in

restricting the income of some of the poorest households, while high food prices constitute a main hindrance to the food security of households.[4]

One decade ago, the Government of Djibouti attempted to acquire lands in the neighbouring Sudan and Ethiopia in order to complement its ailing agricultural production with oil crops and cereals. The project succeeded for a few years but had to stop in 2016 due to security reasons in Ethiopia and to land impoverishment in the Sudan.[5]

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2 TradingEconomics, n. d.; and Cutbill and Schraeder, 2019.
3 Cutbill and Schraeder, 2019.
4 World Bank, 2018.
5 Ibid.

Data and trends

A. Core indicators

- **Prevalence of undernourishment (CO1)** affected 22.3 per cent of people in 2010 and 19.7 per cent in 2016. Even though this is a positive progress towards lowering the prevalence of undernourishment, Djibouti still has one of the highest rates in the Arab region, the average of which was at 12.1 per cent in 2016;

- **Prevalence of severe food insecurity (CO2)** data are not available;

- **Prevalence of adult obesity (CO3)** rates slightly increased from 11 per cent in 2010 to 13.5 per cent in 2016, significantly lower than the Arab regional average of 28.4 per cent. The slight increase might point to a beginning nutritional transition, which might increase obesity rates.

B. Availability

- **Wheat yield to potential (AV1)** data are not available;

- **Agriculture orientation index (AV2)** data are not available;

- **Food losses to food available (AV3)** decreased from 2.06 per cent to 0.54 per cent between 2010 and 2013, showing a potentially improving situation, notably compared to the Arab region (6.8 per cent in 2013). However, accurate data might be lacking and the country imports most of its food, which tends to be better handled;

- **Average dietary energy supply adequacy (AV4),** in 2010 and 2017, was among the lowest in the region, at 105 per cent and 109 per cent, respectively; this indicates a possible lack of food access by the most vulnerable. This value is much lower than the Arab region's average of 131 per cent of 2017;

- **Wheat import dependency (AV5)** was fixed at 100 per cent between 2010 and 2012 as Djibouti is a net importer of food, which puts it at the mercy of global market price fluctuations;

- **Water resources used in agriculture (AV6)** data are not available. However, the per capita share of total renewable water resources stands at 313.5 m^3/capita/year, less than half the water scarcity level of 1000m^3/capita/year.

C. Access

- **Poverty ratio at $3.2/day (AC1)** was the second highest in the Arab region in 2017 at 40.2 per cent. This is more than double the Arab regional average of 16.6 per cent. Rural poverty is especially high;

- **Food consumption share of expenditures (AC2)** data are not available;

- **Unemployment rate (AC3)** decreased from 12.5 per cent to 11.1 per cent between 2010 and 2018, which was a positive trend. The gender gap does not seem to be very wide when it comes to

employment as 10.4 per cent of men are unemployed compared to 12 per cent of women;

- **Logistical performance (AC4)** had a very shy improvement from 2.4 in 2010 to 2.6 in 2018, an indication of possible hurdles ensures food access in remote areas;

- **Inflation, consumer prices (AC5)** decreased from 3.95 per cent to 0.2 per cent between 2010 and 2018, an indication of improved affordability and an eventual ease of economic access to food.

D. Utilization

- **Population using basic drinking water services (UT1)** data show that around one quarter of the population still lacked access to the service in both 2010 and 2017, which is 10 points below the Arab region average of 86 per cent;

- **Population using basic sanitation services (UT2)** access was only 55 per cent in 2010 and 64 per cent in 2017 compared to 80 per cent for the Arab average. Serious efforts need to be exerted for the country to halve the percentage of people without access by 2030;

- **Stunting in children under five years (UT3)** was at 33.5 per cent in 2012. The value falls within the range of high severity of

malnutrition according to classification by the World Health Organization (WHO) and far from the 2030 targets set by the World Health Assembly (WHA);[6]

- **Wasting in children under five years (UT4)** was at 21.5 per cent in 2012. The value also falls within the range of high severity of malnutrition according to WHO classification and is far from the 2030 targets set by WHA;[7]

- **Prevalence of anaemia among women (UT5)** was on the rise between 2010 and 2016 and recorded at 30.9 per cent and 32.7 per cent, respectively, almost double of the 2030 target value set by WHA.[8]

E. Stability

- **Climate change vulnerability (ST1),** at 0.33, was among the highest in the Arab

region, indicating that the country would get strongly impacted by the combined

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6 Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and others, 2019.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.

effects of the increase in weather-related disasters, sea-level rise and loss of agricultural productivity;

- **Food price anomalies (ST2)** data are not available;

- **Political stability (ST3)** decreased from 53 to 41 between 2010 and 2018. Although this is an unfavourable decrease, the value remains within the middle range for this indicator;

- **Food production variability (ST4)** stands at $1,400[9] per capita in 2016, a decreasing trend from $10,300 per capita in 2010. This decrease comes as a positive sign of more stability in food production. However, this value might not affect food availability much as the country produces minimal amounts of food;[10]

- **Food supply variability (ST5)** increased from 20 kcal/capita/day to 29 kcal/capita/ day between 2010 and 2013. This increase is alarming as the country is a net importer of food and its ADESA is already relatively low.

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9   Current 2004-2006 International USD.
10 Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), 2020.

Food security dashboard

Djibouti
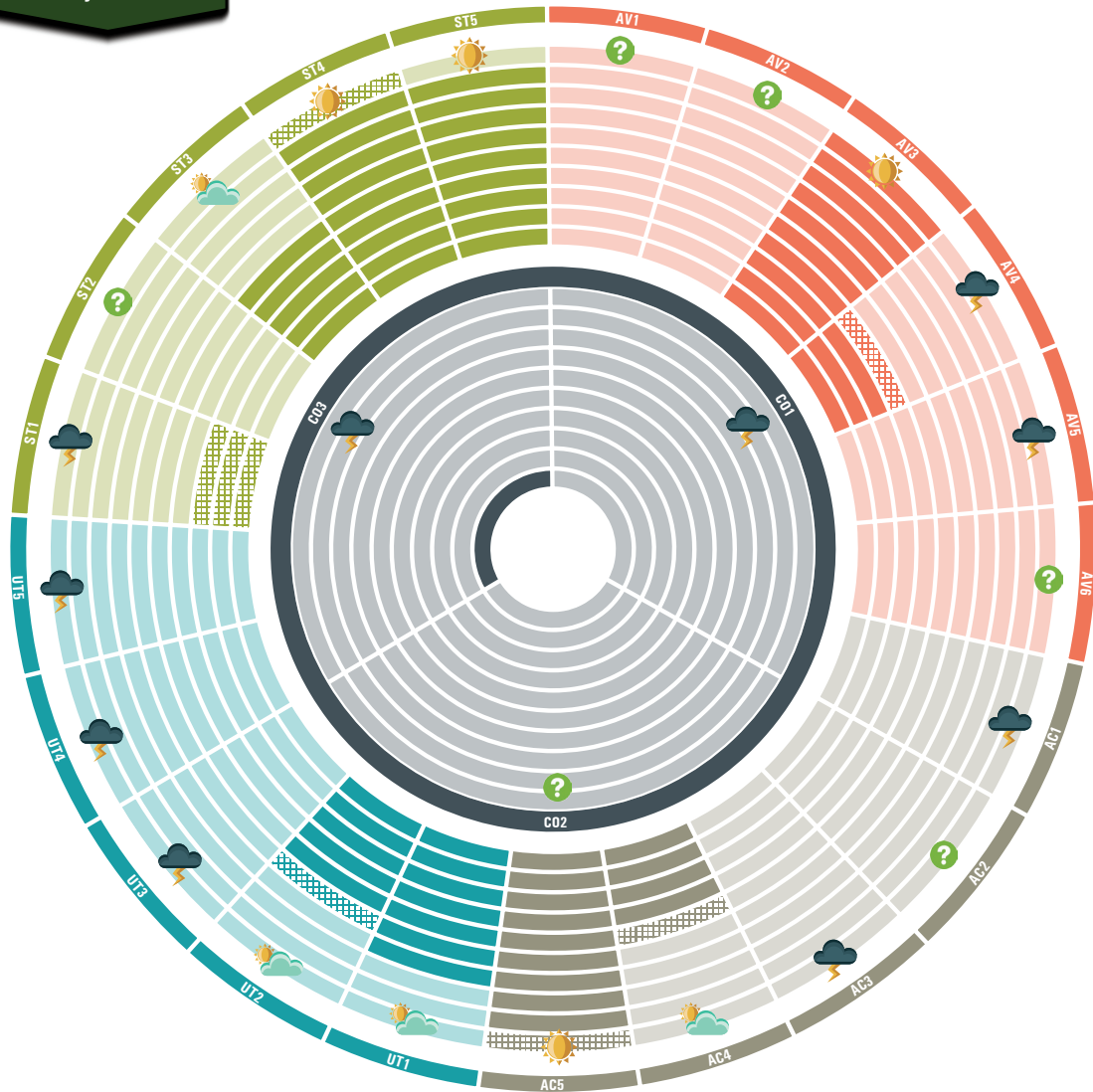
Labels around the dashboard: ST5, ST4, ST3, ST2, ST1, UT5, UT4, UT3, UT2, UT1, AC5, AC4, AC3, AC2, AC1, AV6, AV5, AV4, AV3, AV2, AV1, CO1, CO2, CO3

2010 Data: **Latest Data:**

Performance: High: Proceed Action | Average: More Action | Low: Urgent Action | No Data

Food security indicators, Djibouti

Indicators		Arab		Djibouti			Trend
		Latest		2010	Latest		
Code	Description	Value	Year	Value	Value	Year	
CORE INDICATORS							
CO1	Undernourishment ⓡ %	12.1	2016	22.3	19.7	2016	🟢
CO2	Food insecurity ⓡ %	12.2	2016	n.a.	n.a.		
CO3	Obesity ⓡ %	28.4	2016	11.0	13.5	2016	🔴
AVAILABILITY INDICATORS							
AV1	Wheat yields - %	82.2	2017	n.a.	n.a.		
AV2	Agriculture expenditure - index	n.a.		n.a.	n.a.		
AV3	Food loss ⓡ %	6.8	2013	2.1	0.5	2013	🟢
AV4	Dietary energy supply - %	131	2017	105	109	2017	🟡
AV5	Wheat Import dependency ⓡ %	65.0	2012	100.0	100.0	2012	🟡
AV6	Agriculture water ⓡ %	n.a.		n.a.	n.a.		
ACCESS INDICATORS							
AC1	Poverty ⓡ %	16.6	mult.	n.a.	40.2	2017	
AC2	Food consumption ⓡ %	n.a.		n.a.	n.a.		
AC3	Unemployment ⓡ %	10.4	mult.	12.5	11.1	2018	🟢
AC4	Logistics - index	2.7	2016	2.4	2.6	2018	🟢
AC5	Inflation ⓡ %	12.8	mult.	4.0	0.2	2018	🟢
UTILIZATION INDICATORS							
UT1	Drinking water access - %	86.9	2015	75.5	75.6	2017	🟡
UT2	Sanitation access - %	80.8	2015	54.8	63.6	2017	🟢
UT3	Child stunting ⓡ %	22.9	mult.	n.a.	33.5	2012	
UT4	Child wasting ⓡ %	8.7	mult.	n.a.	21.5	2012	
UT5	Women anaemia ⓡ %	35.5	2016	30.9	32.7	2016	🔴
STABILITY INDICATORS							
ST1	Climate change ⓡ - index	0.1	2019	n.a.	0.33	2019	
ST2	Price Anomalies ⓡ - index	n.a.		n.a.	n.a.		
ST3	Political stability - ranking	14	2017	53	41	2018	🔴
ST4	Production variability ⓡ - $1,000/capita	10.1	2016	10.3	1.4	2016	🟢
ST5	Supply variability ⓡ - kcal/cap/day	29.8	2013	20.0	29.0	2013	🔴

ⓡ : Reversed During Normalization   n.a.= Not Available   mult.= Multiple years
🔴 Red: Negative Trend   🟡 Yellow: Neutral Trend   🟢 Green: Positive Trend

Note: Unless otherwise indicated, all data figuring in this table and framework have been sourced from international databases (including, but not limited to FAOSTAT, ILOSTAT, World Bank and AQUASTAT), according to each indicator's accredited data source.

Food security snapshot

A. Drivers and determinants

The framework core indicators show a challenging food security situation for Djibouti as the country is suffering from undernourishment (CO1) and relatively elevated rates of obesity (CO3) while it lacks data on food security experience.

Hotspot areas include the following:

- **Availability:** dietary energy supply (AV4) and food import dependency (AV5);

- **Access:** poverty (AC1) and unemployment (AC3);

- **Utilization:** stunting (UT3), wasting (UT4) and anaemia in women (UT5);

- **Stability:** climate change impact (ST1).

The framework lacks data for six indicators for the latest year and a bit more for 2010. This means that it is hard to paint a comprehensive picture of the trend of food security and, consequently, identify the proper actions to be undertaken to improve it.

However, food security is a serious concern in Djibouti, with a significant proportion of the population being exposed to chronic food insecurity. The large value for the prevalence of undernourishment (nearly 20 per cent), the rising obesity and the low dietary energy supply confirm the findings of WFP that nearly half of the inhabitants of Djibouti experience food insecurity. About the same proportion of the population lives under the poverty line, which indicates that food insecurity in Djibouti is essentially a problem of economic access.

The unemployment figures indicate that a large proportion of the people is unemployed or might be employed in the informal sector, and disaggregated data show that both men and women are involved in the labour market. Thus, the problem is essentially one of inability to purchase food with current incomes. Indeed, WFP reports that a proportion of the population uses the totality of its income to purchase food. The nutritional outcome of this situation is clear in the indicators: high and concerning figures for child wasting, child stunting and women's anaemia. This is exacerbated by weak logistical performance, total reliance on imports for the main staples and political instability.

B. **Action areas**

There is no silver policy bullet for Djibouti. There has to be a concerted effort between the Government, Arab countries and international aid organizations. The State must seek to stimulate the economy by making use of Djibouti's strategic position, building on successful ventures such as the Doraleh terminal, while ensuring that a system for benefit-sharing and social safety is put in place.
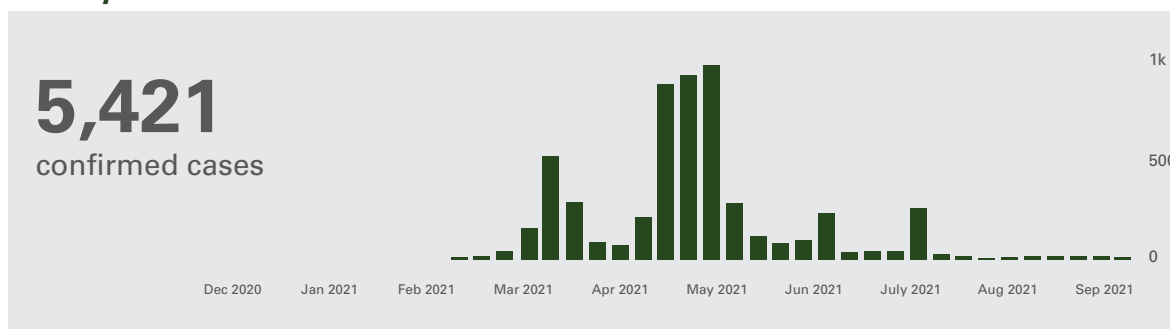
Impact of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic reached Djibouti in early March 2020 and, by late September, had affected more than 5,400 people with around 60 deaths.[11] Djibouti witnessed successive peaks with the highest and longest recorded between late May and early June at slightly more than 200 cases occurring daily.

Weekly cases

5,421
confirmed cases

1k

500

0

Dec 2020   Jan 2021   Feb 2021   Mar 2021   Apr 2021   May 2021   Jun 2021   July 2021   Aug 2021   Sep 2021

Source: World Health Organization (WHO), n. d.

Due to the restrictive measures[12] implemented to control the pandemic, the number of food-insecure people in rural and urban areas is expected to rise.[13] Unemployment was relatively high before the pandemic, estimated at 76 per cent of the population between the age of 15 and 35.[14] In June, the Intergovernmental Agency on Development estimated that the socioeconomic consequences of the pandemic led to the loss of more than 30,000 jobs, more than 10,000 informal jobs and 20,000 formal jobs, and to 31.5 per cent of households living in poverty. In July, the cost of food increased by 6.3 per cent compared to July 2019.[15]

11 WHO, n. d.
12 Suspension of commercial flights, lessons at schools and universities, and closure of religious sites.
13 WFP, 2020; and World Bank, 2020.
14 ACAPS, n. d.
15 Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), 2020; United Nations Country Team (UNCT) Djibouti, 2020; and TradingEconomics, n. d.

According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Displacement Tracking Matrix, 26.5 per cent and 18 per cent of movements during May and July, respectively, were forced movements due to food insecurity. IOM continued to provide food and non-food assistance to migrants.[16]

In April, floods caused by heavy rain hit multiple cities, which led to loss of homes, displaced more people and disrupted the livelihoods of 110,254 and 6,000 people in urban areas and in rural and peri-urban areas, respectively, including agropastoralists. Locust invaded the country and led to estimated crop and pasture losses worth $5 million.[17]

The "Rising Djibouti" fundraising campaign, launched by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Government, aims at boosting livelihoods and the local economy after being impacted by COVID-19-related restrictive measures, through microgrants (to 30,000 beneficiaries) and finance stimulus packages to 20,000 self-owned businesses.[18]

16 International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2020.
17 IGAD, 2020.
18 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2020.

Box 2. Examples of initiatives

Government-led

The Government distributed food vouchers to vulnerable households affected by the pandemic.[a]

In May, the Government, in collaboration with Japan and WFP, initiated food-for-asset-creation activities aiming to support 7,000 beneficiaries.[b]

WFP and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in coordination with the Government, completed in-kind and cash food distributions to 6,100 refugees and the distribution of general food assistance and firewood to 5,400 individuals. WFP and the Government initiated a cash-based assistance aiming at providing $56 to 6,100 households. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) contributed by providing cash for three months for 450 households, eventually targeting 5,000 households; 3,917 households were reached by the end of August. One thousand urban refugees and 200 Djiboutian households in host communities were provided with three-month food vouchers by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Solidarity, the National Office for Assistance to Refugees and Disaster Victims (ONARS) and UNHCR. WFP, in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) distributed food parcels to 528 migrants.[c]

Other initiatives

Between early March and early May, WFP provided more than 18,000 households in various districts of Balbala suburb with general food assistance.[d]

In June, WFP completed the distribution of in-kind and cash food assistance to 21,000 refugees and asylum seekers. By the end of June, WFP shifted to take-home rations instead of school canteens. In July and August, WFP distributed double rations to 1,400 households while continuing food-for-assets activities with 1,200 households. Nutrition commodities to prevent and treat malnutrition in pregnant and lactating women and children were distributed as well. A third distribution cycle started by the end of August targeting 2,500 households.[e]

IOM distributed food and non-food items to 460 migrants in Loyada and Obock.[f]

For two months, WFP distributed food parcels to families who had their agricultural livelihood impacted by the pandemic and locust invasions.[g]

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a International Monetary Fund (IMF), 2020.
b United Nations Country Team (UNCT), 2020.
c Ibid.
d Ibid.
e Ibid.
f Ibid.
g Ibid.

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