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COMPLEMENTARY EMERGENCY SOCIAL
SAFETY NET (C-ESSN) PROJECT

FINDINGS OF POST DISTRIBUTION MONITORING SURVEY (ROUND 2)



KIZILAYKART
PROGRAMMES



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DISCLAIMER

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SUMMARY

Turkey experienced an accelerating economic recovery in 2021 amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, but also rising macro-financial volatility, with significant impacts on households. In the recovery, the economy grew 11.7 percent year-on-year in the first three quarters of 2021 supported by external and domestic demand; the external and fiscal balances improved, and unemployment fell. However, the Lira depreciated to record low levels in 2021 Q4, losing over half its value by early December before appreciating but remaining volatile; consumer price index (CPI) inflation in January 2022 accelerated to its fastest rate (48.7 percent, year-on-year) since 2002; and corporate and financial sector were adversely affected. This volatility added to stresses on poor and vulnerable groups as they had not benefited equally from the employment recovery, and as poverty is estimated to rise at twice the rate of the general increase in prices. Furthermore, a sharp acceleration in both goods and services exports narrowed the current account deficit. Exports of goods reached record high levels in 2021 supported by external demand, improved price competitiveness and demand shifts to Turkey due to rising shipping costs.

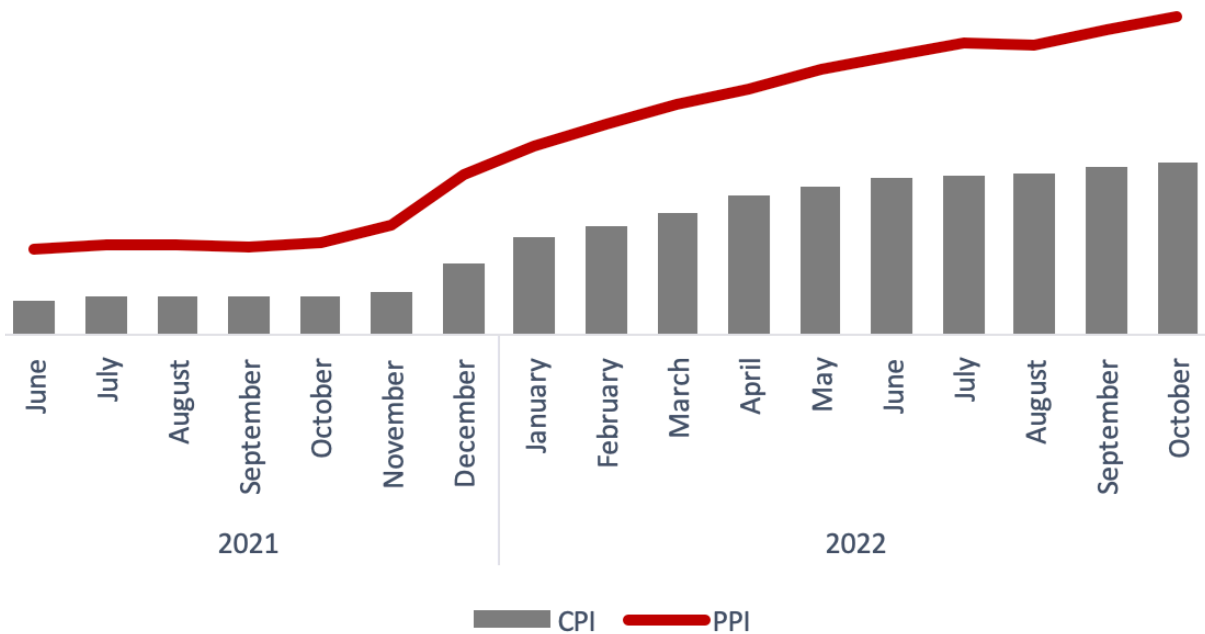


Figure 1: Annual Rate of Changes in CPI and PPI

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Turkey is a host to over 4 million registered refugees¹ and asylum-seeker², 3.75 million Syrian nationals, and close to 320.000 international protection³ status holders and asylum-seekers of other nationalities. In response, the Government of Turkey has granted temporary or international protection to refugees, depending on the nationality, and has provided them with free access to services once they have registered with the Presidency of Migration Management (PMM). To support the government's efforts, the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) programme was launched in November 2016 to help cover the basic needs of the most vulnerable refugees living outside camps under temporary or international protection. It provides beneficiary refugee households with a debit card giving them access to a fixed amount of money each month. Complementary ESSN (C-ESSN) project intends to improve the living standards of the most vulnerable refugees under Temporary and International Protection as well as humanitarian residence permit holders and international protection applicants in Turkey through the provision of regular cash assistance to cover their basic needs. Financed by the EU, the programme will be implemented by the MoFSS as a lead applicant in partnership with the Turkish Red Crescent (TRC) as a co-applicant, and in cooperation with other relevant stakeholders, which have a well-tracked record in the provision of humanitarian aid to the most vulnerable refugees through a coordinated and systematic approach.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to assess the impact of CESSN assistance on socio-economic conditions of most vulnerable recipients with particular focus on their level of expenditure, debt, coping strategies and food consumptions. The study aims to track changes over time and compare these to the ones experienced by non-recipient households.



OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To measure to what extent the minimum expenses such as food, rent, utilities, non-food items (NFI), health, education, etc. are met
2. To determine how income, debt, and expenditure values are critical in understanding households' economic resilience
3. To determine the severity of coping strategies applied in case of having economic /financial difficulties
4. To assess how the food consumption habits are secure

1 According to the Law on Foreigners and International Protection, the refugee refers to foreigners under international protection or temporary protection. Herein the term is used to refer to their legal status.

2 An individual who is seeking international protection. In countries with individualized procedures, an asylum-seeker is someone whose claim has not been finally decided on by the country in which the claim is submitted. Not every asylum-seeker will ultimately be recognized as a refugee, but every refugee was initially an asylum-seeker.

3 The actions by the international community on the basis of international law, aimed at protecting the fundamental rights of a specific category of persons outside their countries of origin, who lack the national protection of their own countries.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

This PDM survey adopted a cross sectional survey design since it involves observations of a sample, or cross section, of a population or phenomenon that are made at one point in time. The unit of analysis chosen for the PDM is the household.

SAMPLE

Sample sizes for C-ESSN recipient group were calculated at 95 per cent confidence level and 5 per cent margin of error. PDM 2 was conducted between June 2022 and October 2022, capturing responses from 2,627 households. Comparisons were done using the results from PDM 1 which was conducted between December 2021 and January 2022. Data was collected by enumerators from TRC's M&E call center in Gaziantep through phone surveys.

AREA OF STUDY

The sampling design of C-ESSN has been designed considering the minimum required sample size per strata that allows disaggregation of the baseline information by geographical regions and by eligibility criteria of C-ESSN. Since the C-ESSN population is dispersed all over Turkey, in order to implement a representative survey, which has nationwide coverage, regional stratification is applied. In this respect, four strata have been determined geographically based on the proportion of C-ESSN households. For survey design, operational challenges have always become an issue when conducting a nationally representative survey on a large scale. In order to avoid them, some of the regions were merged, taking into account the proportions of the C-ESSN population and these regions' socio-economic dynamics. Besides, Istanbul, the main commercial city of Turkey, was accepted as a stratum by itself because of its distinct socio-economic status. The province is also considered an independent stratum by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat). Independent random samples were drawn from these four regions as per Figure 2.

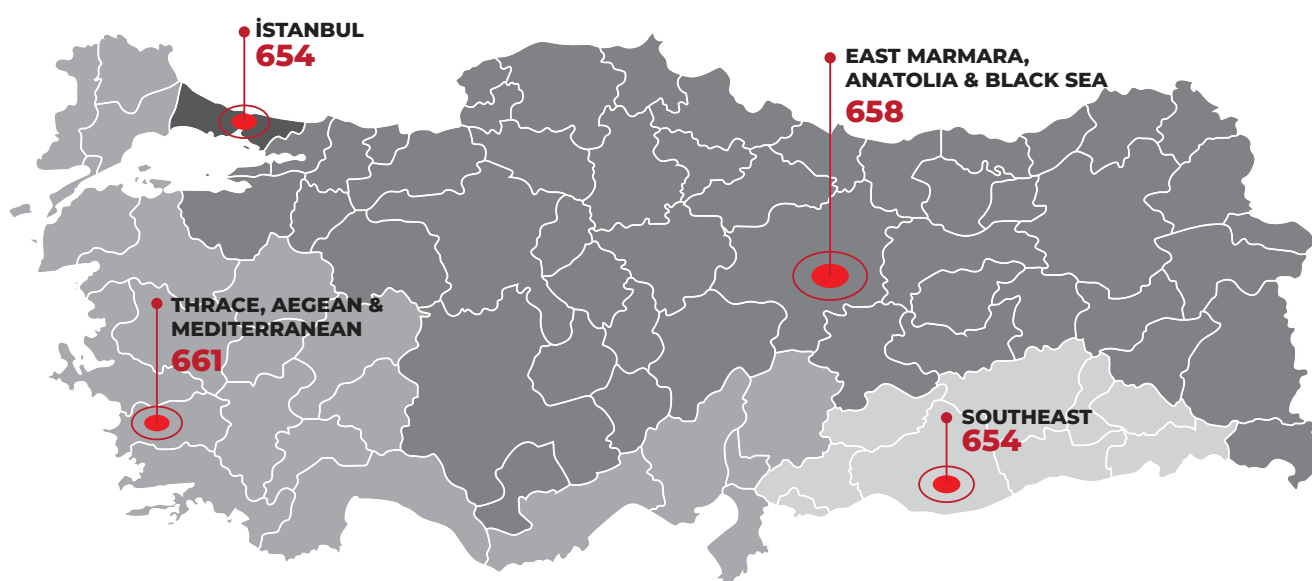


Figure 2: Map of Study Area

FINDINGS

SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDICATORS

INCOME

From PDM 1 to PDM 2, median household income increased to 1500 TRY to 2500 TRY for C-ESSN households. Moreover, even though household's income levels raised, debt and expenditures also escalated together with their income, as explained in the following sections. PDM 2 findings shows that, there is a significant difference⁴ in terms of median household income across study regions. Istanbul is the region with the highest household income (4500 TRY) while both of them the East Marmara, Anatolia and Blacksea, and Southeast regions are the same (2500 TRY), and Thrace, Aegean and Mediterranean is the region with the lowest household income (2200 TRY). Moreover, unskilled labour is the main source of income for C-ESSN households. According to PDM 2 results, unskilled labor, KIZILAYKART and skilled labor were the top three income sources.

EXPENDITURE

Median household expenditure reached to 6214 TRY for C-ESSN households. Istanbul and Anatolia were the regions with highest two provinces for recipients. According to survey results, the largest five main expenditure items of households are food, rent, education, clothing and utilities. For C-ESSN recipients, median household expenditure on food went from 1500 TRY to 2143 TRY, while per capita expenditure was risen from 721 TRY to 1295 TRY. One of the main reasons for increasing in each of the expenditure items of the household is the change in the inflation rate and in the foreign trade balances, resulting in a soar in almost every expenditure item. Findings also show that, C-ESSN households are above the MEB increased to 46 per cent.

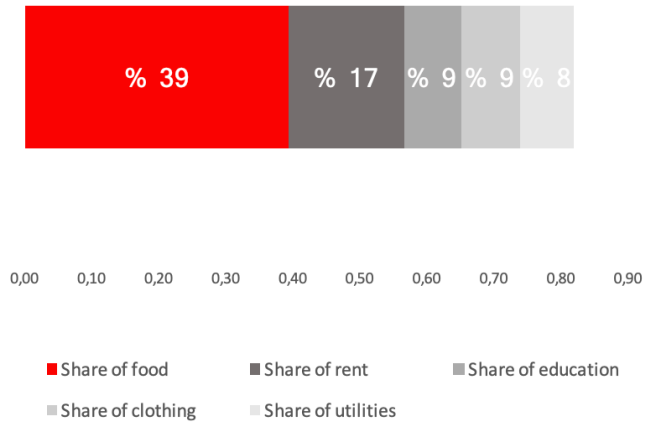


Figure 3: Share of Expenditure Items



4 Mood's Median test were used to measure whether there is any relationship between the variables of labor income and region. According to test results the null hypothesis is rejected due to the fact that the probability value is less than 0.05 significance level. It was concluded that the income amounts differs in terms of region.

DEBT

Seventy-seven per cent of the C-ESSN households have debt according to PDM 2 analysis results. Median household debt amount increased from 2000 TRY to 2500 TRY as from PDM 1.

C-ESSN households are applying the similar strategy compared to previous PDM's. Findings suggest that reliance on debt from local shops are the main source of debt for the refugees (80 per cent). When households are in a difficult situation to meet their basic needs, they might prefer to borrow from their friends/relatives or local shop. Borrowing from individuals (family, neighbors, etc.) within the social network is the most common method among these alternatives. As well as, C-ESSN households borrowed to cover their most basic needs, namely food, rent, utilities, essential non-food items and healthcare.

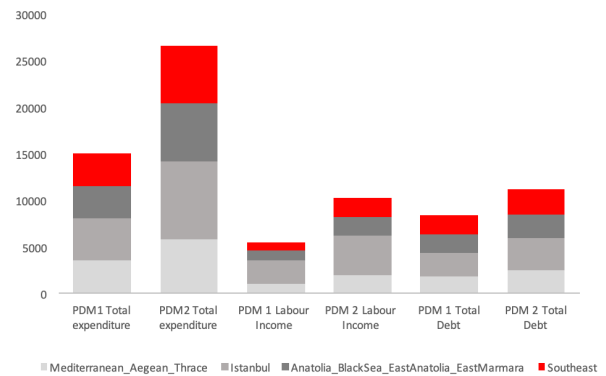


Figure 4: Income, Debt and Expenditure Comparison with PDM 1

COPING STRATEGIES

Reduced Coping Strategy Index (RCSI)

Reduced Coping Strategy Index (RCSI) is often used as a proxy indicator of household food insecurity. The strategies include relying on less preferred or cheaper food, borrowing food or relying on help from friends or relatives, reducing the number of meals eaten per day, reducing the portion size of meals and reducing the quantities consumed by adults so children can eat. A higher score of rCSI is an indication of worsening of food security standards for the households and vice versa⁵.

According to PDM2 results, primary adopted strategy is relying on less preferred/ less expensive food (77 per cent) for C-ESSN recipient. In addition, rCSI score has decreased from 15,47 to 13,37 for C-ESSN households compared PDM 1.

The main reason for the changes in the debt level and rCSI scores of households was that the data collection period in PDM 1 was in winter, whereas PDM 2 data collection coincided with the summer season. In addition, the reduction in fresh fruit and vegetable costs can be attributed to the decline in household's coping mechanisms (rCSI).

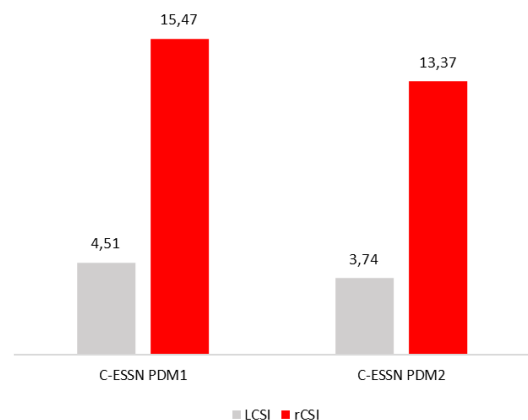


Figure 5: rCSI and LCSI values

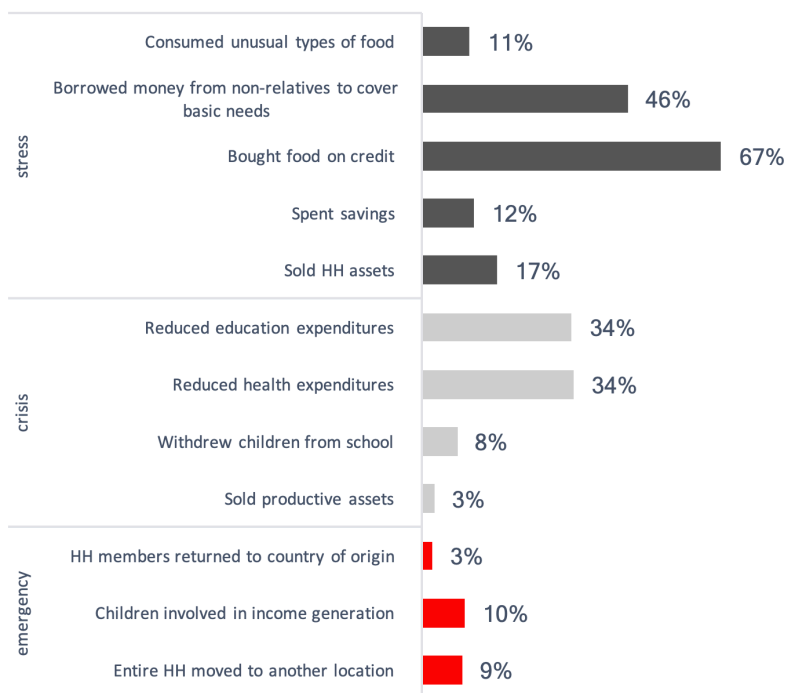
Livelihood Coping Strategy Index (LCSI)

The livelihood coping strategies⁶ are categorised in three sections including stress, crisis and emergency coping strategies. Each component represents sets of behaviour with different degrees of severity⁷. Overall LCSI score has decreased from 4,51 to 3,74 for C-ESSN recipient households.

5 Maxwell et al. (2003). "The Coping Strategies Index: A Tool for Rapid Measurement of Household Food Security and the Impact of Food Aid Programs in Humanitarian Emergencies". Field Methods Manual. Developed for CARE Eastern and Central Africa Regional Management Unit (CARE-EARMU) and World Food Programme Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping (VAM) Unit. For more detail information; <http://www.fao.org/3/ae513e/ae513e.pdf>

6 Livelihood-based coping strategy index aims to assess household level of livelihood and economic security based on income, expenditure and assets to have a better understanding of households' longer term coping capacities in response to economic shocks. The livelihood coping strategies are categorised into three including stress, crisis and emergency coping strategies. Each component represents sets of behaviour with higher degree of severity, respectively

7 The severity weights are: (1) for stress coping strategies, (2) for crisis coping strategies, (3) for emergency coping strategies. The weighted sum of this variable is then calculated to obtain the LCSI score. A higher value of LCSI is an indication that the household is experiencing food and economic insecurity.



Stress coping strategies: According to PDM 2, buying food on credit (67 per cent) and borrowed money (46 per cent) was the most adopted livelihood coping strategy followed by selling households assets (17 per cent).

Crisis coping strategies: C-ESSN recipients almost equally applied reducing health and education expenditures (34 per cent).

Emergency coping strategies: Another most frequently adopted livelihood coping strategy was involving children in income generation (10 per cent) since PDM 1.

Figure 6: LCSI Components

In the PDM 2 study, analysis of livelihood copings was reflecting that buying food on credit, reducing education and health expenses and involving children to generate income were the concerning coping strategies. Furthermore, it is observed that the children involved in income generation has decreased from PDM-1 to PDM-2 (16 per cent to 10 per cent) with withdrew children from school (12 per cent to 9 per cent).

FOOD CONSUMPTION SCORE (FCS)

In terms of food consumption overall frequency 23 per cent of the households are marked as having poor food consumption, 31 per cent as borderline and 46 per cent as acceptable food consumption. As a result of the PDM 2 analysis, it is seen that while the acceptable food consumption level of the households increased 10 percentage point whilst there was 13 percentage point decrease in the poor category for C-ESSN households from PDM 1 to PDM 2. These results shows that improvement in the food consumption score.

Although there is a decrease in the poor category and an increase in the acceptable level for the indicator, this increase is not statistically significant. At the same time, the increases in household food expenditures and food inflation should also be taken into account.

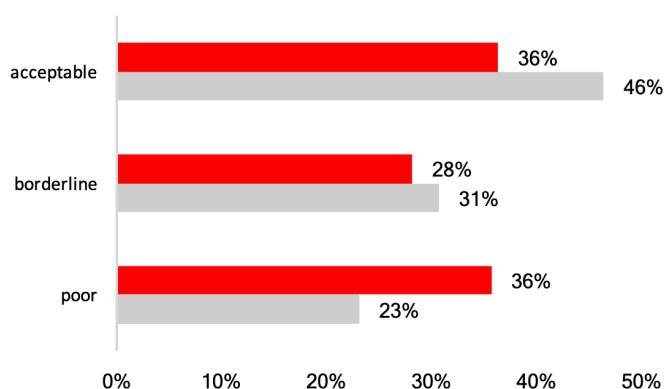


Figure 7: Food Consumption Groups Compared PDM 1

CONCLUSION

This report provides a summary of the main findings for beneficiaries interviewed in the selected communities. The analysis presented in this document provides evidence of TRC's contribution in terms of ESSN programme to basic needs in Türkiye. This will help the programme evaluators make use of the relevant and most strategic evidence available for effective managerial decision-making.

In this PDM study focused on the impact of the cash transfer of C-ESSN recipients and compared the results with the previous C-ESSN PDM-1 study as well. In the progress that took place from PDM-1 to the PDM-2 study, the economic conditions of households were negatively affected due to the fluctuations in the country's economy. Herewith, it was observed that there was an increase in the income, expenditure and debt levels of households. The key findings are outlined below:

- A 10 per cent increase was recorded in the proportion of households with an acceptable Food Consumption Score (FCS), meaning that beneficiary households have improved access, availability and better utilization of food.
- Households are still facing almost the same level of stress in case of food shortage, and the rCSI has slightly reduced from PDM 1 to PDM 2. This slightly decrease in coping mechanisms can be associated with seasonality and one-time payment to households.
- In terms of economic vulnerability, households were spending over 39 per cent of their income on food expenses. A "double increase" has occurred in food expenditures since the PDM 1 study, however, households are still facing challenges to afford other basic social services like health care, education, etc.





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