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Factors Affecting Food Security in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq

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Abstract

In Iraq, 4,7% of the population do not have sufficient food consumption (food insecure) and 23,6% have chronic hunger; 15–25% are undernourished; two-thirds of food insecure people located in the rural areas. Among the main drivers of food insecurity in the area are conflict; socio-economic and demographic characteristics; and ineffective safety net.

This is a proposed research that will be conducted in Sulaymaniyah Governorate of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The main aims of the study are i. describing the food security of households in the study area; ii. investigating factors influencing food security; iii. finding household access to safe water and availability of water; iv. analysing the effect of Public Distribution System on the household food security. We will in particular investigate, if there is a difference in households' food security based on rural and urban areas and different heights from sea level, and how the army conflict affects household food security.

The household food security will be measured using two indicators: i. Food Consumption Score (FCS) to capture the availability and variety of food; ii. Household Food Insecurity and Access Scale (HFIAS) to measure the household access to food. The data will be collected in Sulaymaniyah Governorate during May and June 2021 with an estimated sample size of 400 households. A combination of purposive and random sampling will be applied to collect data in three different zones (rural-with conflict, rural - without conflict, and urban areas) and three different heights from sea level (very lowlands “lower than 300 meters height from sea level”, lowlands “300 to 1500 meters height from sea level”, and high lands “higher than 1500 meters height from sea level”). Data will be analysed using Regression Model and Student's t-test and Chi squared test. The results will document the geographic distribution and characteristics of food insecure population and hence, can be used as a tool by the aid organizations or government for better targeting the credit or food aid distribution. Moreover, the findings regarding the importance of the Public Distribution System for household food security will help the policymakers in the ongoing reforming process of the system to better target the groups in need.

Keywords: Army conflict, household food security, public distribution system, rural and urban, water consumption