

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF SYRIAN REFUGEES AND VULNERABLE JORDANIANS IN THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR

The AFD-funded Grow Economy project, led by a consortium of actors including Acted, Action Against Hunger (ACF), Terre des hommes (TDH), Phenix Centre for Sustainable Development, ECO Consult, The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), and National Agricultural Research Center (NARC) aims to promote sustainable and inclusive economic opportunities for Syrian refugees and vulnerable Jordanians in the agriculture sector. Over a period of three years (May 2023 to April 2026), the project targets vulnerable small farmers and agricultural laborers in Ajloun, Irbid, Madaba, and Balqa Governorates, aiming to improve their livelihoods and working conditions while promoting gender inclusion and child protection.

BASELINE ASSESSMENT OF SMALL FARMERS

Under Specific Objective 1, the GrowEconomy Consortium aims to improve climate-adaptive approaches, productivity, and diversify income sources for 600 vulnerable small farming households. This baseline factsheet focuses on the first round of small farmers. In this round, both Acted and ACF each selected 150 farmers, bringing the total to 300. In a later stage, the second round will follow a similar process, with both Acted and ACF selecting an additional 150 farmers each, ultimately reaching the target of 600 small farmers for the project.

Baseline data was gathered on household income, agricultural practices, access to resources, and vulnerability indicators. This data will serve as a reference to measure the project's progress and impact, helping to track changes over time and assess the effectiveness of interventions. Additionally, it provides insights into specific needs and challenges faced by the farmers, informing the design and implementation of tailored interventions.

The quantitative baseline survey employed a mixed approach, utilizing both phone calls and field visits. The sampling process was based on a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, resulting in a sample size of 170 farmers. Consequently, this first round consisted of two groups of 85 respondents, one for Acted and one for ACF, randomly selected from two initial groups of 150 small farmers each, selected by Acted and ACF.

Rounds	Sampling frame	CI	MoE	Sample size overall	Sample size per round	Sample size per round by Acted	Sample size per round by ACF
2	600	95%	5%	340	170	85	85



In the sample, 11% of respondents are from Ajloun, 14% are from Balqa, 25% from Madaba and 50% from Irbid.



The average household consists of 6 members, 1 being the smallest and 21 being the largest in the dataset.



Of the 170 small farmer households surveyed, 70% were men, 30% women, 44% Jordanian and 56% Syrian.



64% of the farmers live in structurally sound permanent housing, 33% in live in tents, 2% in wooden or tin structures and 1% in unfinished buildings.

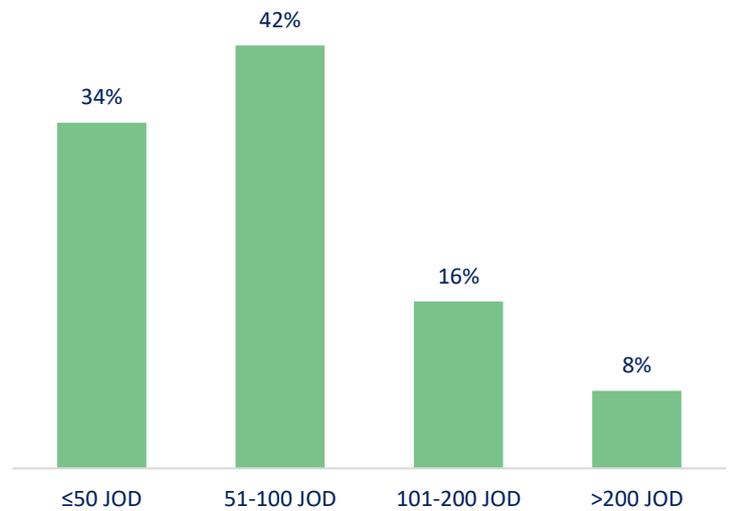
MONTHLY INCOME

Per household the average monthly income is 543 JOD, which equates to 130 JOD per family member per month.

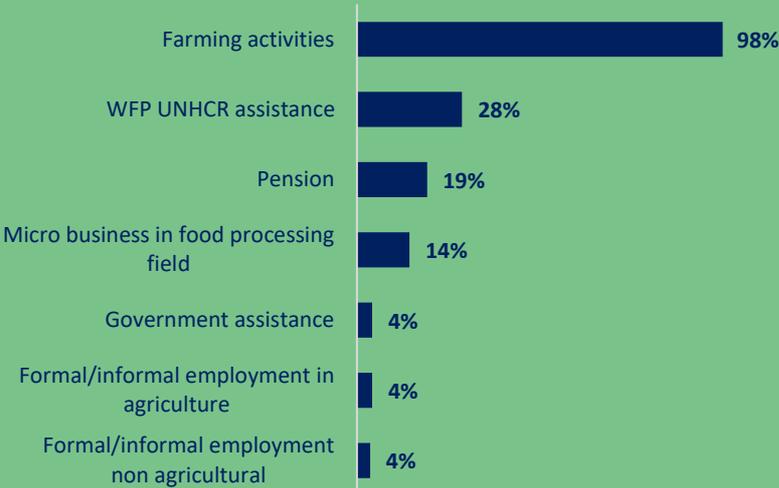
The monthly income per family member is divided into the following categories: 34% of respondents earn 50 JOD or less per family member, 42% earn between 51-100 JOD, 16% earn between 101-200 JOD, and only 8% earn more than 200 JD.

The data indicates that **47% of respondents live under the poverty line**, while 53% are above it.

Monthly income per household member



Main sources of income



SOURCES OF INCOME AND DEBTS

The three main sources of income selected by the respondents are the farming activities (98%), the assistance from UNHCR's food programs (28%) and the pension (19%).

Additionally, 96% of the small farmers affirmed not having any savings and the same proportion declared having debts.

The average amount of debt is 6,265 JOD, with on average 3,151 JOD of debt related to assets and 2,181 JOD on average of debt related to essential needs.

MICROBUSINESSES

The fourth most frequently reported source of income is from microbusinesses in food processing with 14% of the sample reporting income. The data shows that only farmers from Irbid declared having this source of income (30% of the farmers from Irbid).

As for Madaba, Balqa and Ajloun, 20% of the farmers revealed having previous experience, in either food processing (19%), artisan (2%) or eco-tourism (2%). However, when asked about their sources of income, they all declared receiving no income from this in the past 12 months. This implies that they do have some experience, but they did not generate any income related to microbusinesses in the past year.



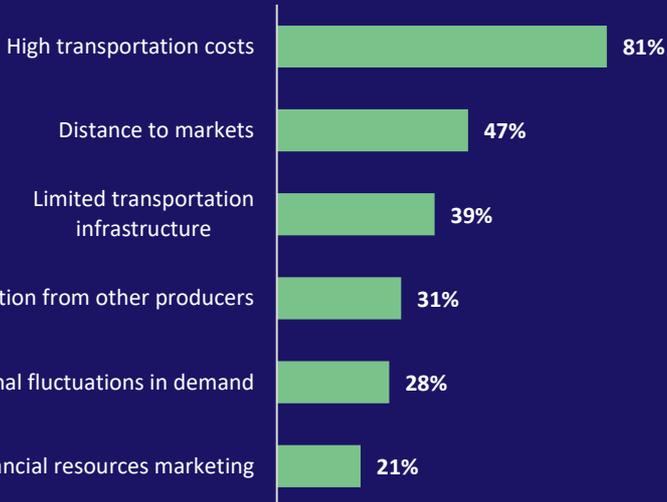
ESSENTIAL NEEDS

When asked how they manage to meet their household's essential needs with their income, the majority of respondents indicated that their income was either moderately sufficient (47%) or too low (39%) to meet their basic needs. This data is consistent with the previous observations on debts since 85% of the respondents have debts related to their essential needs.

Moreover, most of respondents (39%) declared that they had a high financial burden in the last 30 days, 29% very high and moderate, 2% low and 1% very low or no financial burden at all.



Main challenges in accessing the market



KNOWLEDGE OF THE MARKET

Among the sample of 170 farmers, 39% of them assessed that their market knowledge is moderate and 22% stated good. None of them knew that they could sell their farming products to agri cooperatives, only 1 knew about agri tourism initiatives, 2 about hotels, 4 about big farms, and 5 about selling to restaurants.

Moreover, most of them, 47%, indicated that their products moderately meet the requirements, and 35% said they meet them fairly well. A smaller proportion reported that their products meet the requirements either a lot (10%), barely (7%), or not at all (1%).

CHALLENGES IN ACCESSING THE MARKET

When asked about their ability to access different markets, a majority of the farmers self-rated it as moderate (36%) while some declared it good (25%), poor (22%), and very good (17%).

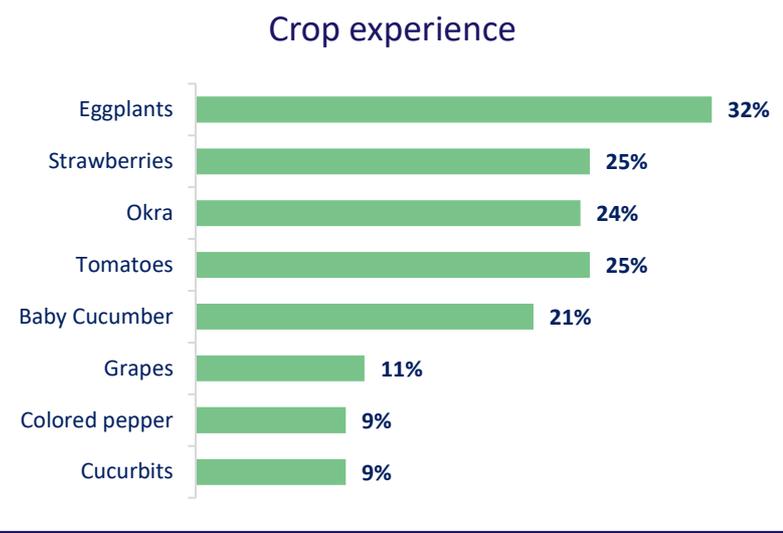
The primary challenge in market access for respondents is high transportation costs, cited by 81%. Other significant challenges include the distance to markets (47%), limited transportation infrastructure (39%), competition from other producers (31%), seasonal fluctuations in demand (28%) and a lack of financial resources mentioned by 21% of respondents.



CROPS EXPERIENCE

When asked about their experience in the 8 selected types of crop, 32% of the farmers reported having experience in planting eggplants, followed by 25% in strawberries, 25% in tomatoes, 24% in okra, 21% in baby cucumbers, 11% in grapes and 9% in both peppers and cucurbits.

Moreover, 65% of the surveyed farmers use land rather than greenhouses as the main farming method. The average number of greenhouses per farmer is 7, 3 being the smallest and 10 being the largest in the dataset.



WATER ACCESS AND CHALLENGES

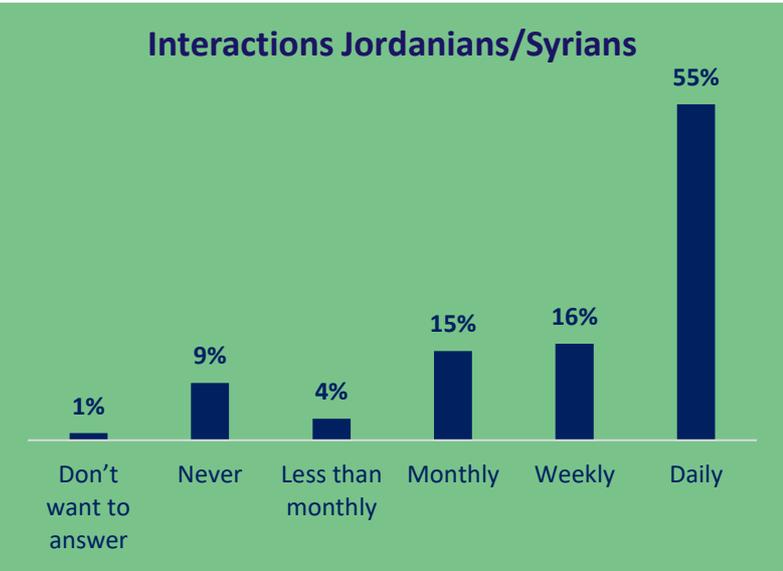
The vast majority of farmers, 72%, utilize drip irrigation, while only 8% rely on manual irrigation and 2% use sprinklers for watering their crops.

113 out of the 170 respondents, 66% of them, reported facing challenges in accessing water. Among those 113 farmers, 71% report high water cost, 43% mention limited availability of water, and other reported challenges are expensive irrigation systems (14%) and lack of appropriate infrastructures (9%).

SOCIAL COHESION

When asked about their relations with other nationalities, the selected farmers mostly (55%) declared having daily interactions with Jordanians /Syrians, 16% weekly, 15% monthly, 4% less than monthly, 9% never and 1% of them refused to answer.

Regarding the perception they have on these interactions, a majority (84%) mentioned that were either positive or very positive, 3% negative or very negative while 11% identified them as neutral and 2% did not answer.



The baseline assessment reveals that small farmers in Jordan, both Syrians and Jordanians, face significant challenges related to income generation, market access, and water availability. With many living under the poverty line and heavily reliant on agriculture, the GrowEconomy project is well-positioned to address these issues by promoting climate-adaptive practices and diversifying income sources.