

Food security and nutrition deteriorates for households with inadequate food consumption

Key points



Almost one in three surveyed Syrian households reported poor or borderline food consumption which has sharply increased during the past month, mainly due to changes in Dar'a Governorate.



The dietary diversity and intake of nutrient-rich foods deteriorated in June for households that already have inadequate food consumption.



The food-related coping strategy remains at a high level even after slight decreases from May to June.



Evacuated household from Eastern Ghouta WFP/Hussam Alsaleh

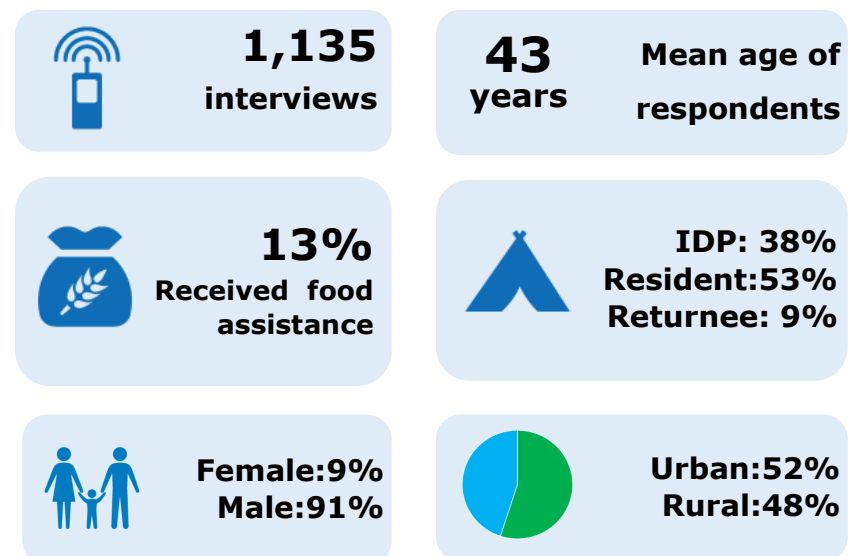
Situation Update

At the start of June, **11,000 displacements** were recorded mainly from Idleb Governorate. Violence sharply escalated on 16 June in North West Dar'a, impacting mainly Sama, Kafr Shams, Namar and Al-Hara communities. On 20 June, Syrian government forces led ground clashes and aerial bombardment began in Sweida Governorate including the villages of Laja, Hirak, Nahta, Bisr Elharir, Eastern Maliha and Sama in North East Dar'a. This led opposition armed groups to counter the offensive in Laja and on the highway to the Nasib-Jaber border.

The recent spike in hostilities has led to an estimated **272,000-320,000 individuals** to flee to the southern districts of Dar'a. Of these, some **60,000 individuals** fled to areas near the Free Zone and the closed Nasib-Jaber border crossing with Jordan, and approximately **164,000 individuals** have fled towards Quneitra close to the Golan Heights. Both the governments of Jordan and Israel have maintained their borders closed since the displacement started and have announced that no permission will be granted for Syrian IDPs to cross their borders. Hereby leaving IDPs stranded in border areas in difficult conditions with lack of regular access to basic necessities such as clean drinking water, health care and shelter.

For the population still living in the affected areas, the price of fuel, cooking gas and housing have largely doubled in Eastern Dar'a villages. In particular the price of cooking gas is sensitive to instability since the canisters have to be sent back to the Government held areas for refilling. If the current situation sustains or worsens in this part of Syria, prices will likely increase further, negatively impacting livelihoods and humanitarian programming.

Figure 1: Sample Household characteristics





Significant increases in poor and borderline food consumption recorded in Dar'a and hard-to-reach areas in Homs and Hama

The overall food consumption deteriorated in June, where almost one in three surveyed Syrian households (30 percent) reported poor and borderline food consumption.

At governorate level, the sharpest increase in households facing inadequate food consumption was seen in Dar'a which experienced an increase from 21.1 percent in May to 40.2 percent in June, mainly driven by a high increase in borderline food consumption.

Households in Homs and Hama hard-to-reach areas saw an increase in borderline food consumption from 23.7 percent to 31.1 percent, while Rural Damascus hard-to-reach areas experienced an overall fall in poor and borderline food consumption from 17.8 percent in May to 9.2 percent in June.

Especially returnees experienced an increase in households having borderline food consumption, which increased from 16.1 percent in May to 29.3 percent in June while also poor food consumption increased by 4 percentage points to 11.6 percent.

Also residents experienced a significant increase in borderline food consumption from 9.5 percent to 18 percent. While the situation also worsened for IDPs, the increase was not found to be as significant.

No data was available in June for hard-to-reach areas of Dar'a, Quneitra, Deir-ez-Zor and Ar-Raqa.

Figure 2: Percent of households with inadequate food consumption aggregated by governorate, January 2018 to June 2018

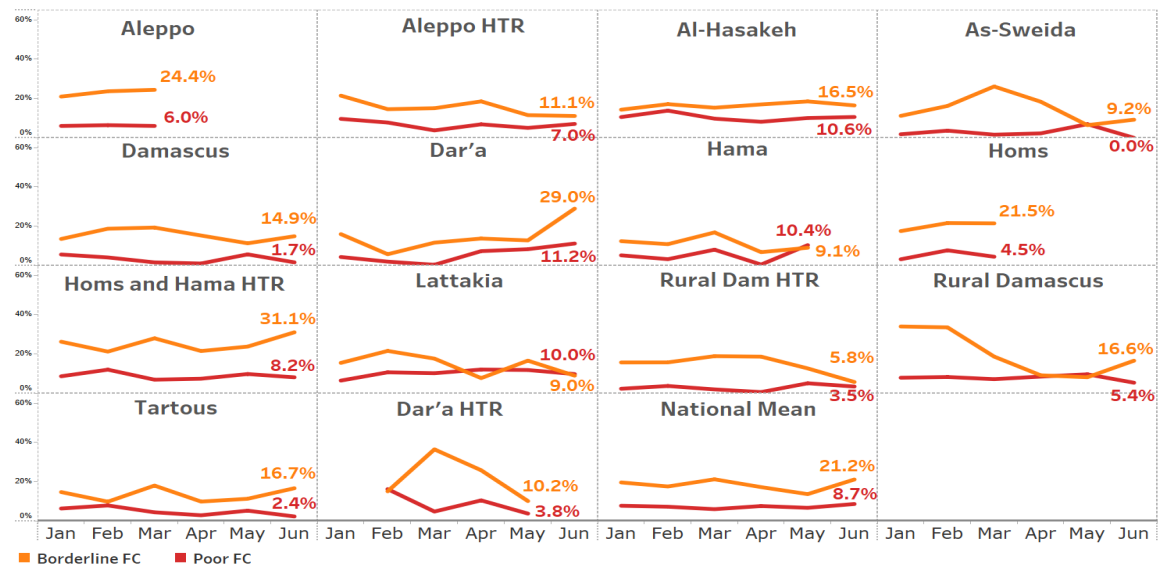
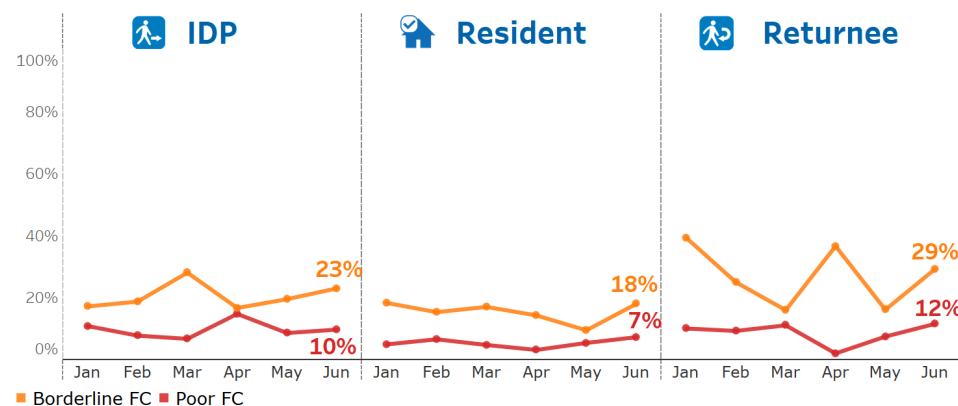
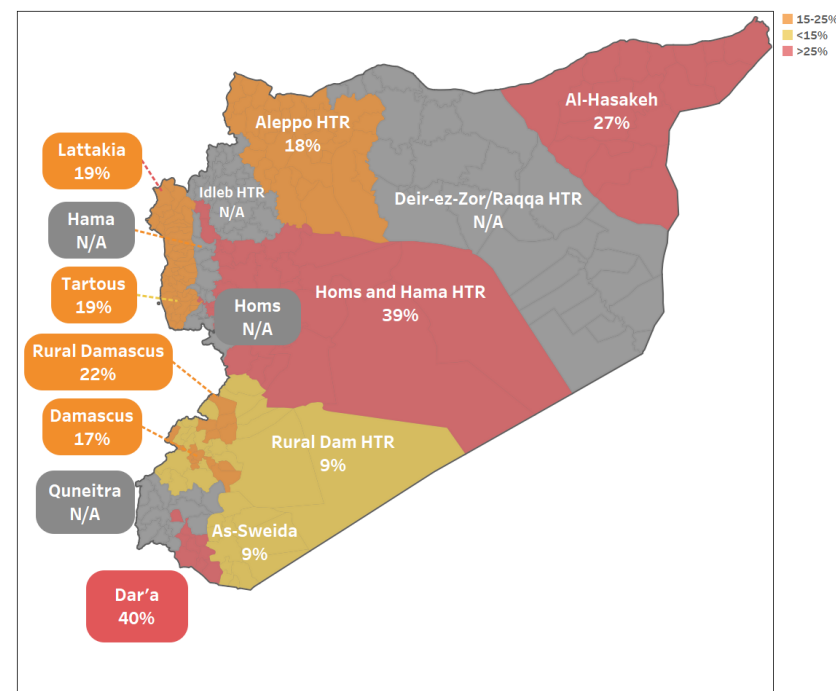


Figure 3: Percent of households with inadequate food consumption by residency status, January 2018 to June 2018



Map 1: Percent of households with inadequate food consumption aggregated by governorate, June 2018



Borderline food consumption significantly increased from 15.3 percent in May to 28.4 percent in June for female headed households. For households headed by men, significant increases were found for both poor (6.4 percent versus 8.9 percent) and borderline food consumption (13.6 percent versus 20.1 percent). The observed increase was led by food consumption score increases mainly in Al-Hasakeh followed by Aleppo, As-Sweida, Dar'a, Damascus, Rural Damascus and Tartous.

Though food consumption deteriorated for both male and female headed households, both groups reported to have adopted less food-related coping strategies, with the reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI) decreasing by 0.6 and 3.9 percentage points respectively.

Large households consisting of eight or more household members continue to have both considerably worse food consumption and higher use of food-coping mechanisms than smaller households. The significant increase in especially borderline food consumption means that one in two large Syrian households reported to have inadequate food consumption in June, 79 percent of whom have to rely on less expensive food and 57 percent have to limit portion sizes to cover the households' need for food.

While borderline food consumption increased for all accommodation types significant poor food consumption increases were found for households who were renting (11 percent versus 5.1 percent). Families staying as guests were found to have the highest rCSI. The increases in poor food consumption levels in June compared to May were driven by responses in Al-Hasakeh, Aleppo, Dar'a and Quneitra.

Despite overall improvements in dietary diversity and consumption of nutrient-rich food compared to May, households with inadequate food consumption were still found to rely heavily on staples, fats and sugar and a low intake of nutritious food groups such as animal proteins (meat and dairy), pulses and fruits. Furthermore, the households with inadequate food consumption saw a worsening in the reported consumption of nutrient-rich food groups, namely protein, vitamin A and haem iron in June compared to May.

Significant changes from the May survey were found especially in the intake of households with poor food consumption, where an increase was found for fruits while staples and sugar slightly decreased (Figure 6). For households with borderline food consumption, the most significant change was found in the consumption of vegetables, which increased by 1.2 days on a weekly basis from 2.8 days to four days.

Figure 4: Percent of households with inadequate food consumption by gender of head of household, household size and type of accommodation, June 2018

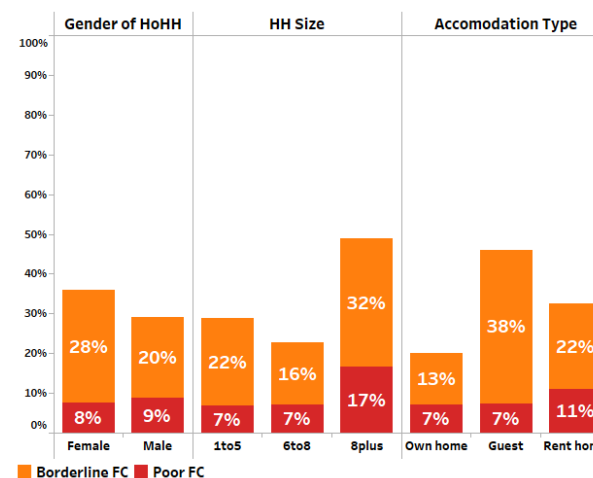


Figure 6: Dietary diversity by food consumption group (# of days food groups consumed), June 2018

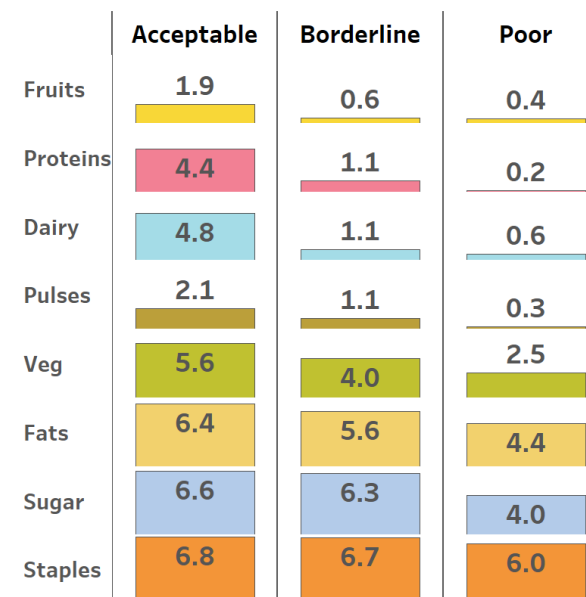


Figure 5: Mean rCSI by gender of head of household, household size and type of accommodation, June 2018

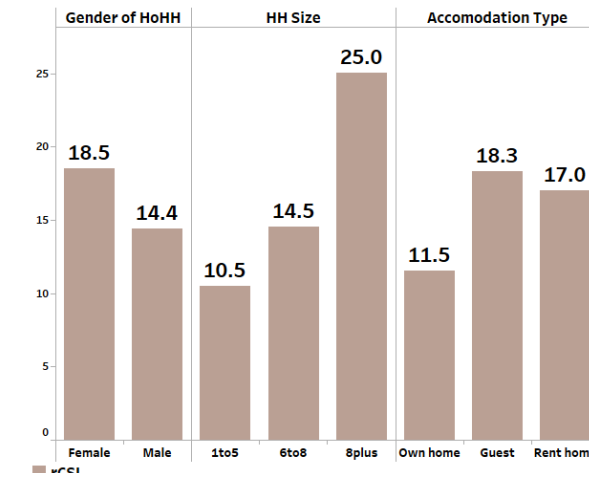
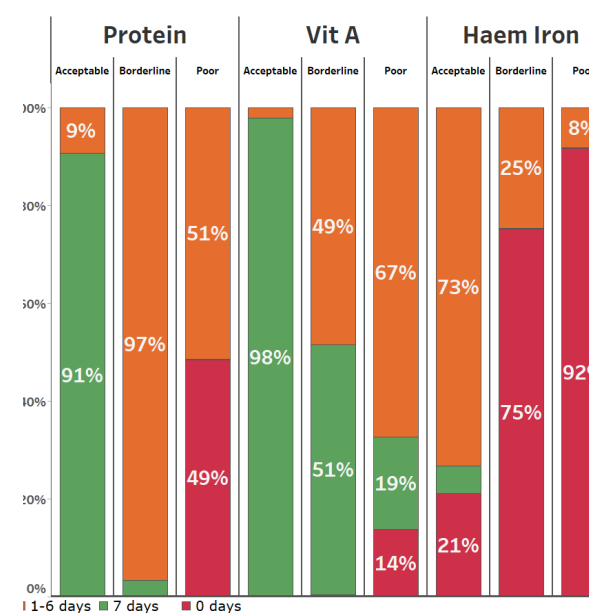


Figure 7: Frequency of consumption of nutrient-rich food by food consumption group, June 2018





More households rely on food-based coping strategies in Dar'a

In June, the mean national rCSI decreased slightly to 14.9, mainly due to lack insufficient reports from hard-to-reach areas of Dar'a, in addition to rCSI decreases for Dar'a, Lattakia, Rural Damascus as well as the hard-to-reach areas in Aleppo, Hama and Rural Damascus. The percent of households in Dar'a that adopted food-related coping mechanisms decreased to 79 percent from 88 percent in May, however, it still remains at high levels. Considering the current situation in Dar'a, the use of food-related coping strategies is expected to worsen.

Based on displacement status, the decrease in overall rCSI was driven by a significant fall for IDPs and residents, while the rCSI for returnees increased. The main significant increase was found for returnee households having to limit portion sizes, which increased from 28.8 percent in May to 50.2 percent in July. Fewer households were found to have to reduce the number of meals across all displacement groups in June compared to May.

Map 2: Mean rCSI by aggregated governorates, June 2018

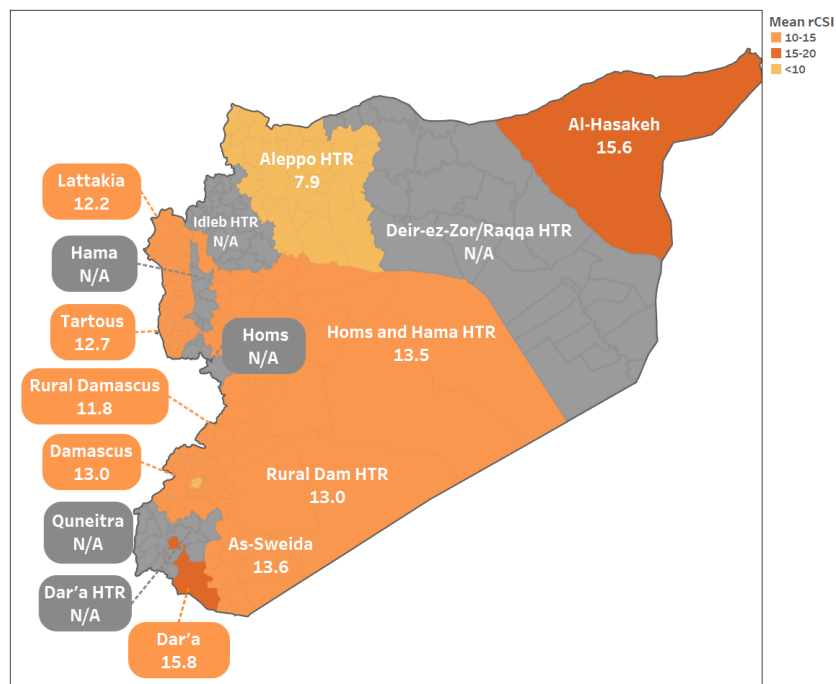


Figure 8: Mean rCSI by aggregated governorates, January 2018 to June 2018

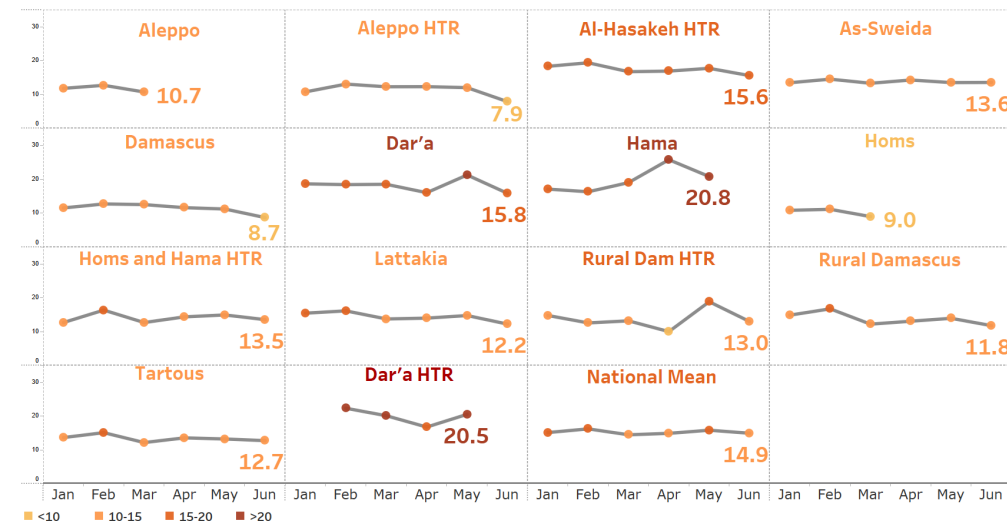
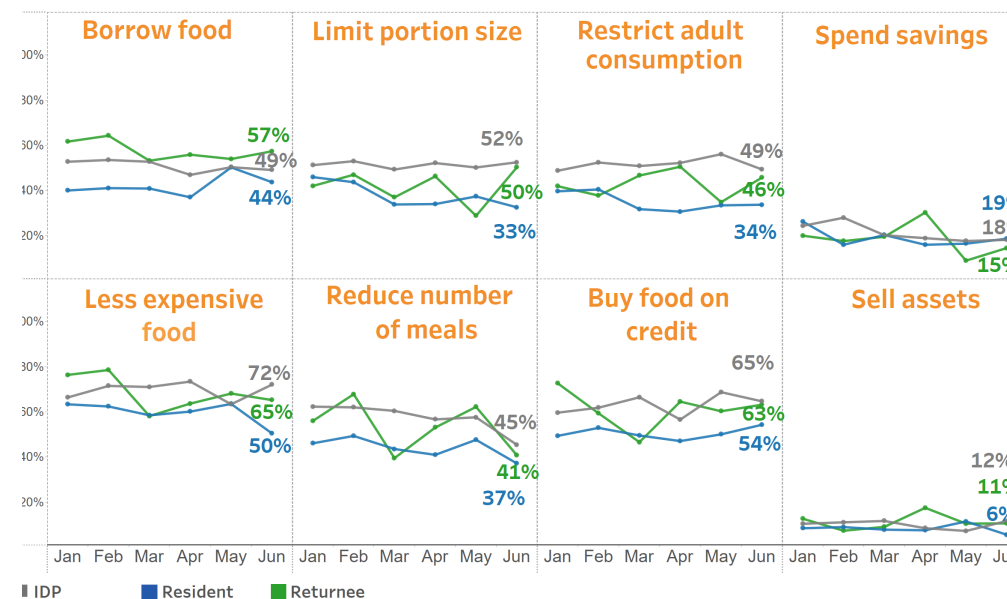


Figure 9: Mean rCSI by displacement status, January 2018 to June 2018

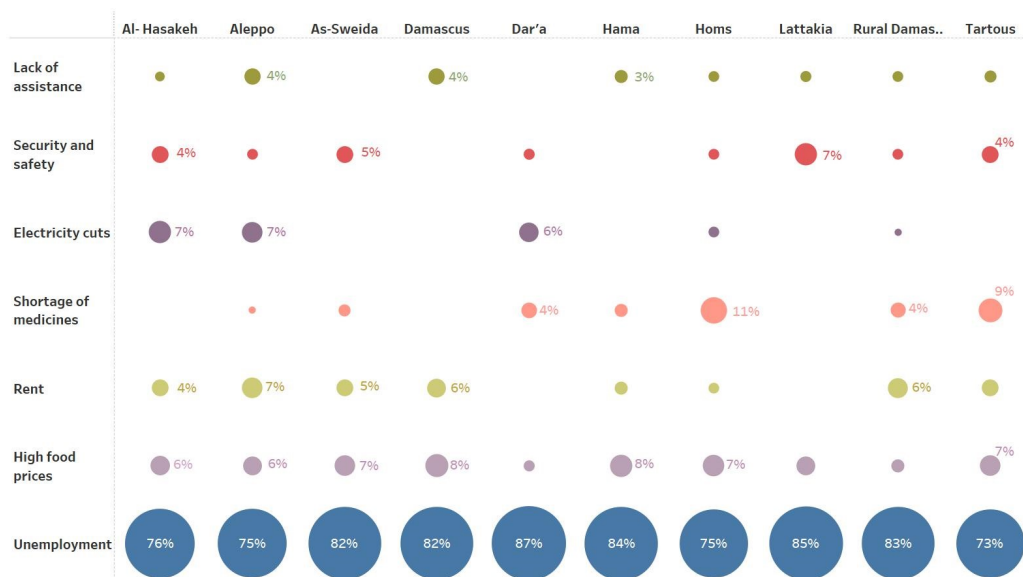




In the words of respondents

In June, respondents were asked to identify the main problems their families were facing. Overall, four in five households reported unemployment as the main issue they were facing while high food prices was the second most reported issue across Syria. The third most reported issue was rent while 11 and 9 percent in Homs and Tartous respectively reported that shortage of medicine was the household’s main area of concern. Electricity cuts were the main issue for 6-7 percent of the surveyed households in Al-Hasakeh, Aleppo and Dar’a, and security and safety was mainly reported as a concern for households in Lattakia, Al-Hasakeh, Aleppo and Damascus. The least reported issue was lack of assistance, which was reported by 4 percent of respondents in Aleppo and Damascus, and 3 percent in Hama.

Figure 10: Main problems faced by surveyed households, by governorate and overall severity, June 2018



Methodology

This mVAM bulletin is based on data collected via live telephone interviews in June from households in locations across Syria. The telephone numbers called were generated using random-digit dialling, yielding 1,135 completed surveys. The questionnaire contained questions on demographics, food assistance, household food consumption and nutrition, coping strategies, and primary food sources. A final open-ended question gave respondents the chance to share additional information about the food situation in their communities.

Data are weighted by the number of mobile phones owned by the household. Information collected through mobile phone interviews may be biased towards younger, somewhat better-off households who live in urban areas and have better access to electricity and phone-charging services.

Starting from May 2017, districts were combined into 18 strata based on their accessibility, in order to obtain more granular food security analysis. The composition of the 18 strata changes following the evolution of the situation in Syria in terms of accessibility.

In May 2018, the accessible areas were Aleppo, As-Sweida, Al-Hasakeh, Damascus, Dar’a, Hama, Homs, Rural Damascus, Quneitra, Lattakia and Tartous. Hard-to-reach (HTR) areas were Aleppo HTR, Idleb HTR, Deir-ez-Zor, Ar-Raqqa, Homs and Hama HTR, Rural Damascus HTR and Dar’a HTR. The sampling frame groups together areas with similar geography and accessibility, allowing for a large enough sample size to make statistically significant comparisons. More details on the methodology can be found [here](#).



For further information:

Arif Husain arif.husain@wfp.org
Jonathan Rivers jonathan.rivers@wfp.org

mVAM Resources:
Website: http://vam.wfp.org/sites/mvam_monitoring/
Blog: mvam.org
Toolkit: <http://resources.vam.wfp.org/mVAM>



vam
 food security analysis