



Marwa Awad - WFP



Key Points

- Food consumption deteriorates in both accessible and hard-to-reach areas of Homs and Hama.

- Households living in hard-to-reach areas show higher use of livelihood coping strategies especially spending saving and buying food on credit.

- Levels of coping strategies increased among households living in rural areas.

Food security deteriorated in areas directly affected by fighting and among displaced households

Situation Update

- Despite September agreement between Russia and Turkey, February witnessed an increase in fighting in north-western Syria, including southern Idleb and northern Hama governorates. Heavy bombardment of the Maarat An Numan and Khan Shaykun areas of southern Idleb have been reported, as well as bombardment of the Madiq Castle area of northern Hama governorate. An estimated 2.7 million men, women and children are currently in need of some form of humanitarian assistance in northwestern Syria. This includes 1.7 million internally displaced persons (IDPs), many of whom have been displaced multiple times and have been living in camps for years resulting in increased levels of vulnerability.

- In north-eastern Syria, fighting in Hajin sub-district of Deir-ez-Zor governorate as a result of anti-ISIL military operations continues, although the intensity of the fighting is reportedly subsiding. Al-Hole camp (Al-Hasakeh governorate) continues to see an influx of displaced people. The camp population has now more than tripled over the past two months and the total camp population is now at an estimated 54,500 people – 90 per cent of them women and children. Extremely harsh conditions are reported along the route north, including cold temperature and lack of food, water, shelter and health services. By mid-February, at least 50 children were reported to have died either while in transit or shortly after arriving in the Al Hole camp, mostly due to hypothermia caused by exposure and a lack of access to healthcare, while making the arduous journey northwards.

- In the South, on February 14, The United Nations and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) finalised their largest ever humanitarian convoy to over 41,000 displaced Syrians at the remote settlement of Rukban, along the border with Jordan. The UN and SARC carried out an intention survey with nearly 3,000 households to consult with residents on their needs and priorities. According to the survey results, food is primarily available through smuggling routes; however, prices remain high and the quality and variety are limited. Many people reported being unable to afford basic food items and resort to negative coping mechanisms, such as skipping meals.

sources: Al-Hole camp and Suar transit-centre, Deir Ez-Zor Update No. 4 as of 28 February 2019

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Key Figures



1,648
Households Surveyed



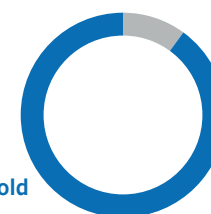
18%
Poor Food Consumption in Hama



42
Average age of respondents



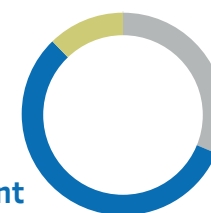
90%
Male headed household



10%
Female headed household



12%
Returnee

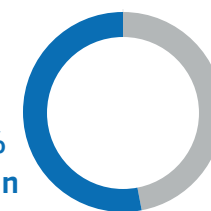


56%
Resident

31%
IDP



53%
Urban



47%
Rural

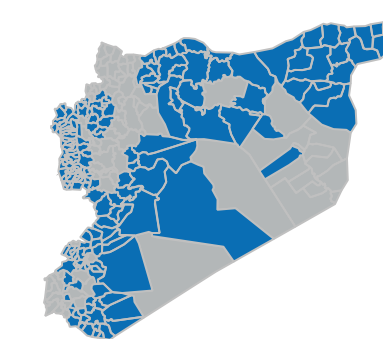
Methodology

This mVAM bulletin is based on data collected via live telephone interviews in February 2019 from households in locations across Syria. The telephone numbers called were generated using random-digit dialing.

Starting from July 2017, districts were combined into 19 stratas based on their accessibility. Since January 2019, the accessible areas are Aleppo, As-Sweida, Al-Hasakeh, Damascus, Dar'a, Hama, Homs, Rural Damascus, Quneitra, Deir-ez-Zor and Ar-Raqqa, Lattakia and Tartous. Hard-to-reach (HTR) areas are Aleppo HTR, Dar'a HTR, Quneitra HTR, Idleb HTR, Deir-ez-Zor and Ar-Raqqa HTR, Homs and Hama HTR, and Rural Damascus 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 http://vam.wfp.org/sites/mvam_monitoring/read_me_syria.pdf



■ Accessible ■ Hard To Reach



Prevalence of households with poor food consumption increased in Aleppo, Hama, Deir-ez-zor and Ar-Raqqa

- In February 2019, a significant increase in the share of households reporting **poor** food consumption has been recorded in accessible areas of **Aleppo, Hama** and **both accessible and hard-to-reach** areas of **Deir-ez-zor** and **Ar-Raqqa** (Figure 1). These governorates that are directly affected by the ongoing fighting are reporting the highest percentage of poor food consumption. Weekly dietary diversity of households with poor food consumption is extremely low with only staples and sugars consumed on a daily bases and fats consumed four times a week. However, less households in hard-to-reach areas of **Dar'a** and **Rural Damascus** reported having a poor food consumption this month in comparison with January.

- The percentage of households who reported **borderline** food consumption increased significantly from 17 percent in January to 25 percent in February in accessible areas of **Dar'a**, from 19 percent in January to 24 percent in February 2019 in **Rural Damascus** and it doubled in hard-to-reach areas of Homs and Hama jumping from 16 percent in January to 37 percent in February.

-In February, a deterioration in terms of food consumption have been reported among surveyed **displaced households**: an increase of almost 10 percentage points have been recorded among IDPs reporting having a borderline food consumption in comparison with January. The total percentage of displaced households with inadequate food consumption reached 42 percent this month increasing the gap in comparison with the resident households whose inadequate food consumption stood at 23 percent (Figure 2).

Map1 : Percentage of households by aggregated governorate with poor and borderline Food Consumption (FC) (February 2019)

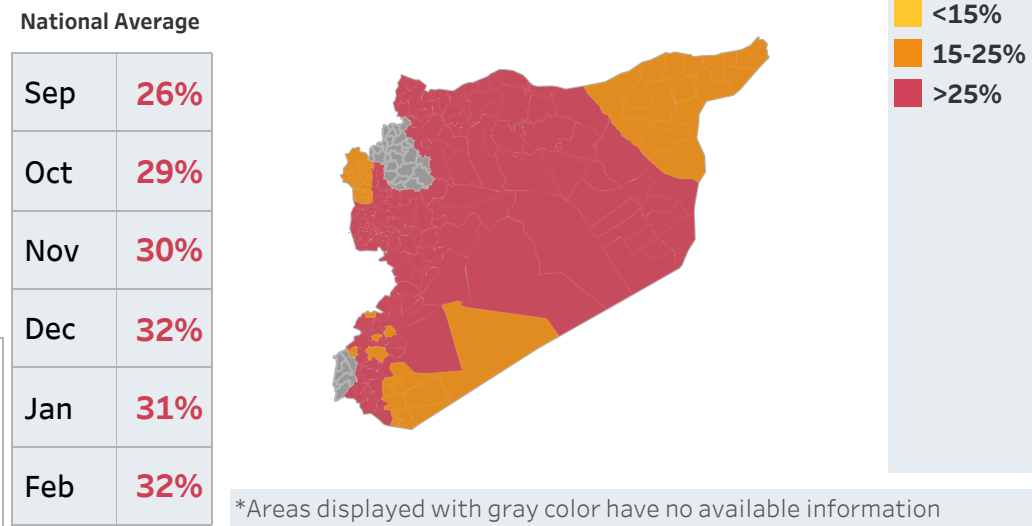


Figure 2 : Percentage of households with poor and borderline FC in the last six months according to Displacement Status

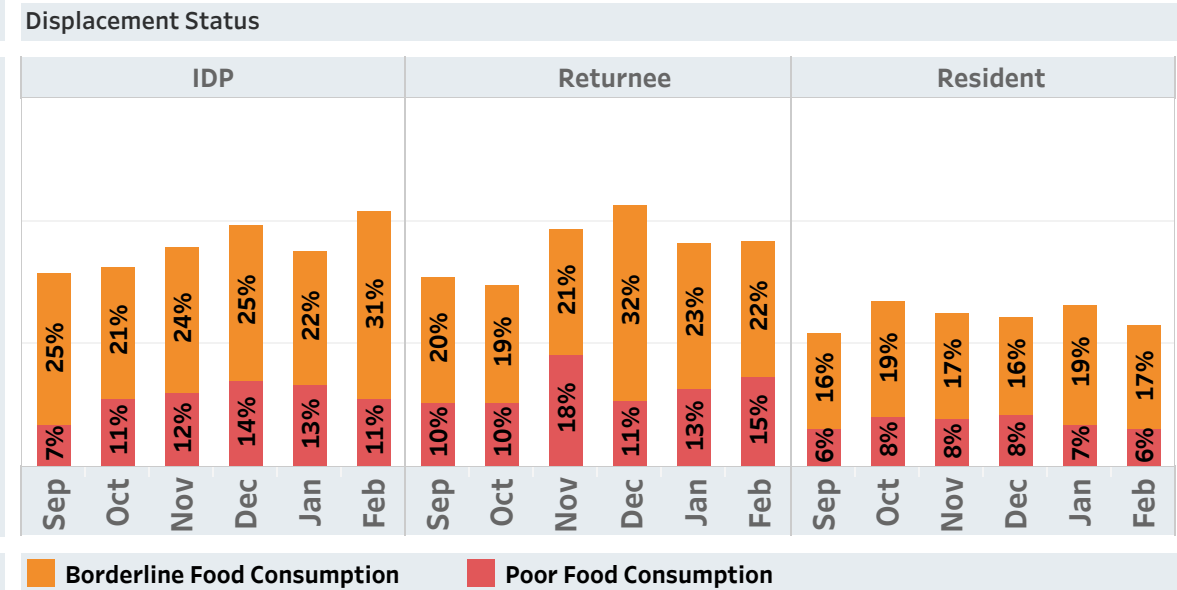
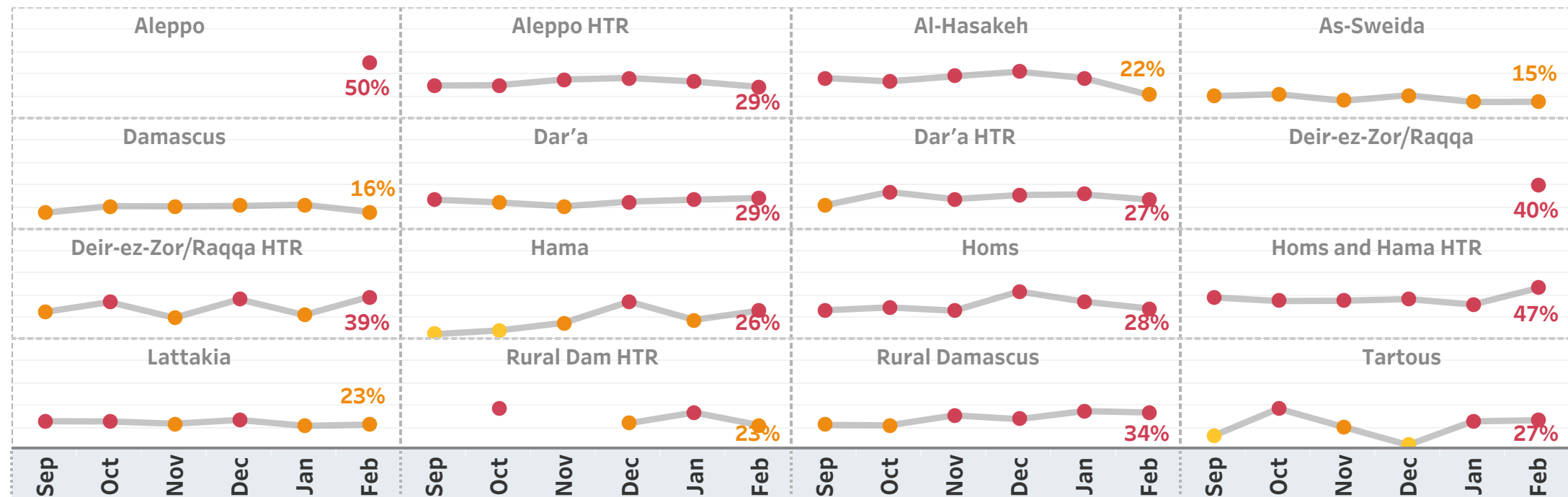
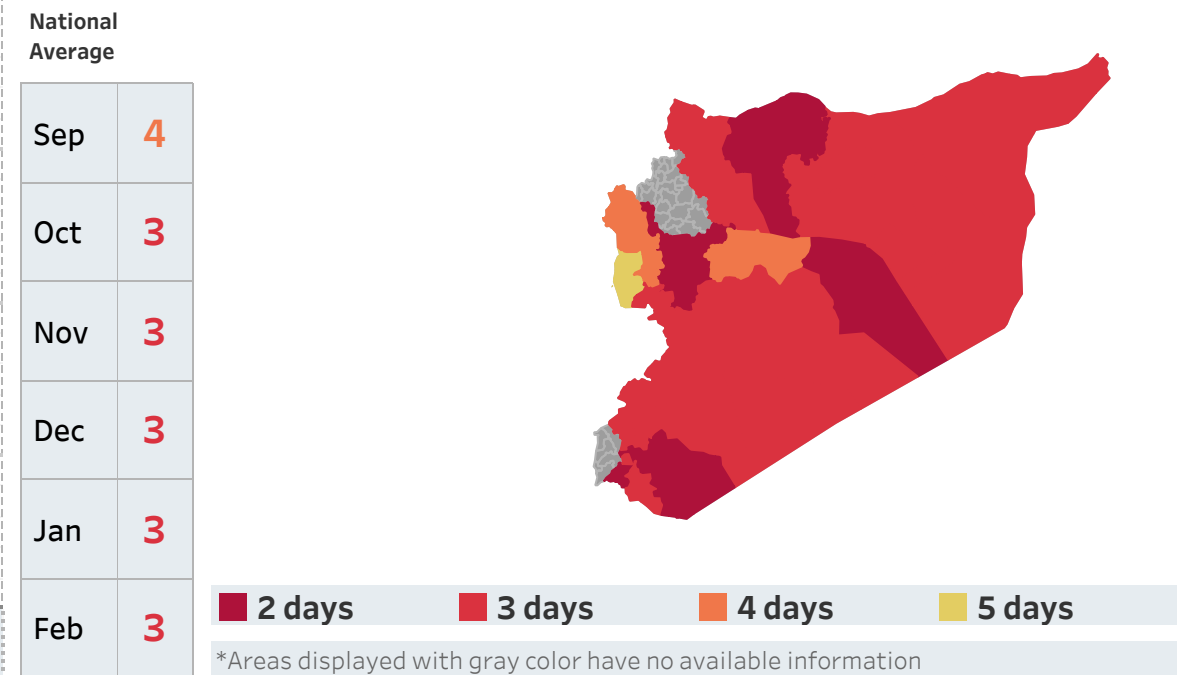


Figure 1 : Percentage of households by aggregated governorate with Poor and Borderline Food Consumption in the last six months



Map 2 : Average weekly consumption (February 2019) by aggregated governorates for Proteins



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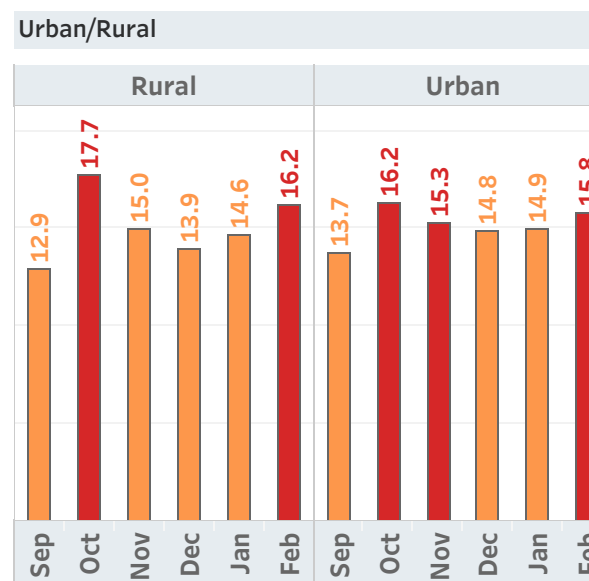
Engaging in food consumption based coping strategies is the highest in Homs and Hama

- In February, national average rCSI significantly increased reaching the highest level since October 2018. This increase was led mainly by an increase in the average rCSI recorded in accessible areas of **Homs** and **Hama** where the highest levels of use of food consumption based coping strategies were recorded (Figure 4). In these two governorates, households are relying on the all five food based coping strategies (rely on less expensive food, borrow food from relatives and friends, limit the portion of the meals, reduce number of meals and restrict consumption of adults) on average three days a week.

- Even though, the use of food consumption based coping strategies in accessible (rCSI=16.3) and hard-to-reach (rCSI=15.5) areas is close, households in **hard-to-reach-areas** are reporting higher adaption of livelihood coping strategies like **spending savings** and **buying food on credit**, increasing the risk of greater indebtedness. The use of these livelihood coping strategies is more common among IDPs, returnees, female headed households and households with more than eight members.

- The level of coping strategies increased among household living in **rural areas** from an average rCSI 14.6 in January to 16.2 in February. In specific, in February more households in rural areas reported buying less expensive and less preferred food, restricting consumption of adults so that children could eat, selling assets and spending saving in order to cope with the lack of food or money to buy it (Figure 5).

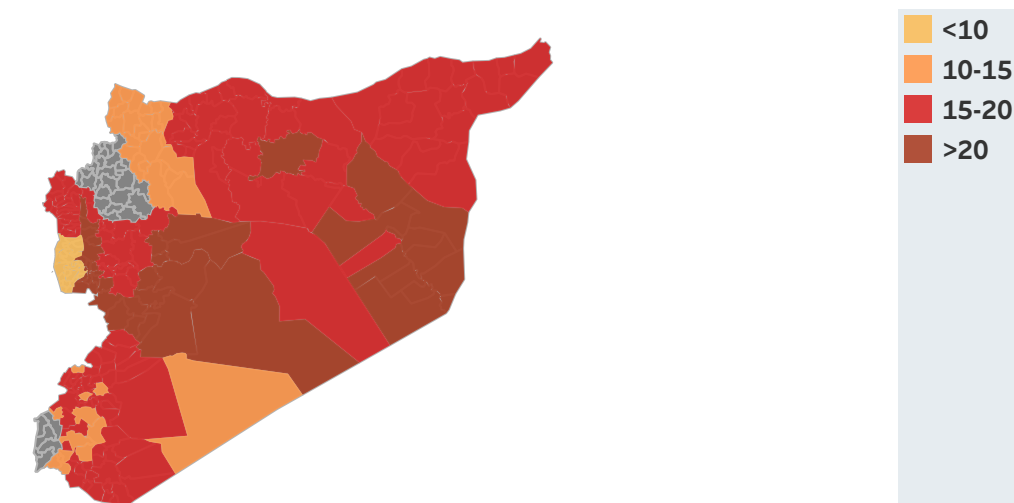
Figure 3 : Mean rCSI in the last six months according to Urban/Rural



Map3 : Mean rCSI by aggregated governorates (February 2019)

rCSI National Average

Sep	13.3
Oct	17.1
Nov	15.1
Dec	14.3
Jan	14.7
Feb	16.1



*Areas displayed with gray colors have no available information

Figure 4 : Mean rCSI by aggregated governorates in the last six months

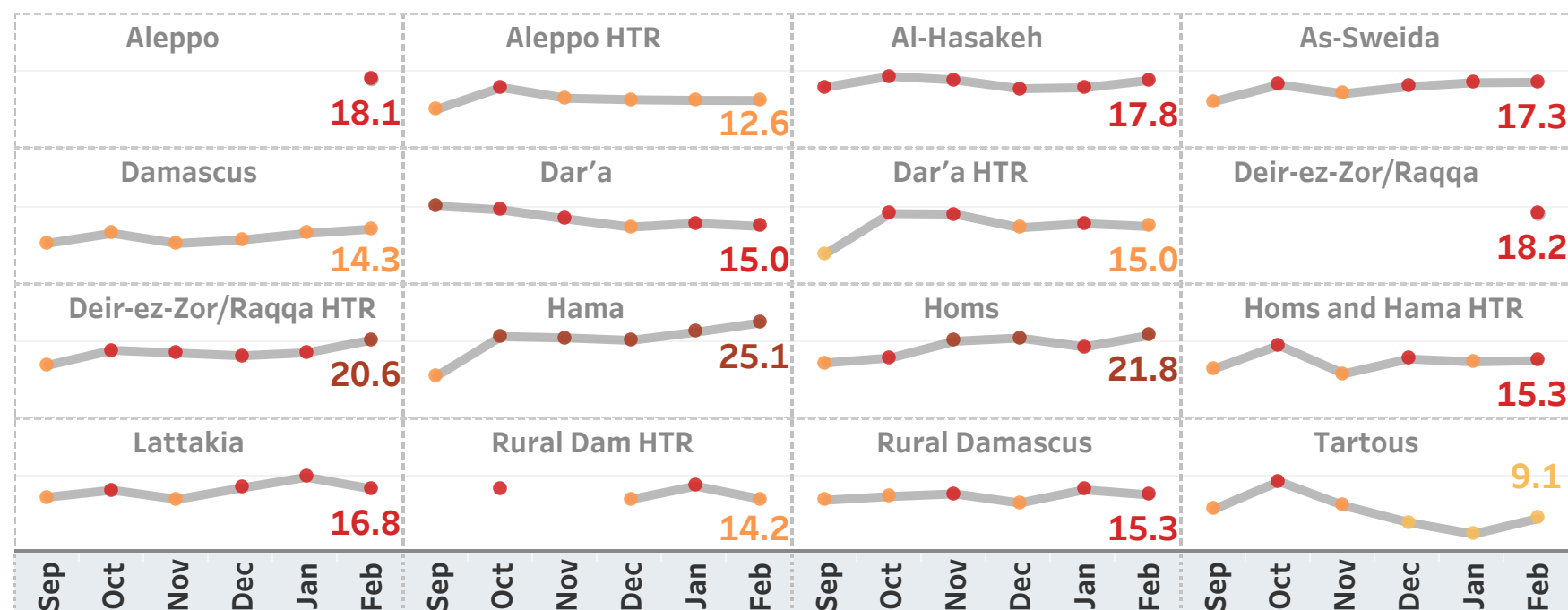
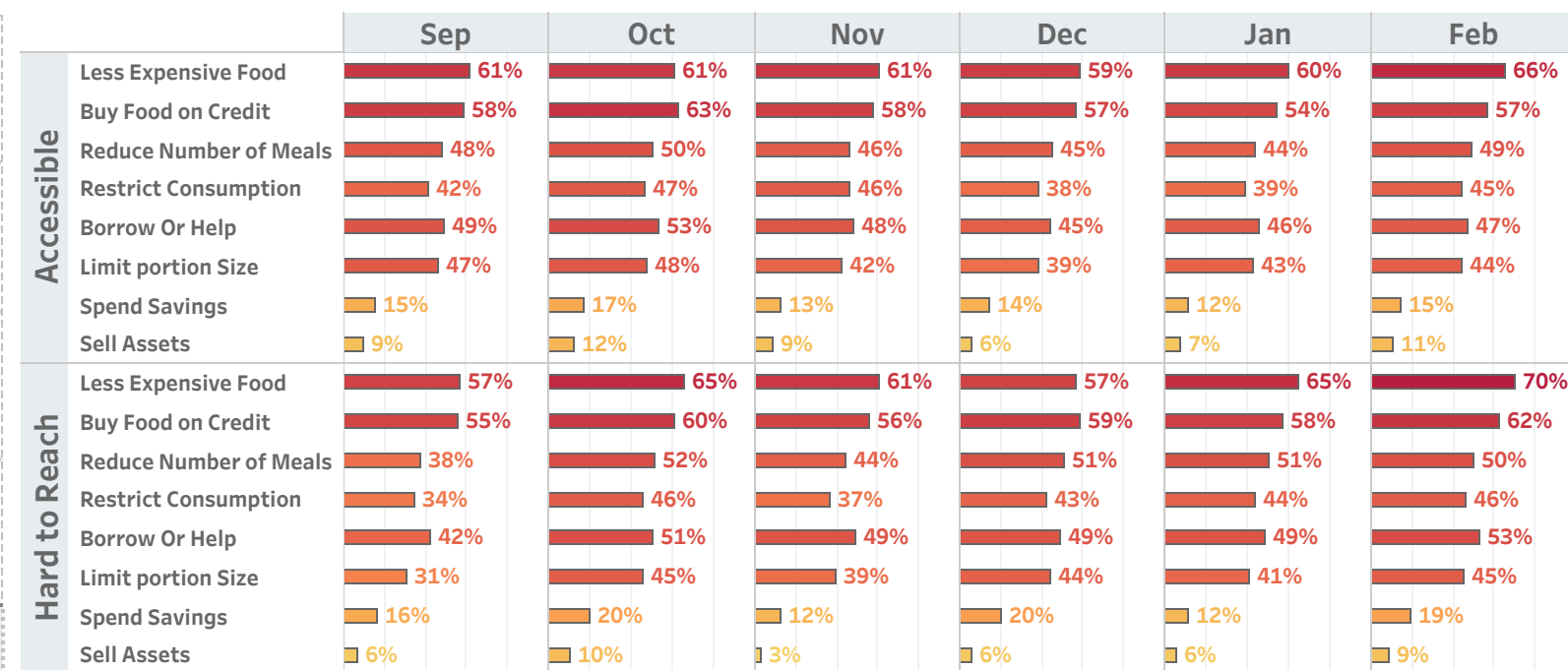


Figure 5: Percentage of households who adopted All coping strategies in the last six months according to Accessibility of areas



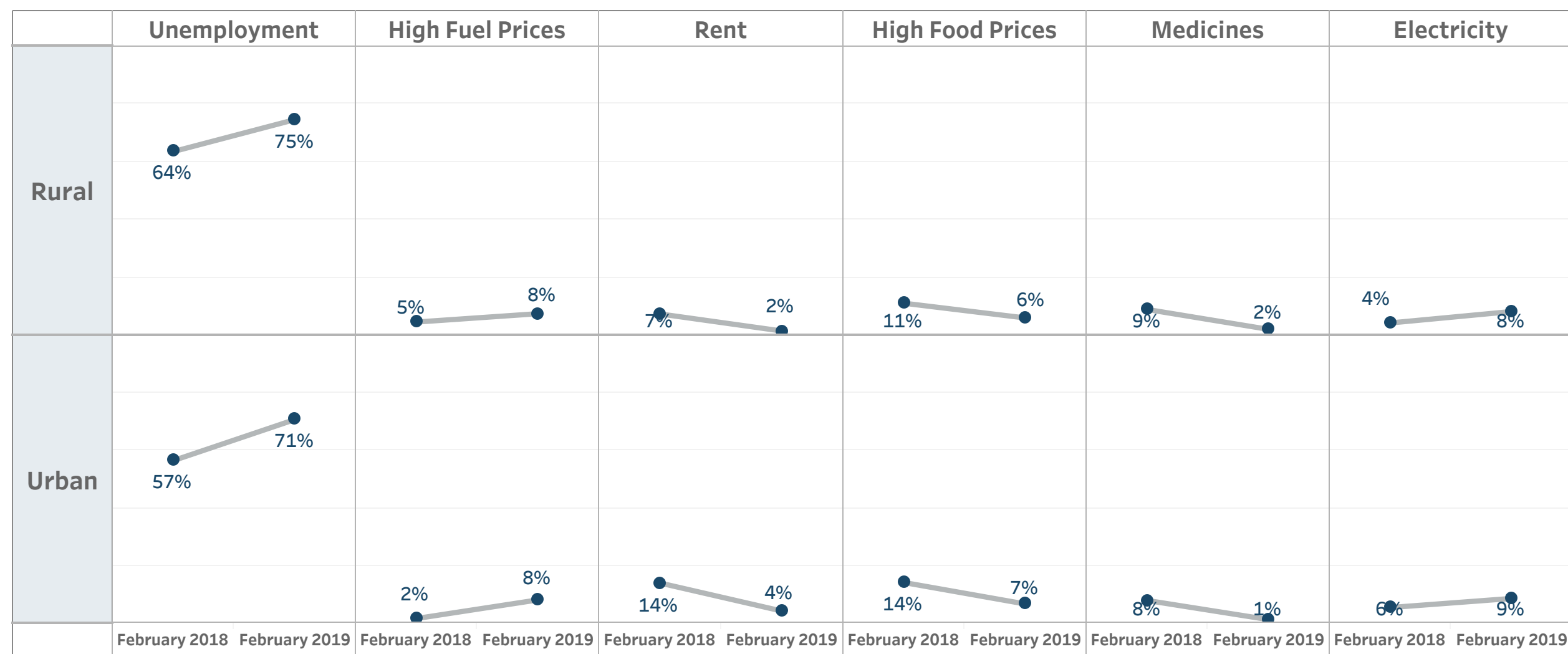


In the words of respondents

Each month, respondents are asked to identify the main problems their families are facing. Below is an overview for the main problems reported by households in urban and rural areas in February 2019 in comparison with February 2018.



Figure 6: Main problems faced by surveyed households



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mVAM Resources Website

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