Syria mVAM (December 2019 - January 2020) Issue no. 42

| **Highlights** | Food Consumption | Coping Strategies | In the words of respondents |

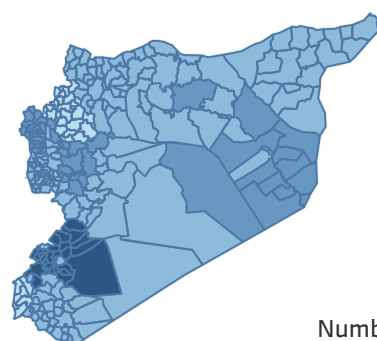**3,664**
Households surveyed

10%
Female headed households

18%
Stay as guest

28%
Displaced Households

Situation Overview

- Between December 2019 and January 2020, around 600,000 people were displaced as a result of hostilities in north-west Syria, 200,000 of which during the last week alone (from 26 January to 2 February 2020). The humanitarian situation is dire, as several years of crisis and successive displacements have eroded households' resilience in the area.
- In December 2019, WFP dispatched food assistance for 3.6 million people across all 14 Syrian governorates. This includes food assistance for 578,600 people provided via the Logistics Cluster-facilitated cross-border operation from Turkey to areas not accessible from inside Syria, in the Aleppo, Idlib and Hama governorates.
- WFP dispatched food assistance for 368,900 people in 55 hard-to-reach areas in Rural Damascus, Quneitra, Homs, Deir Ezzor, and Ar-Raqqa.
- The official rate remained at around SYP 434 for 1 USD, but the depreciation of the Syrian pound continued with day-to-day changes on the informal market, impacting food and fuel prices. In December-January, the national average informal exchange rate reached SYP 900 per USD, representing a year-on-year depreciation of 42 percent since December 2018.
- Compared to the previous month, the national average price of the reference food basket increased by 17 percent, reaching SYP 33,238 in December 2019. Compared to December 2018, the increase was of 43 percent. An increased variability of food prices between regions was also recorded.

WFP Syria Situation Report #12, December 2019   WFP Syria Country Office Market Price Watch Bulletin, Issue 61, December 2019   OCHA, Humanitarian Update, Syrian Arab Republic, Issue 07, 23 December 2019

Key Points

- Deir-ez-Zor and Aleppo recorded the highest proportion of households having poor or borderline food consumption, with respectively 71 and 60 percent in December, and 53 and 45 percent in January.

- Deir-ez-Zor/Raqqa remained the governorate with the highest proportion of households with a poor food consumption, reaching 32 percent.

- With an rCSI of 18.9, the use of coping strategies was the highest in As-Sweida, followed by 18.2 in Homs and Hama HTR.

- Unemployment was the main problem faced by 58 percent of all households, while high prices were increasingly a problem for 20 percent of displaced households, 26 percent of returnees and 27 percent of resident households.

mVAM coverage (Dec 2019 - Jan 2020)

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Number of Records
10 — 500

vam
food security analysis

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- Since October 2019, the national average rate of inadequate food consumption increased constantly, reaching 37 percent in January 2020, representing an increase of 12 percentage points since October 2019.
- In December 2019 and January 2020, the average proportion of households with poor or borderline food consumption was the highest in Deir-ez-Zor (71 percent in December and 53 percent in January), followed by Aleppo (respectively 60 and 45 percent).
- Deir-ez-Zor and Aleppo also recorded the biggest decrease in the proportion of households with inadequate food consumption from December 2019 to January 2020 (respectively – 18 and -15 percentage points).
- The lowest proportion of households with inadequate food consumption was found in Tartous in December (17 percent) and Dar'a (20 percent in January).
- During the same period, the proportion of households with inadequate food consumption increased the most in As-Sweida and Lattakia (+ 16 percentage points each).
- In terms of displacement status, displaced households were more likely to have poor and borderline food consumption, with a proportion of 49 percent of households compared to 32 percent for resident households.
- Female headed households were found to have a substantially higher rate of poor food consumption, especially in January 2020 (24 percent, compared to 10 percent of male headed households).
- Protein intake remained at a national average consumption of 3 days per week with regional disparities, while dairy products were consumed 4 days per week by most households.

Map 1 : Percentage of households (Dec -Jan) by aggregated governorate with

Poor and Borderline Food Consumption

Click on one or more aggregations to get the corresponded figure 1 & figure 2

National Average

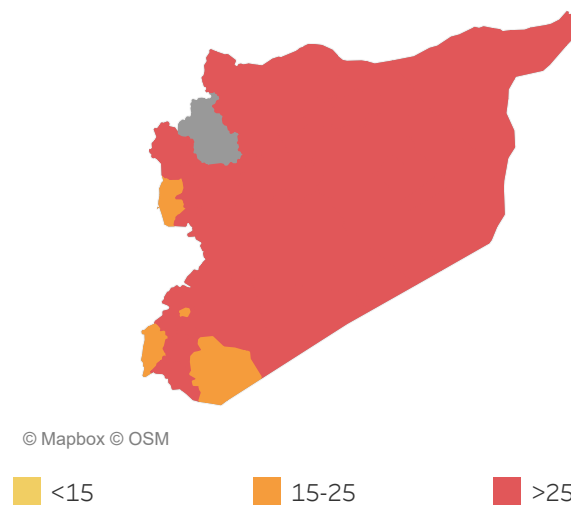| Aug	20%
Sep	27%
Oct	25%
Nov	26%
Dec	32%
Jan	37%

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■ <15   ■ 15-25   ■ >25

Figure 2 : Percentage of households with poor and borderline FC according to

Displacement Status

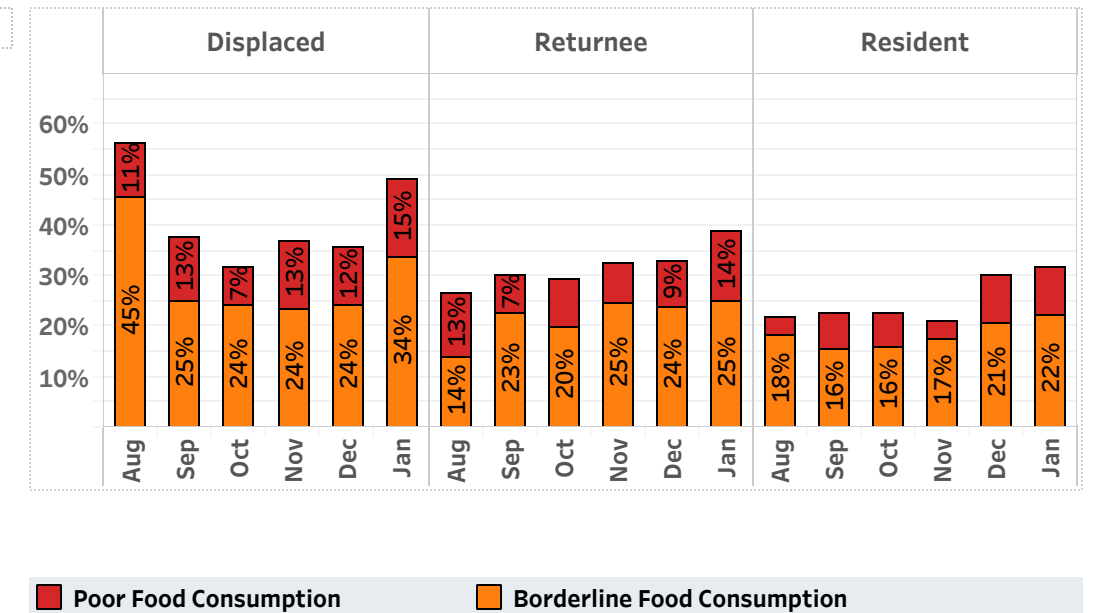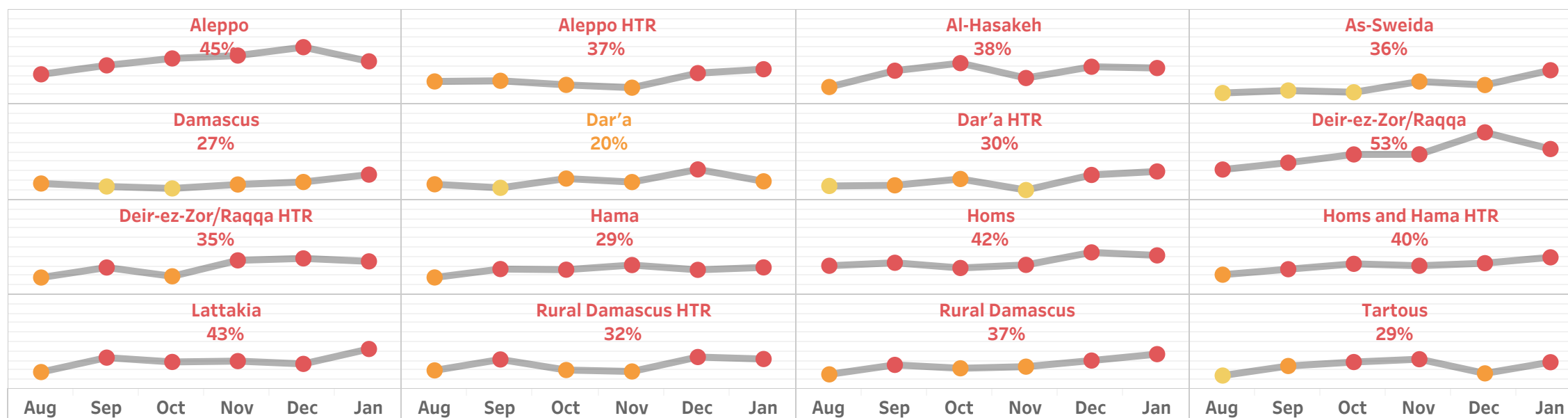|	Displaced	Returnee	Resident

■ Poor Food Consumption   ■ Borderline Food Consumption

Figure 1: Percentage of households with inadequate food consumption per aggregated governorates in the last six months

Aleppo 45%	Aleppo HTR 37%	Al-Hasakeh 38%	As-Sweida 36%
Damascus 27%	Dar'a 20%	Dar'a HTR 30%	Deir-ez-Zor/Raqqa 53%
Deir-ez-Zor/Raqqa HTR 35%	Hama 29%	Homs 42%	Homs and Hama HTR 40%
Lattakia 43%	Rural Damascus HTR 32%	Rural Damascus 37%	Tartous 29%

Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan

HTR: Hard-to-Reach

Map 2 : Average weekly consumption (Oct-Nov) by aggregated governorates for
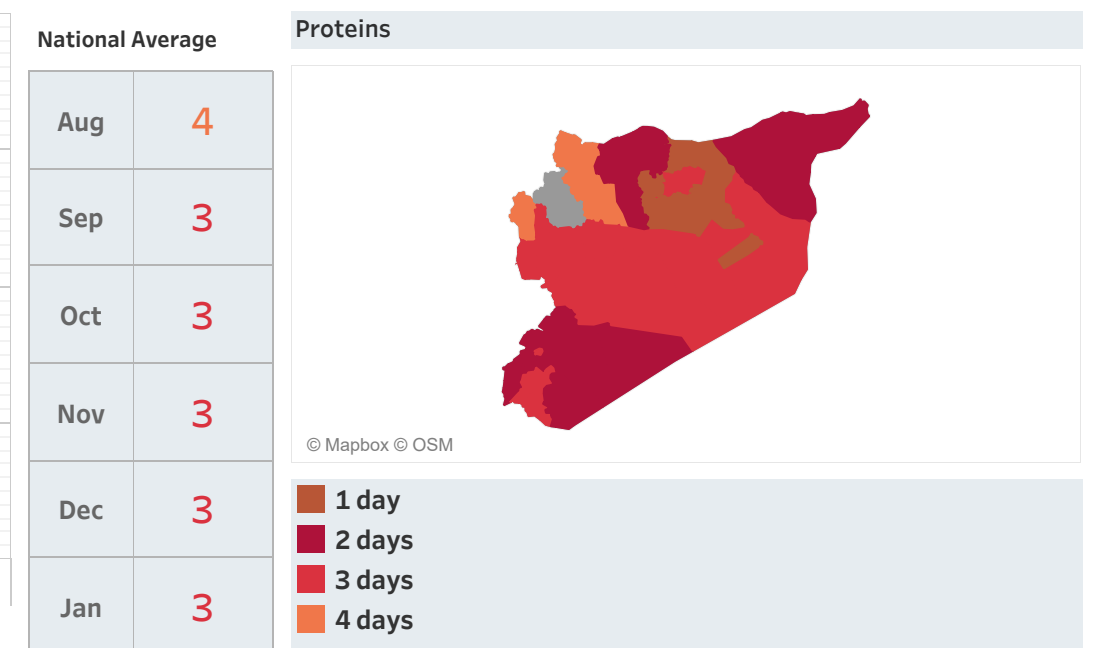
Proteins

National Average

Aug	4
Sep	3
Oct	3
Nov	3
Dec	3
Jan	3

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■ 1 day
■ 2 days
■ 3 days
■ 4 days

- The national average rCSI recorded variations over the past months, with a sharp increase of +3.5 from November to December 2019, reaching 17.4, followed by a slight decrease at a national average of 16 in January 2019.
- As in previous months, the most broadly used coping strategy remained the consumption of less expensive food for all population groups.
- Households in Aleppo HTR reported the lowest use of coping strategies, with a rCSI of 10.9, while the highest rCSI was found in As-Sweida (18.9) as well as Homs and Hama HTR (18.2).
- Between December 2019 and January 2020, the rCSI decreased most in Aleppo HTR with -2.4, followed by Tartous (-1.9).
- As for food consumption, the biggest increase in the use of coping strategies was recorded in As-Sweida, indicating a general worsening of the situation in the region.
- Households headed by a female reported a very high use of coping strategies in December 2019 with a rCSI of 24, representing +9.3 compared to the previous November. In January, it returned to a lower level of 18, compared to 15.8 for male headed households. However, only 10 percent of respondents reached were from female headed households.
- Households hosted as guests or renting homes had a rCSI of +4 compared to those owning a home with 18 versus 14.
- Displaced households reported the highest use of coping strategies, reaching 22 in December 2019 and 19 in January 2020.

Figure 3: rCSI average in the last six months

according to | Displacement Status

| Displaced | Returnee | Resident |
| Aug 21.6, Sep 19.7, Oct 18.7, Nov 16.4, Dec 22.0, Jan 19.0 | Aug 20.7, Sep 18.5, Oct 18.1, Nov 16.6, Dec 18.7, Jan 18.4 | Aug 15.2, Sep 15.2, Oct 14.3, Nov 12.8, Dec 15.3, Jan 14.8 |
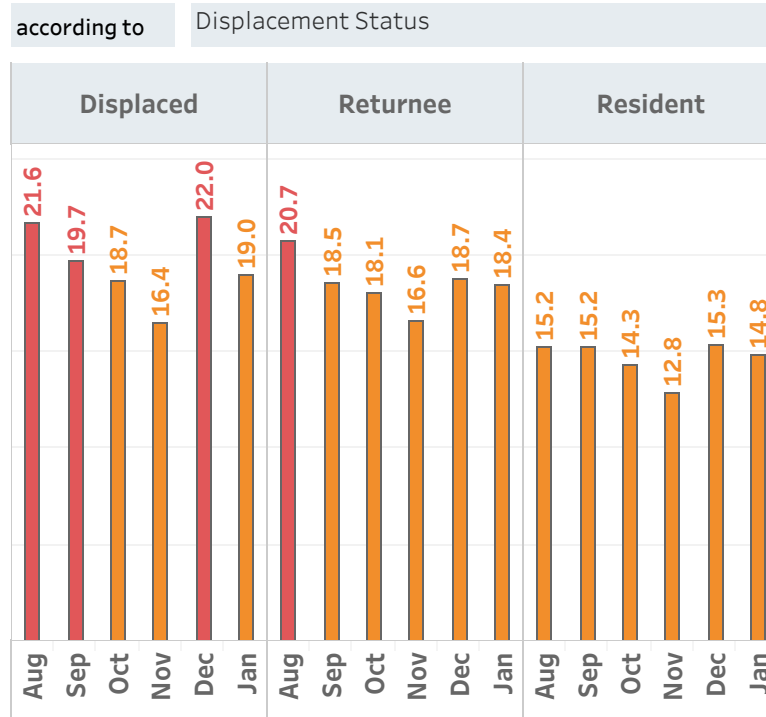
Map3 : Mean rCSI by aggregated governorates (Dec 2019-Jan 2020)

Click on one or more aggregation to get the corresponded figure 3 & figure 4

rCSI National Average	
Aug	14.6
Sep	16.4
Oct	15.7
Nov	13.9
Dec	17.4
Jan	16.0

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4-18 ▮ >19 ▮
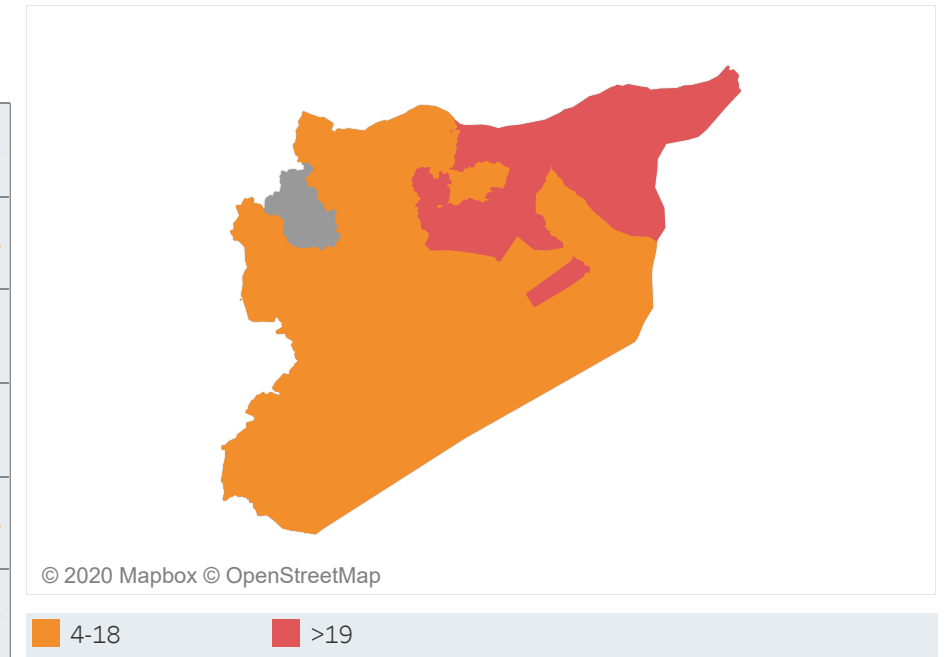
Figure 4: rCSI average per aggregated governorates in the last six month

Aleppo 18.3	Aleppo HTR 10.9	Al-Hasakeh 21.6	As-Sweida 18.9
Damascus 15.2	Dar'a 15.1	Dar'a HTR 15.0	Deir-ez-Zor/Raqqa 20.8
Deir-ez-Zor/Raqqa HTR 20.0	Hama 17.8	Homs 16.5	Homs and Hama HTR 18.2
Lattakia 18.4	Rural Damascus HTR 17.0	Rural Damascus 13.2	Tartous 13.7
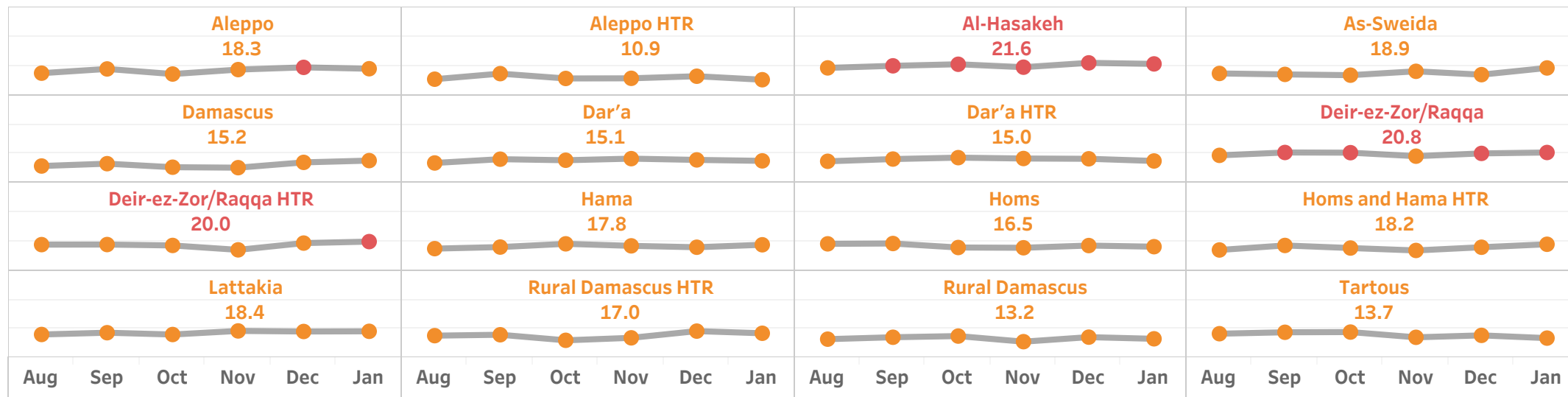
HTR: Hard-to-Reach

Figure 5: Percentage of households who adopted each coping strategy on national level

		Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
Displaced	Less Expensive Food	80%	68%	70%	69%	69%	73%
	Reduce Number of Meals	70%	60%	53%	50%	58%	56%
	Borrow Or Help	70%	61%	50%	53%	68%	61%
	Limit portion Size	66%	53%	54%	39%	54%	50%
	Restrict Consumption	33%	51%	51%	51%	61%	49%
Returnee	Less Expensive Food	68%	71%	64%	65%	79%	83%
	Reduce Number of Meals	55%	51%	54%	55%	50%	54%
	Borrow Or Help	59%	65%	62%	63%	58%	56%
	Limit portion Size	52%	49%	55%	53%	49%	56%
	Restrict Consumption	52%	46%	50%	51%	55%	52%
Resident	Less Expensive Food	60%	62%	58%	56%	62%	62%
	Reduce Number of Meals	52%	49%	46%	36%	48%	45%
	Borrow Or Help	48%	51%	43%	49%	54%	51%
	Limit portion Size	44%	42%	43%	39%	39%	39%
	Restrict Consumption	38%	42%	42%	37%	43%	40%

| Highlights | Food Consumption | Coping Strategies | **In the words of respondents** |

Each month, respondents are asked to identify the main problems their households are facing. Below is an overview of the main problems reported by households in December 2019 and January 2020, based on their displacement status across the country as well as per aggregated governorates.

Unemployment is increasingly a problem for households of all status. High prices are a concern for 27 percent of resident households (stable since last month), 26 percent of returnees and 20 percent of displaced households. Access to electricity is an issue for 8 percent of returnees, and 6 percent of displaced and resident households, while rent is mostly an obstacle for displaced households who cite this as their main problem in 6 percent of cases, in contrast to 1-2 percent of other households. Fuel prices are increasingly an issue for 6 percent of resident households and 5 percent of displaced households with a respective m-o-m increase of 2 percent, but only 3 percent of returnees (-2 percentage points compared to December 2019).

In Dar'a (Hard-to-Reach, HTR), up to 50 percent of displaced household cited high prices as their main problem, and 45 percent of resident households in Aleppo HTR.

Other issues such as access to medicines, water and assistance are cited by less than 2 percent of respondents as a problem faced by their household, regardless of their status.

Figure 6: Main problems faced by surveyed households according to displacement status (Dec 2019 - Jan 2020)

Please select an aggregated governorate

All

	Unemployment		High Prices		Rent		Electricity		Medicines		Water		Fuel Prices		Lack of assist.	
	Dec	Jan	Dec	Jan	Dec	Jan	Dec	Jan	Dec	Jan	Dec	Jan	Dec	Jan	Dec	Jan
Resident	54%	58%	27%	27%	1%	1%	9%	6%	1%	1%	1%	0%	4%	6%	3%	2%
Displaced	56%	58%	22%	20%	7%	6%	5%	6%	2%	2%		1%	3%	5%	5%	3%
Returnee	58%	58%	23%	26%	1%	2%	9%	8%	1%	1%	1%			5%	3%	3%	2%

Methodology

This mVAM bulletin is based on data collected via live telephone interviews from households in locations across Syria. The telephone numbers called were generated using random-digit dialling, yielding 3,664 completed surveys between December 2019 and January 2020. 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. The data is 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. Districts were combined into 16 strata based on their accessibility, in order to obtain more granular food security analysis. The accessible areas were: Aleppo, Aleppo HTR, Al-Hasakeh, As-Sweida, Damascus, Dar'a, Dar'a HTR, Deir-ez-Zor/Raqqa, Deir-ez-Zor/Raqqa HTR, Hama, Homs, Homs and Hama HTR, Lattakia, Rural Damascus, Rural Damascus HTR and Tartous. The sampling frame groups together areas with similar geography and access status, allowing for a large enough sample size to make statistically significant comparisons.