

Situation Overview

- COVID-19 continued to spread across Syria. As of 30 June 2021, a total of 25,515 COVID-19 cases, including 1,876 fatalities, were confirmed by the Minister of Health in government-controlled areas. While the monthly increase in COVID-19 cases in June (1,020 cases) signals a downward trend compared to May 2021 (1,762 cases), it is understood that COVID-19 community transmission is widespread throughout Syria and that containing the pandemic remains challenging countrywide. In northeast Syria, around 18,472 COVID-19 cases were reported by the end of June 2021. The COVID-19 monthly caseload decreased in the region during June (653 cases) from the peak recorded in April (5,769 cases) and May (1,891 cases), following the lockdown measures instated by the Kurdish authorities. In June 2021, the epidemiological situation has deteriorated throughout northwest Syria. Approximately 25,661 COVID-19 cases were reported in opposition-held areas in northwest Syria by the end of June, an increase of 2,120 new cases compared to the previous month, representing the highest monthly caseload since January 2021. Simultaneously, as of 20 June 2021, more than 97,000 people had received their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine in government-controlled areas and northeast Syria, in addition to 26,000 people across northwest Syria.
- The general security situation throughout Syria remained volatile in June. Intensified hostilities were reported in northwest Syria, with shelling largely concentrated in southern Idlib and northern Aleppo, resulting in casualties and the displacement of around 11,600 people from Jabal al-Zawiya areas during June 2021. The recent attacks put a strain on the ceasefire agreement in Idlib that Turkey and Russia reached in 2020. On 12 June 2021, artillery shelling and missiles reportedly struck Al-Shifaa Hospital in northern Aleppo. Al-Shifaa Hospital is one of the largest medical facilities in northern Syria and provides medical services to an average of 15,000 people each month. The attack devastated the hospital building and destroyed the clinic and delivery rooms, resulting in widespread casualties including humanitarian and healthcare workers. According to the International Rescue Committee, this was the eleventh attack recorded on medical facilities this year, bringing the total number of attacks on healthcare facilities to 124 since January 2019. Moreover, in northeast Syria, the Islamic State continued its attacks across southern Al-Hasakeh, Raqqqa and Deir-ez-Zor governorates.
- The Security Council's authorization for the UN cross-border operations in Syria expires on 10 July 2021. In northwest Syria, over 2.7 million people are forcibly displaced, including 1.7 million of displaced people living in IDP camps. Around 75 percent of the Syrian population in northwest Syria rely on the UN life-saving assistance to meet their basic needs, and cross-border operations reach nearly 85 percent of them each month. A failure to renew the resolution would have negatively impact the UN delivery of food, COVID-19 vaccines, critical medical supplies, shelter, protection, clean water and sanitation, and other humanitarian assistance to more than 3.4 million people across northwest Syria. On 18 June 2021, the heads of seven UN agencies, including WFP, released a statement calling for the renewal of the cross-border operations to northwest Syria.
- Major humanitarian needs persisted across all sectors in Syria. To address the food insecurity faced by the Syrian population, WFP delivered general food assistance to approximately 4.8 million people in June 2021 across the country. Moreover, WFP conducted rehabilitation work of irrigation canals in Maskanah Sharq (Aleppo governorate). This project aims to restore water supply to a total of 17,800 hectares of farmlands and contribute to agricultural developments and social cohesion in vulnerable areas of Syria.

Sources: [OCHA Statement | Syria June 2021](#), [CSIS | The Implications of the UN Cross-Border Vote in Syria](#), [IRC Statement on Hospital Attack | Syria June 2021](#)



Key Points

- More than two out of five interviewed households (43 percent) at national level reported poor or borderline food consumption in June 2021, marking a 26 percent increase in food insecurity levels compared to June 2020.
- During the reporting period, 89 percent of surveyed households reported applying at least one food-based coping mechanism to deal with insufficient food stocks or resources to buy food.
- Approximately 16 percent of interviewed households in Syria who had mentioned receiving the same or more income sources in previous rounds of the survey since January 2021, reported having lost one or more sources of income in June 2021.
- In June 2021, around 20 percent of surveyed households reported challenges in accessing medical care services, representing the highest national average level recorded since November 2020.

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Key Characteristics



1,200
Households Surveyed



13%
Female Headed Households



18%
Stay as Guests



28%
Displaced Households

Methodology

This mVAM bulletin is based on data collected via live telephone interviews in June 2021 from households in locations across Syria. The phone numbers were generated using random-digit dialing. In June 2021, data was collected from a sample of 1,200 respondents across 13 governorates (Idlib is not covered). As per standard survey procedures, respondents' consent was obtained prior to the interviews. For security and safety measures, all respondents were identified with an anonymous ID.

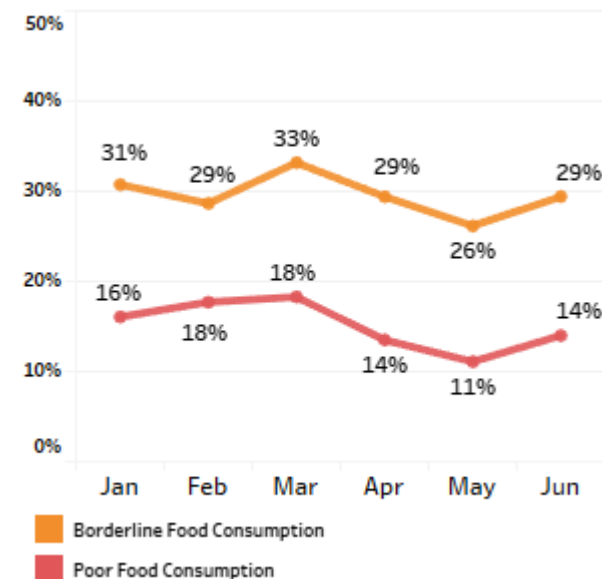




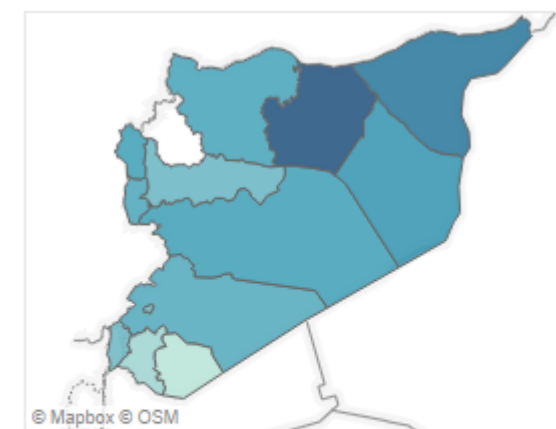
Food Consumption

- Food insecurity in Syria remained at critical levels. In June 2021, more than two out of five interviewed households (43 percent) reported poor or borderline food consumption in Syria. The national average rate of inadequate food consumption (poor and borderline combined) increased by 16 percent from May 2021, returning to pre-Ramadan levels, and by 26 percent compared to June 2020. This trend was higher among female-headed households (54 percent), with an increase of 23 percent month-on-month, compared to male-headed households (42 percent). At the national level, around 16 percent of surveyed households in Syria who had been reporting borderline food consumption in previous rounds of the survey since January 2021 reported poor food consumption in June 2021. This deterioration highlights a sustained worsening trend in the food security situation across the country.
- Broken down by governorate, in June 2021, the highest proportion of households with poor or borderline food consumption was recorded in Deir-ez-Zor, with more than three out of five interviewed households (61 percent) reporting inadequate food consumption, followed by Al-Hasakeh (54 percent). Month-on-month, all governorates recorded an increasing average rate of inadequate food consumption in June 2021, except Ar-Raqqa and As-Sweida. However, 53 percent of surveyed households in Ar-Raqqa and 20 percent of respondents in As-Sweida reported poor or borderline food consumption this month. This indicates that the slight improvement observed in May was temporary and related to the holy month of Ramadan and Eid Al-Fitr festivities. In June 2021, the highest monthly increase of interviewed households with inadequate food consumption was detected in Rural Damascus (up by 17 percentage points) and Lattakia (up by 17 percentage points).
- During the reporting period, 14 percent of surveyed households in Syria reported poor food consumption, up by three percentage points from May 2021 and representing an increase by half the level recorded in June 2020. This trend was much higher in Ar-Raqqa (29 percent), an increase of nine percentage points from the level recorded a month earlier. The highest monthly increase of interviewed households reporting poor food consumption was recorded in Rural Damascus (up by 12 percentage points) and Homs (up by 10 percentage points), reaching 15 percent and 16 percent, respectively, in June 2021.
- According to residency status, in June 2021, 52 percent of IDPs reported inadequate food consumption, an increase of 16 percent month-on-month. Moreover, the total share of returnee and resident households with poor or borderline food consumption increased reaching 41 and 40 percent respectively.
- In June 2021, approximately 56 percent of surveyed households in Syria indicated consuming animal-source protein less than twice a week. This trend was more evident among households with poor or borderline food consumption, as they reported consuming animal-source protein less than once a week. These trends have worrisome implications for the nutrition status, which can even be negatively affected by prolonged poor diets and inadequate consumption of nutrients.

Fig1: The national average level of poor and borderline food consumption in the last six months



Map1: Percent of households by governorate reporting poor food consumption in June 2021



Data from Idleb is not available

Fig2: Percent of households with inadequate food consumption in the last six months by governorate

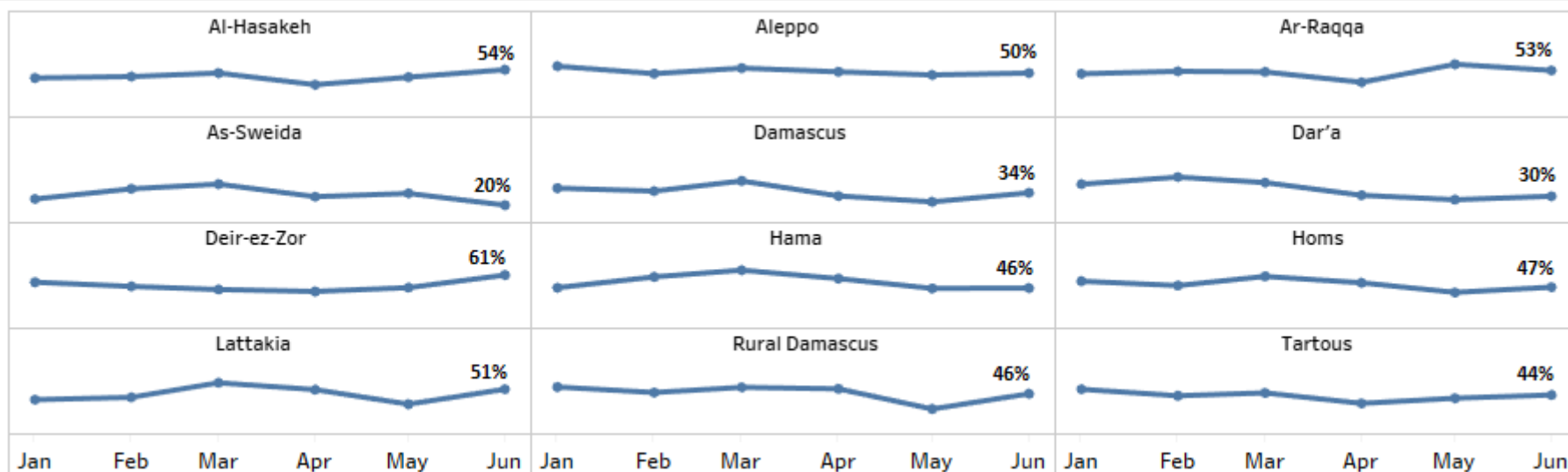
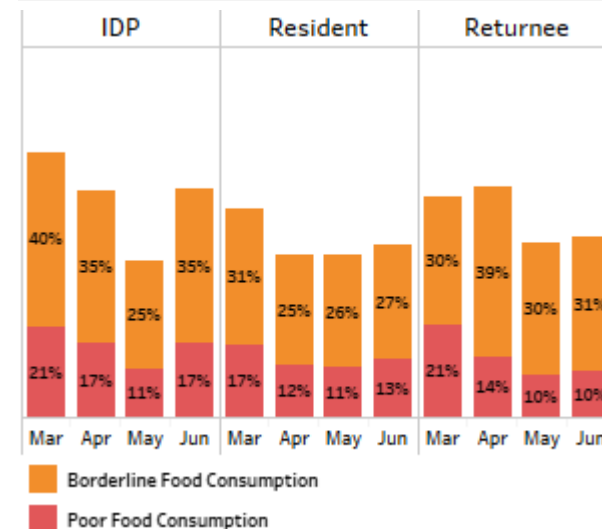


Fig3: Percent of households reporting poor and borderline food consumption according to displacement status





Coping Strategies

- Between May and June 2021, the national average reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI) slightly decreased from 19.1 to 18.5. In June 2021, nearly nine out of ten interviewed households (89 percent) reported applying at least one food-based coping mechanism to meet their food consumption needs, with a higher proportion recorded among female-headed households (95 percent) compared to male-headed households (88 percent).
- As a result of increasing food prices nationwide and the continued degradation of household coping capacity, more than four out of five interviewed households (82 percent) reported having already depleted their savings, with a peak recorded in Hama (91 percent). The further erosion of the purchasing power pushed more than seven out of ten interviewed households (72 percent) to buy food on credit, an increase of eight percent year-on-year, with a wider share recorded among female-headed households (81 percent). The reported adoption of this strategy was most common among IDPs (76 percent) and returnees (74 percent), while it remained very high among residents (70 percent), signaling a general worsening trend in the economic capacity of all population groups in Syria.
- In terms of displacement status, the average rCSI was highest among IDPs and returnees. In June 2021, 93 percent of IDPs and 88 percent of returnees reported adopting at least one food-based coping strategy to source their essential food needs amid the dire economic living conditions, compared to 88 percent of residents.
- In June 2021, consuming less preferred or less expensive food was the most widely adopted negative food coping strategy by surveyed households (69 percent), with an eight percent increase year-on-year. The reported adoption of this strategy was highest in Quneitra (82 percent) and Al-Hasakeh (79 percent). In addition, more than half of the interviewed households in Syria (54 percent) indicated a reduction in the number of meals consumed per day, with a wide share recorded among female-headed households (65 percent) compared to male-headed households (51 percent). Also, to meet food shortages and cope with the reduced financial access to adequate diets, 44 percent of surveyed households reported reducing food consumption by adult members to prioritize their children's food consumption needs, representing an increase of 13 percent above the level of June 2020, with a higher proportion among IDPs (53 percent) and returnees (42 percent) compared to residents (40 percent). Moreover, 11 percent of interviewed households nationwide reported taking children of the mandatory education age out of school and having them work instead to bring in additional income to the household.

Fig5: rCSI average by governorate over the last six months

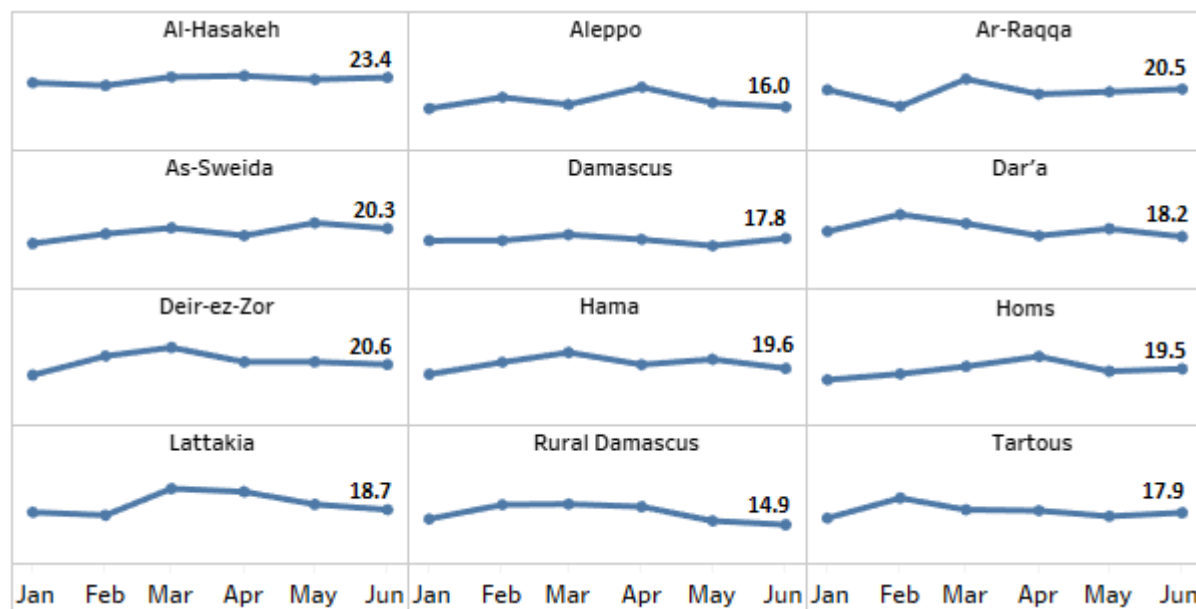
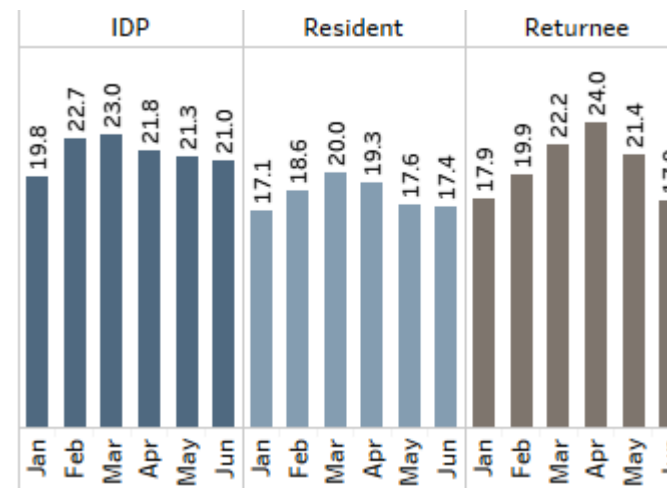


Fig4: rCSI average over the last six months according to displacement status



Map2: Percent of households consuming less preferred or less expensive food in June 2021

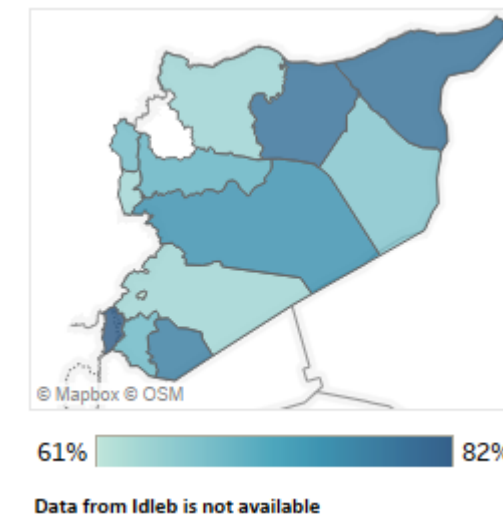


Fig6: Overall percent of households by adopted coping strategy over the past six months

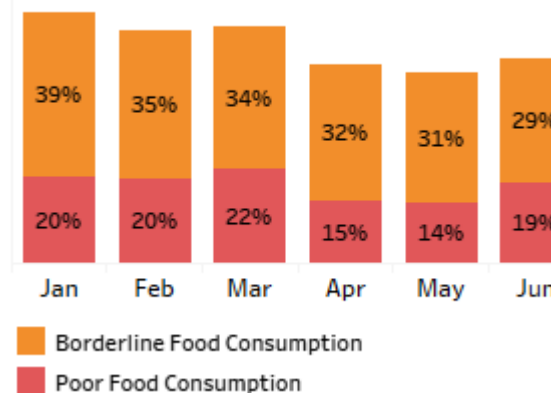
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
Male	Less Expensive Food	63%	67%	72%	72%	71%	68%
	Reduce Number of Meals	50%	53%	59%	54%	48%	52%
	Limit Portion Size	42%	45%	52%	51%	50%	45%
	Borrow Food	45%	46%	49%	48%	48%	45%
	Restrict Consumption	43%	47%	49%	49%	45%	44%
Female	Less Expensive Food	67%	76%	72%	74%	76%	74%
	Reduce Number of Meals	59%	65%	68%	57%	59%	65%
	Limit Portion Size	47%	48%	54%	54%	55%	54%
	Borrow Food	50%	49%	57%	49%	59%	52%
	Restrict Consumption	40%	48%	44%	42%	48%	42%



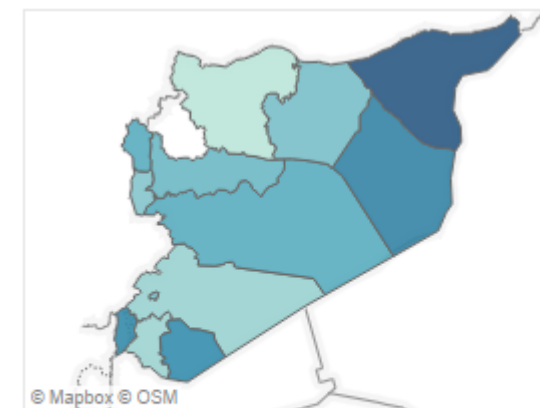
COVID-19 Situation Overview I

- The compounding impact of the COVID-19 pandemic aggravated the hardships faced by Syrians. The pandemic continued to undermine Syrian livelihoods, further exacerbating the existing humanitarian needs countrywide and increasing the fragility of the Syrian economy.
- Syrian households continued to grapple with challenges to access markets, including due to the recent fuel shortage throughout Syria. In June 2021, more than one out of four interviewed households (28 percent) indicated facing difficulties in reaching markets, with a wider share recorded among female-headed households (33 percent). At the governorate level, Al-Hasakeh (44 percent) recorded the highest proportion of surveyed households not having access to markets. Though this trend remained high in Al-Hasakeh, it decreased by 14 percent from last month, largely due to the lifting of the full lockdown measures in northeast Syria. Around eight percent of respondents in Al-Hasakeh cited the COVID-19 travel-related restrictions among the main impediments to access markets in June, which was half the level recorded in May 2021. In Deir-ez-Zor, 36 percent of interviewed households reported challenges in reaching markets in June, leading to an increase by 12 percentage points from the level recorded in May 2021. From interviews conducted in June 2021, close to half of the surveyed households with no regular access to markets nationwide (48 percent), had poor or borderline food consumption, up by 17 percent year-on-year. Furthermore, in June 2021, overall five percent of interviewed households reported difficulties in obtaining remittances and/or food assistance due to movement restrictions or security issues over the past month. This trend was more pronounced in Quneitra (12 percent), Al-Hasakeh (10 percent), and Deir-ez-Zor (nine percent).
- During the reporting period, 20 percent of surveyed households reported challenges in accessing medical care services, an increase of six percentage points year-on-year and representing the highest national average level recorded since November 2020. This trend was highest in Al-Hasakeh (40 percent) followed by Ar-Raqqa (29 percent). The lack of access to hospitals and healthcare services is concerning nationwide, given that more than 12.4 million people in Syria are estimated to require health assistance in 2021 (source: WHO). Additionally, nearly two out of five interviewed households (39 percent) reported not being able to purchase the necessary medicines in June 2021, mainly due to a lack of financial resources (77 percent) and a shortage of medicines in pharmacies (18 percent). Furthermore, as Syria has started the COVID-19 vaccination campaign, around 69 percent of surveyed households nationwide reported their intent to have all household members vaccinated were the COVID-19 vaccine made available to them free of charge.

Fig7: Share of households with inadequate food consumption who reported facing difficulties in accessing markets



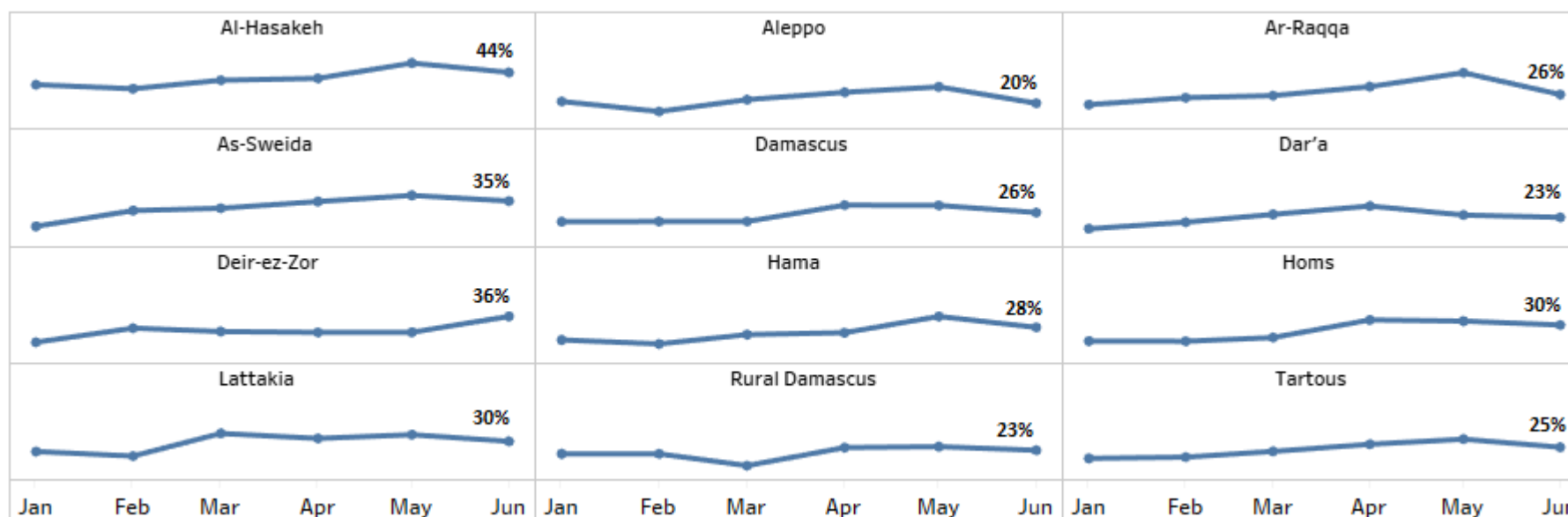
Map3: Percent of households facing challenges to access markets by governorate in June 2021



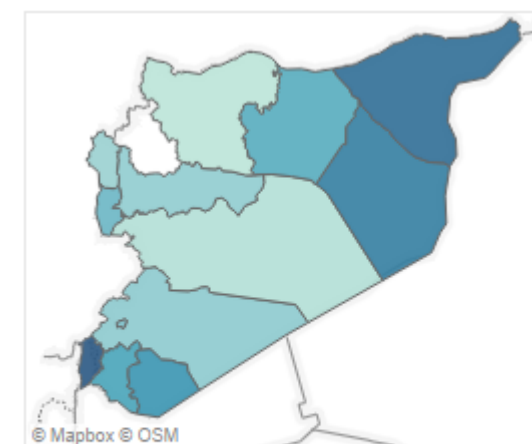
20% 44%

Data from Idleb is not available

Fig8: Percent of households facing challenges to access markets in the last six months by governorate



Map4: Percent of households facing difficulties in receiving assistance in June 2021



1% 12%

Data from Idleb is not available



COVID-19 Situation Overview II

- Syrian households continued facing difficulties in sustaining income generating activities, while prices remained high and the households' coping capacity further eroded. In June 2021, close to a third of interviewed households in Syria (32 percent) indicated that they had lost one or more sources of income over the past month, with a higher proportion recorded among male-headed households (33 percent) compared to female-headed households (24 percent). This trend was more pronounced among returnees (36 percent) and IDPs (33 percent) compared to residents (30 percent). Moreover, nearly one out of four interviewed households nationwide (23 percent) reported having lost more than half of their monthly income in June 2021, with a peak recorded in As-Sweida (31 percent).
- The reported shortfall of households' income was due to different factors. In June 2021, more than two out of five interviewed households in Syria (43 percent) reported reduction of revenues from business activities or agricultural sales, with peaks recorded in Homs (53 percent) and Tartous (50 percent). During the reporting period, 33 percent of surveyed households nationwide reported having been impacted by a reduction in working hours and thus receiving a partial salary. In addition, 16 percent of interviewed households indicated job lay-offs. This was the case even among breadwinners having university degrees (10 percent).
- At the governorate level, in June 2021, As-Sweida (43 percent) and Dar'a (38 percent) recorded the highest proportion of surveyed households having lost one or more sources of income. Nearly a third of interviewed households in As-Sweida (31 percent) and 28 percent of respondents in Dar'a lost more than half of their June income.
- The difficulties faced by the Syrian families in the labor market have affected their income sources and had a negative impact on their food consumption. In June 2021, close to half of the surveyed households across Syria (46 percent) who reported losses of income also reported inadequate food consumption, an increase of 18 percent month-on-month. Moreover, 95 percent of these respondents indicated having relied on at least one food-based coping strategy in June. Furthermore, around 16 percent of interviewed households who had mentioned receiving the same or more income sources in previous rounds of the survey since January 2021, reported having lost one or more sources of income in June 2021.

Fig10: Percent of households losing one or more sources of income in the last six months by governorate

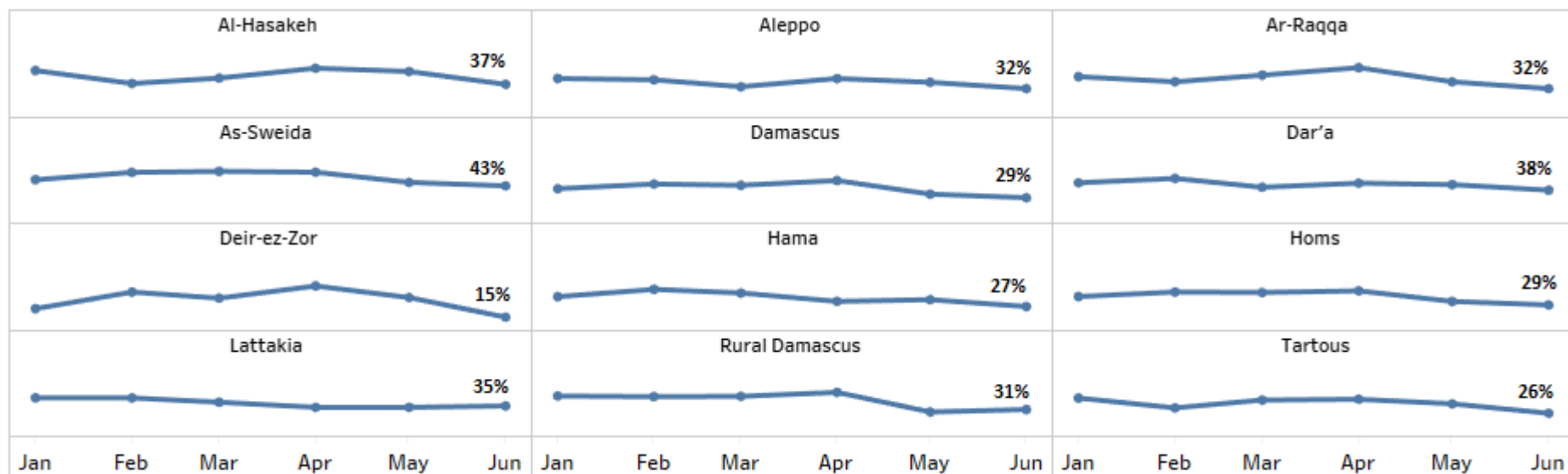
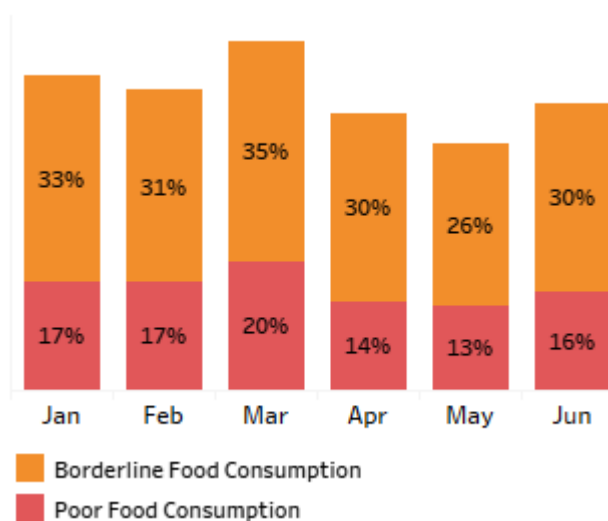
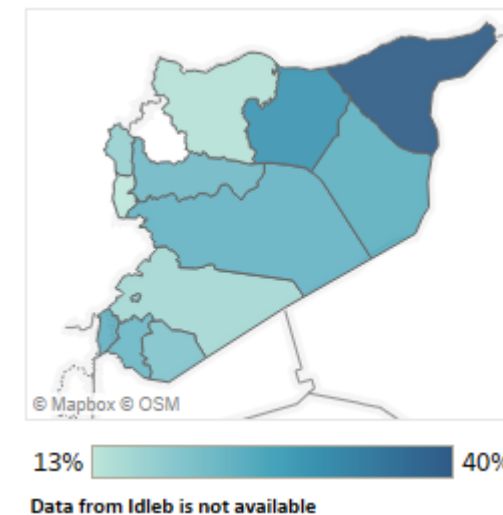


Fig9: Percent of households with inadequate food consumption who reported having lost their main income source



Map5: Percent of households facing challenges to access medical services by governorate in June 2021



Map6: Percent of households reporting losing more than half of their income sources in June 2021

