

### Situation Overview

- The general security situation throughout Syria remained volatile in July. Intensified hostilities were reported in northwest Syria, with shelling largely concentrated in southern Idleb, northern Latakia and Aleppo, and western Hama. These attacks in southern Idleb are the worst since a ceasefire agreement was brokered between Turkey and Russia in March last year. The continued escalation of violence during June and July has resulted in many casualties and displacements of around 44,000 people from Ehem, Ariha and Idleb areas of Idleb governorate towards safer areas, in addition to sustained damage on a water station. Moreover, Dar'a al-Balad in Dar'a Governorate in southern Syria, has experienced increased tension since mid-July. On 28 July, heavy shelling and ground clashes in Dara'a al-Balad and some villages in western Dar'a reportedly resulted in civilian casualties and displacement of around 24,000 people. The Dar'a national hospital was also hit by four mortar shells which destroyed one water tank that temporarily shut-down the dialysis unit. The main roads linking Dar'a al-Balad from other parts of the city and to outlying areas have been closed and just one road remained open to civilian and commercial traffic. These findings highlight a grave concern on the security situation in Dar'a.
- The fuel shortage crisis continued to worsen across Syria. On 7 July 2021, the Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection increased the liter price of Octane 95 gasoline from 2,500 SYP to 3,000 SYP. This represents the third rise in Octane 95 gasoline prices since January 2021. Also, the liter price of the subsidized diesel has been increased from 187 SYP to 500 SYP. At the same time, the Syrian Government doubled the price of a bundle of bread wrapped in a nylon bag, from SYP 100/bundle to SYP 200/bundle. In line with the recent increases in prices, on 11 July 2021, the Syrian Government raised the salaries of civil servants and military workers by 50 percent, as well as pensions for retirees by 40 percent, effective as of August 2021. The last salary increase in Syria was announced in November 2019. Furthermore, as of 30 July 2021, Alouk water station (in Al-Hasakeh governorate), which directly provides clean drinking water to nearly 460,000 people, was made partially operational after being suspended for more than one month. Nevertheless, further maintenance work is still needed for the station to be fully operational.
- COVID-19 continued to spread across Syria. As of 31 July 2021, a total of 25,963 COVID-19 cases, including 1,914 fatalities, were confirmed by the Minister of Health in government-controlled areas. The monthly increase in COVID-19 cases in July (488 cases) signals a downward trend compared to June 2021 (1,020 cases). Nonetheless, most cases have not been linked to a suspected source, demonstrating widespread community transmission. Simultaneously, the COVID-19 vaccination campaign continues in Syria. As of 9 July 2021, a total of 131,221 COVID-19 vaccine doses have been administered. In opposition-held areas in northwest Syria, approximately 26,432 COVID-19 cases were reported by the end of July, an increase of 771 new cases compared to the previous month. Around 16 percent of these COVID-19 cases in northwest Syria were in IDP camps.
- On 7 July 2021, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 2585 (2021), authorizing the continued cross-border delivery of humanitarian assistance from Turkey to northwest Syria, through the Bab al-Hawa crossing. The Resolution extends the cross-border operations for six months, with another six-month extension contingent on a substantive assessment by the Secretary General. The UN sends 1,000 trucks to Syria cross-border each month with food, critical medical supplies, COVID-19 vaccinations, and other life-saving assistance for 3.4 million people in northwest Syria. Furthermore, in July 2021, WFP delivered general food assistance to approximately 4.7 million people across Syria in order to meet the growing humanitarian needs nationwide. On 31 July 2021, WFP dispatched 1,500 read-to-eat rations to Dar'a city, sufficient to cover the needs of 7,500 people for a period of a week.

Sources: [OCHA | Hostilities in Dar'a Governorate](#), [UNICEF Statement | Syria July 2021](#), [COAR | Syria Update July 2021](#)



### Key Points

- Close to half of the surveyed households (46 percent) at national level reported poor or borderline food consumption in July 2021, marking a 15 percent increase in food insecurity levels compared to July 2020.
- Despite the Eid El-Adha festivities during July, overall 56 percent of surveyed households in Syria indicated consuming animal-source protein less than twice a week.
- In July 2021, a third of the interviewed households (33 percent) reported facing difficulties in reaching markets, an increase of seven percentage points year-on-year and representing the highest level recorded since April 2020.
- In Dar'a governorate, 32 percent of the surveyed households indicated that they had lost one or more sources of income over the past month, with 19 percent of these respondents lost more than half of their July income.

#### For Further Information

Arif Husain  
Chief Economist & Director  
Research, Assessment and Monitoring  
Arif.Husain@wfp.org

Eliana Favari  
Regional VAM Officer  
Regional Bureau Cairo (RBC)  
Eliana.Favari@wfp.org

Amira Swedan  
Regional Data Scientist  
Regional Bureau Cairo (RBC)  
Amira.Swedan@wfp.org

Abdelrahman Hamza  
VAM Programme Associate  
Regional Bureau Cairo (RBC)  
Abdelrahman.Hamza@wfp.org

### Key Characteristics



1,357  
Households Surveyed



12%  
Female Headed Households



20%  
Stay as Guests



26%  
Displaced Households

### Methodology

This mVAM bulletin is based on data collected via live telephone interviews in July 2021 from households in locations across Syria. The phone numbers were generated using random-digit dialing. In July 2021, data was collected from a sample of 1,357 respondents across 13 governorates (Idleb 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.

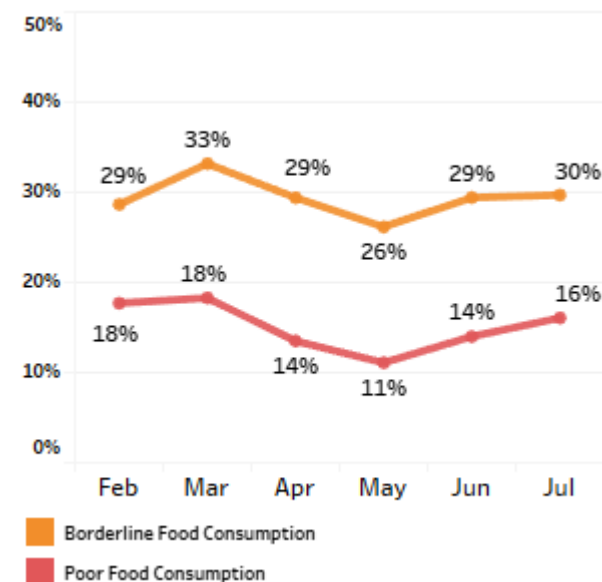




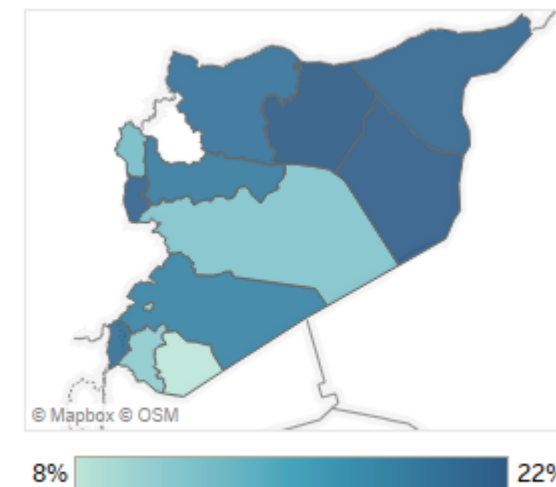
## Food Consumption

- Food insecurity persisted across Syria. In July 2021, close to half of the surveyed households (46 percent) reported poor or borderline food consumption in Syria, with the highest levels recorded among female-headed households (53 percent). The national average rate of inadequate food consumption (poor and borderline combined) increased by three percentage points from June 2021 and up by 15 percent compared to July 2020. The continued deterioration of food security in Syria is largely induced by a decade of conflict and the ongoing economic meltdown compounded by the knock-on effects of the growing financial crisis in Lebanon.
- Broken down by governorate, in July 2021, the highest proportion of households with poor or borderline food consumption was recorded in Hama, with nearly three out of five interviewed households (58 percent) reporting inadequate food consumption (representing a 26 percent increase year-on-year), followed by Deir-ez-Zor (57 percent). On the other hand, As-Sweida (31 percent) recorded the lowest level of inadequate food consumption in July 2021, which nevertheless witnessed an increase by nine percentage points from levels recorded in July 2020. This highlights a sustained worsening trend in the food security situation countrywide.
- During the reporting period, 16 percent of interviewed households in Syria reported poor food consumption, up by three percentage points from July 2020. This trend was much higher in Ar-Raqqa (22 percent), an increase of nine percentage points year-on-year, followed by Deir-ez-Zor (22 percent). The highest monthly increase of surveyed households reporting poor food consumption was recorded in Quneitra (up by eight percentage points) and Hama (up by seven percentage points), reaching 20 percent and 19 percent, respectively, in July 2021. Also, in Dar'a governorate, 11 percent of interviewed households reported poor food consumption, marking almost double the level recorded a month earlier.
- According to residency status, in July 2021, around 53 percent of IDPs and 51 percent of returnees reported inadequate food consumption, an increase of nine percent and 24 percent, respectively, year-on-year. Moreover, the total share of resident households with poor or borderline food consumption increased in July as well, reaching 42 percent.
- Despite the Eid El-Adha festivities during July, which typically leads to an increase in the protein intake of the average household and vulnerable families tend to have access to more assistance from charity organizations, insufficient consumption of protein-rich food items was reported across the country. In July 2021, overall 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 inadequate food consumption, as they reported consuming animal-source protein less than once a week. These findings signal worrisome and deteriorating nutrition status throughout Syria.

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 July 2021



Data from Idleb is not available

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

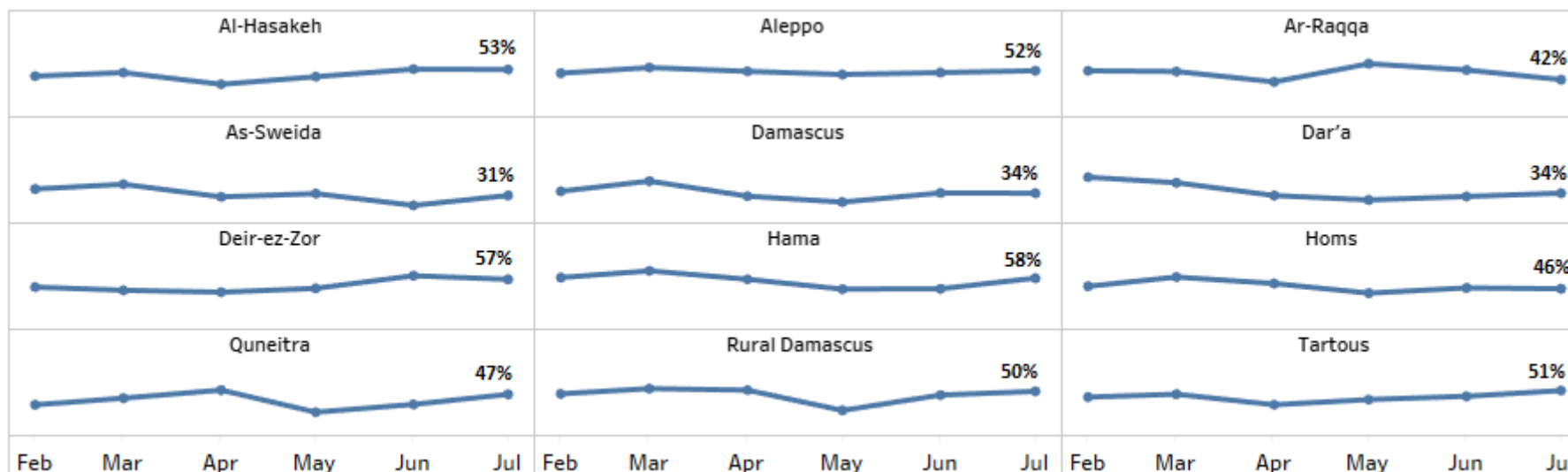
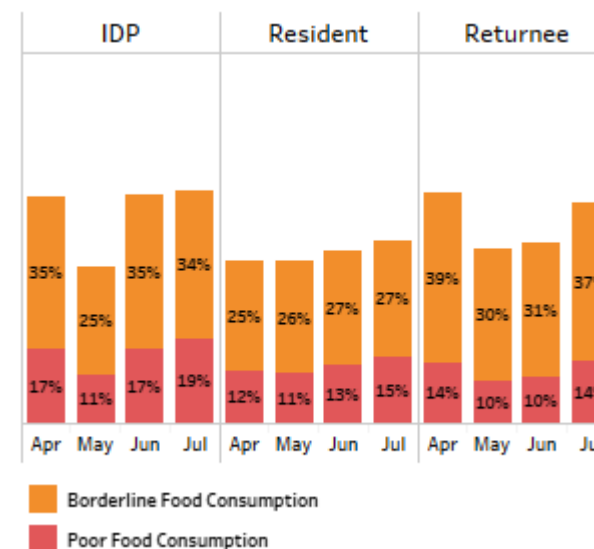


Fig3: Percent of households reporting poor and borderline food consumption according to displacement status





## Coping Strategies

- Between June and July 2021, the national average reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI) increased from 18.5 to 19.8. In July 2021, close to nine out of ten interviewed households in Syria (89 percent) reported applying at least one food-based coping mechanism to deal with insufficient food stocks and meet their food consumption needs, representing a five percent increase year-on-year. This trend was higher among female-headed households (96 percent) compared to male-headed households (88 percent). The further erosion of the purchasing power and the marked reductions in households' economic coping capacity pushed more than seven out of ten interviewed households (71 percent) to buy food on credit, with a wider share recorded among female-headed households (78 percent). The reported adoption of this strategy was more pronounced in Quneitra (83 percent), Deir-ez-Zor (80 percent) and Hama (79 percent). This generally reflects the dire living conditions countrywide and signals an upward trend in peoples' indebtedness to source their food needs. Moreover, 14 percent of surveyed households reported to have relied on child labor having been forced to remove their children of mandatory school age out of school and having them work instead to bring home needed additional income to the household.
- In line with the deterioration of the food consumption trend, the adoption of food-based coping strategies continued to worsen among vulnerable groups. The average rCSI was highest among IDPs and returnees. In July 2021, 94 percent of IDPs (The second highest average level recorded among IDPs since July 2020) and 93 percent of returnees reported adopting at least one food-based coping strategy to cover their essential food needs amid the consistent economic downturn, compared to 86 percent of residents.
- The high price of commodities and the widespread loss of livelihoods played a key role in pushing households into adopting food-based coping strategies. In July 2021, 70 percent of surveyed households reported relying on less preferred or less expensive food, up by eight percent from July 2020, with peaks recorded in Quneitra (80 percent) and Hama (75 percent). Approximately three out of five interviewed households in Syria (57 percent) indicated a reduction in the number of meals consumed per day, an increase of 14 percent year-on-year, with a wider share recorded among female-headed households (68 percent) compared to male-headed households (56 percent). Also, to cope with food shortages, nearly half of the surveyed households (48 percent) reported reducing food consumption by adult members to prioritize their children's food consumption needs, representing an increase of 17 percent since July 2020, with a higher proportion among IDPs (57 percent) and returnees (55 percent) compared to residents (43 percent).

Fig5: rCSI average by governorate over the last six months

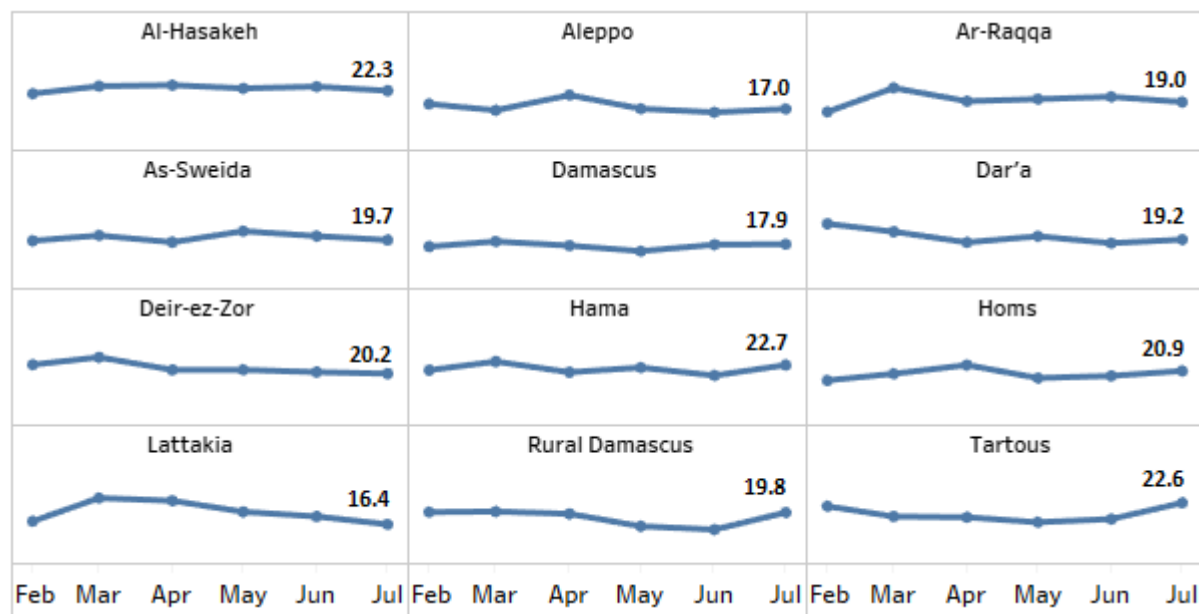
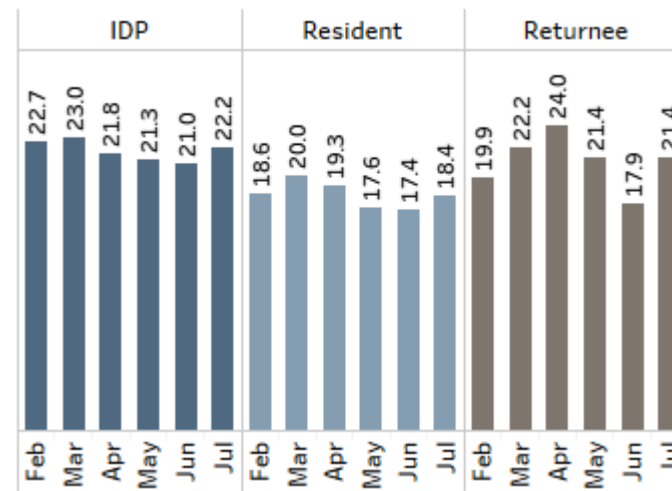


Fig4: rCSI average over the last six months according to displacement status



Map2: Percent of households restricting adult food consumption in July 2021

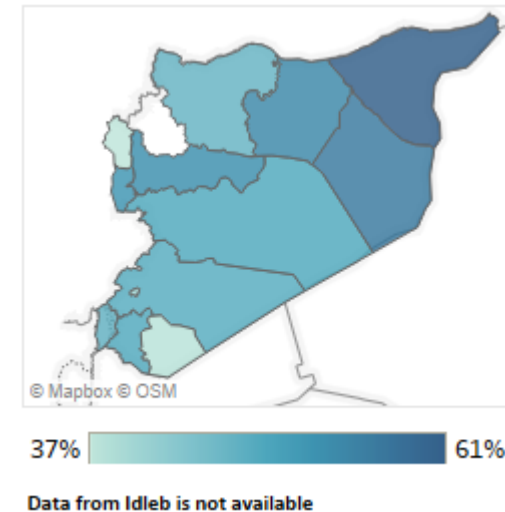
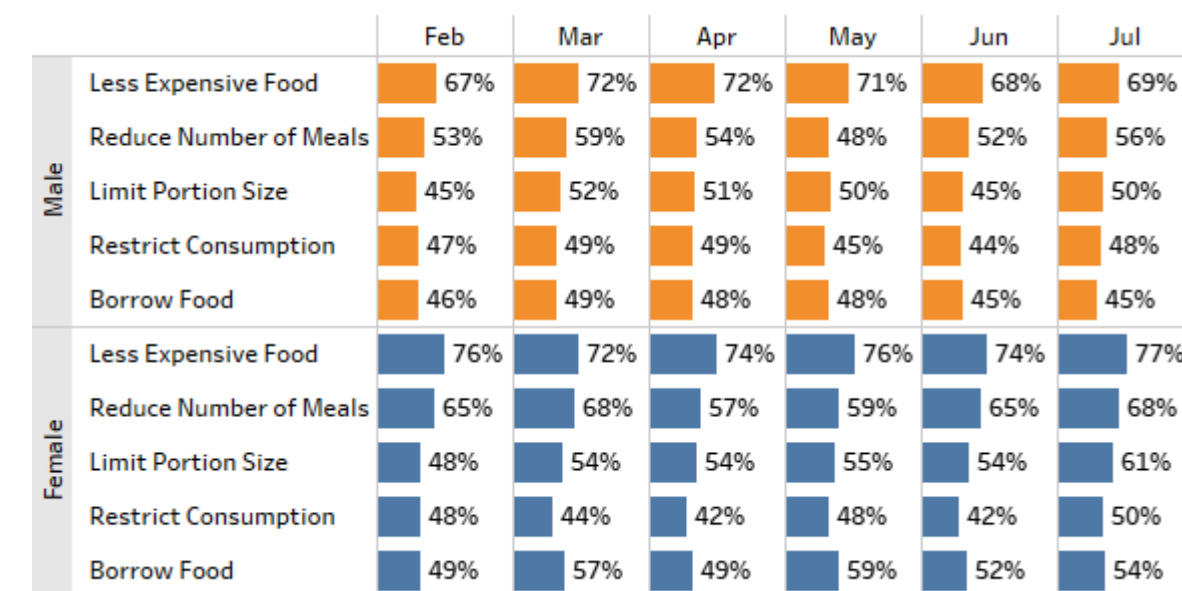


Fig6: Overall percent of households by adopted coping strategy over the past six months

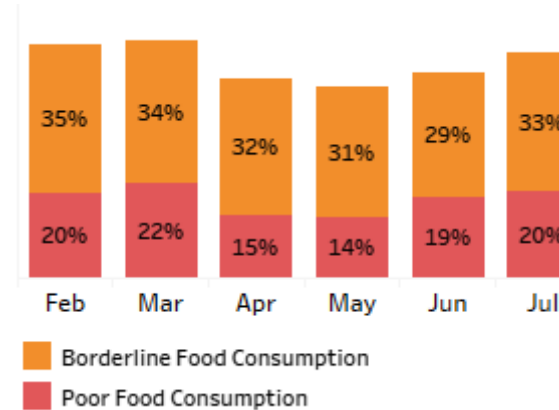




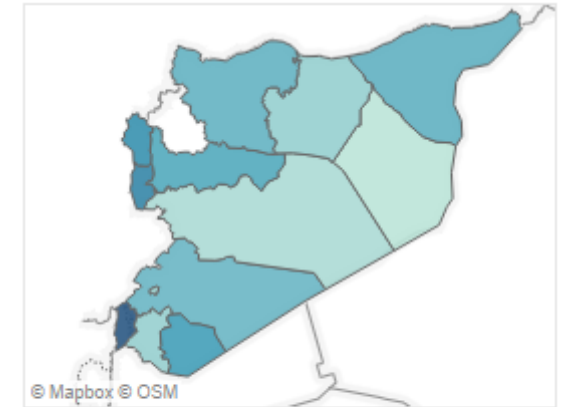
## COVID-19 Situation Overview I

- In addition to the persisting conflict and the worsening socio-economic hardships in Syria, the compounding impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has added a further layer of vulnerability on Syrian population, hereby increasing the existing humanitarian needs and spurring deterioration of the general food security situation nationwide.
- Syrian households continued to grapple with challenges to access markets. A problem that has been exacerbated by increasing gasoline prices and the ongoing fuel shortages experienced across the country. In July 2021, a third of the interviewed households (33 percent) indicated facing difficulties in reaching markets, an increase of five percentage points from a month earlier and by seven percentage points year-on-year, representing the highest national average level recorded since April 2020. This trend was more pronounced among female-headed households (43 percent), up by 10 percentage points month-on-month, compared to male-headed households (32 percent). These findings generally highlight nationwide food access concerns given that more than nine out of ten interviewed households across Syria (92 percent) indicated relying on markets as a primary source of food. From interviews conducted in July 2021, more than half of the surveyed households with no regular access to markets nationwide (53 percent), had poor or borderline food consumption, up by 10 percent month-on-month. Furthermore, in July 2021, overall four 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 observed more in Ar-Raqqa (eight percent), Quneitra (seven percent) and Deir-ez-Zor (seven percent).
- Health needs in Syria are significant and COVID-19 has aggravated the situation further. In July 2021, more than one out of five interviewed households (21 percent) reported challenges in accessing medical care services, an increase of six percentage points year-on-year and representing the second highest national average level recorded since April 2020. The lack of access to hospitals and healthcare facilities was more pronounced in Lattakia (28 percent), Al-Hasakeh (28 percent) and Dar'a (25 percent). These findings point out to a nationwide health concern given that 17 percent of surveyed households have elderly members with chronic diseases, as well as around 52 percent of public hospitals in Syria were reportedly not fully functioning (source: WHO). Additionally, more than two out of five interviewed households (42 percent) reported not being able to purchase the necessary medicines in July 2021, mainly due to a lack of financial resources (78 percent) and a shortage of medicines in pharmacies (18 percent). Moreover, COVID-19 vaccination intentions were high countrywide, with more than two-thirds of interviewed households (67 percent) indicating 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



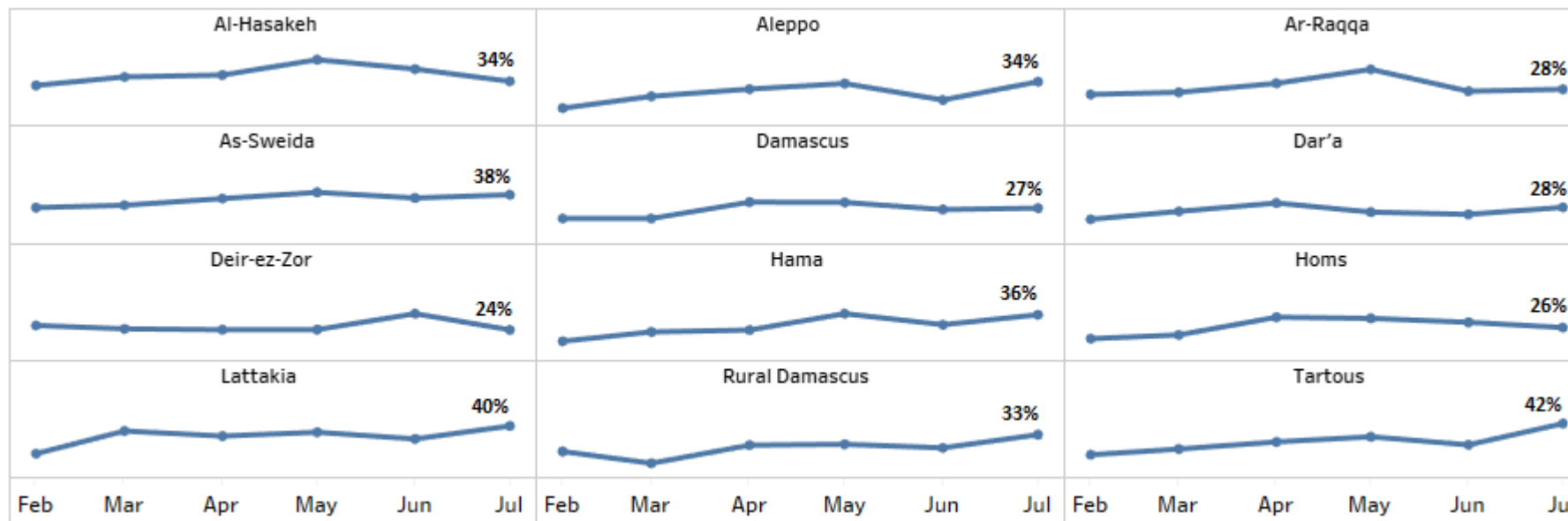
Map3: Percent of households facing challenges to access markets by governorate in July 2021



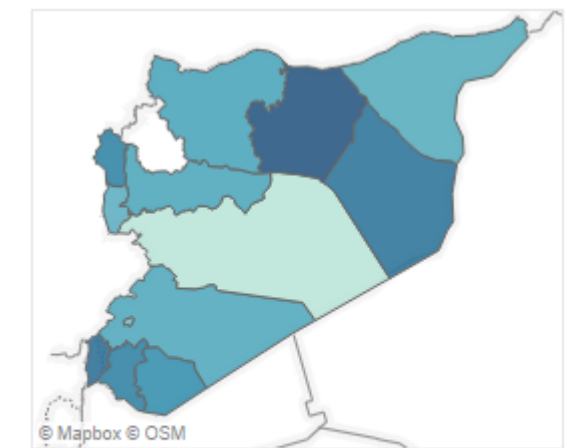
24% 50%

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 July 2021



1% 8%

Data from Idleb is not available



## COVID-19 Situation Overview II

- The weak labor market continued to negatively impact Syrian households, resulting in reported difficulties in sustaining families' livelihoods and limiting access to sources of income. In July 2021, more than one out of four interviewed households in Syria (28 percent) indicated that they had lost one or more sources of income over the past month, with a higher proportion recorded among returnees (33 percent) and IDPs (29 percent) compared to residents (27 percent). This was the case even among interviewed breadwinners nationwide who had a university degree (19 percent). In addition, one out of five interviewed households across Syria (20 percent) reported having lost more than half of their monthly income in July 2021, with peaks recorded in Rural Damascus (26 percent) and Homs (24 percent).
- The lack of access to households' sources of income were reportedly due to a number of issues. Close to half of the surveyed households in Syria in July 2021 (48 percent) reported reduction of revenues from business activities or agricultural sales, with peaks recorded in Deir-ez-Zor (73 percent) and Damascus (62 percent). During the reporting period, 32 percent of interviewed households nationwide reported having been impacted by a reduction in working hours and thus receiving a partial salary. In addition, 17 percent of surveyed households indicated job lay-offs, with a higher proportion recorded among female-headed households (26 percent) compared to male-headed households (16 percent). To cope with the burden of their current situation amid the soaring inflation in Syria and the eroding of households' coping capacity, 21 percent of respondents reported to have been pushed to work more than one full time jobs over the past month.
- At the governorate level, in July 2021, Rural Damascus (34 percent), Quneitra (33 percent) and Dar'a (32 percent) recorded the highest proportion of surveyed households having lost one or more sources of income over the past month. Nearly a quarter of interviewed households in Quneitra (23 percent) and 19 percent of respondents in Dar'a, lost more than half of their July income.
- Loss of income and employment opportunities have a negative ripple effect on households' food security situation. In July 2021, close to half of the surveyed households across Syria (49 percent) who reported losses of income also reported inadequate food consumption, representing an increase of nine percentage points year-on-year. Moreover, 96 percent of these respondents indicated having relied on at least one food-based coping strategy in July. Furthermore, around 24 percent of interviewed households who had mentioned receiving the same or more income sources in previous rounds of the survey since February 2021, reported having lost one or more sources of income in July 2021. This figure was highest in Dar'a (33 percent).

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

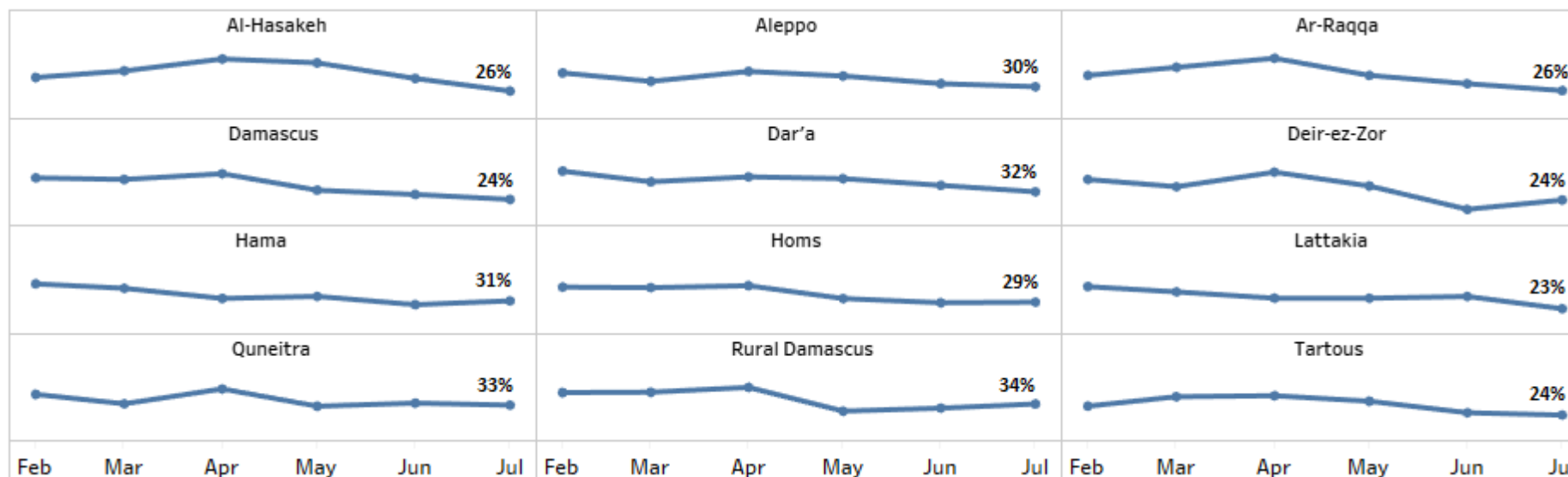
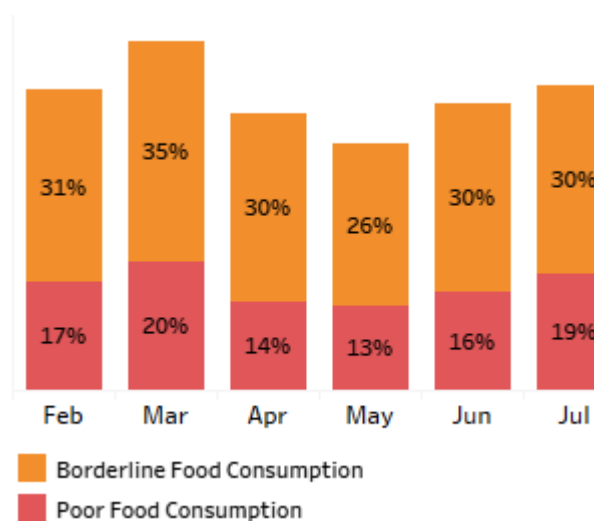
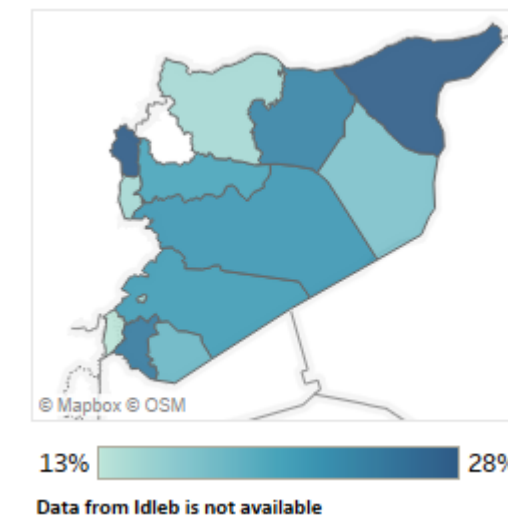


Fig9: Percent of households with inadequate food consumption who reported having lost their main income source



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



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

