

Mercy Corps' Rasht Valley Rapid Food Security and Livelihoods Assessment

Presented to the REACT Secretariat
6 June 2012
Dushanbe, Tajikistan



Key Information

- Assessment Conducted from 16 – 20 April 2012.
- Predicated on the premise that more substantive information was required to effectively understand the impact of winter 2011-12 on food security and livelihoods of households in the Rasht Valley.
- Evidence prior to this assessment was mostly anecdotal.
- Household survey designed in collaboration with Save the Children, vetted by the Tajikistan Food Security Cluster.

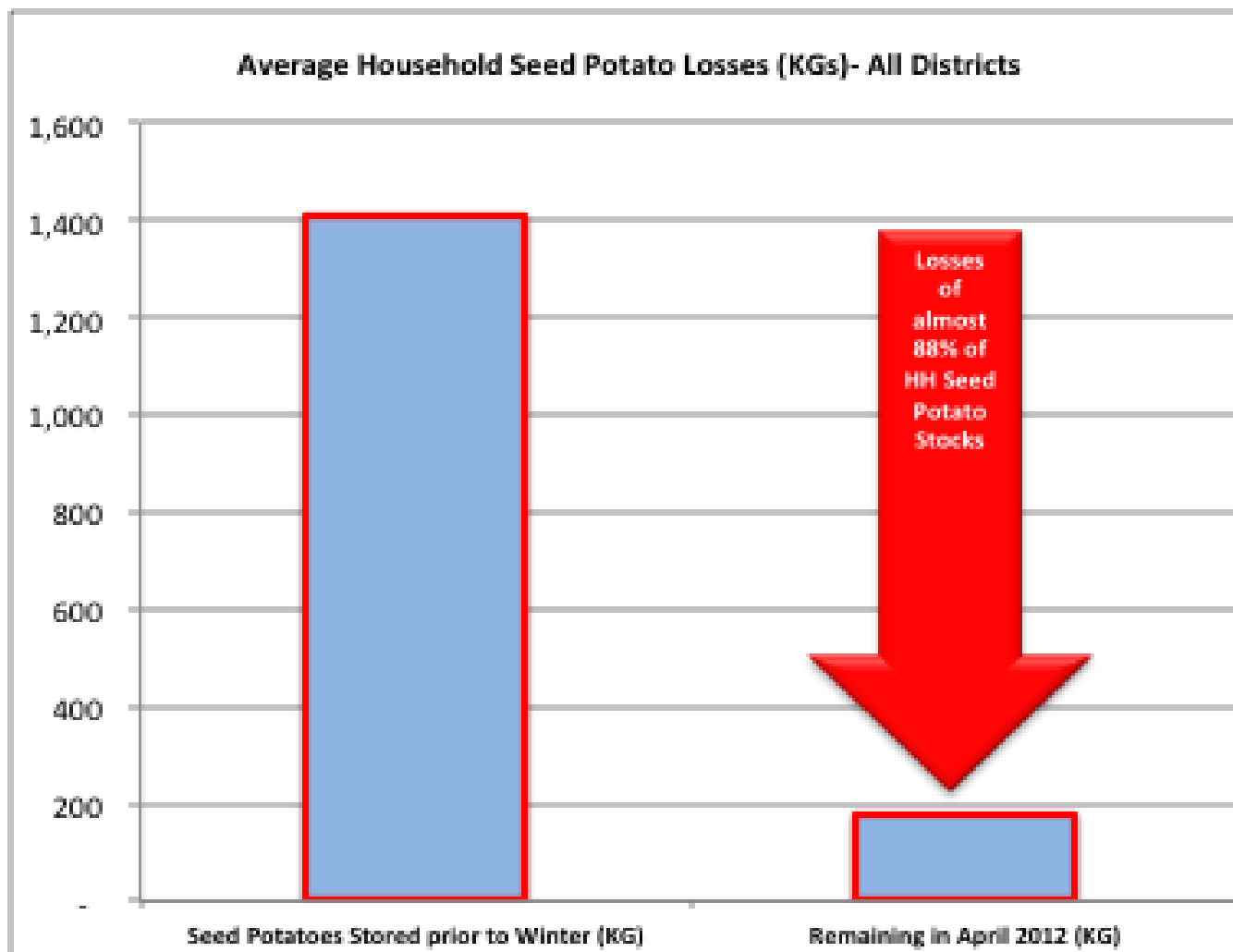
Methodology

- 136 households randomly selected by village across 5 districts (Nurobod, Rasht, Tavildara, Jirgato, Tojikobod).
- Jamoat selection included 6 in Rasht, 5 in Jirgato, 2 each in Nurobod and Tavildara.
- Jamoats and villages selected in consultation with local authorities to determine the most severely affected.
- Accessibility also impacted village selection.
- Lowland and Highland Villages selected.

Key Findings - Livelihoods

Livelihoods questions focused on key livelihoods for the region, namely potatoes and livestock.

Key Findings - Potatoes

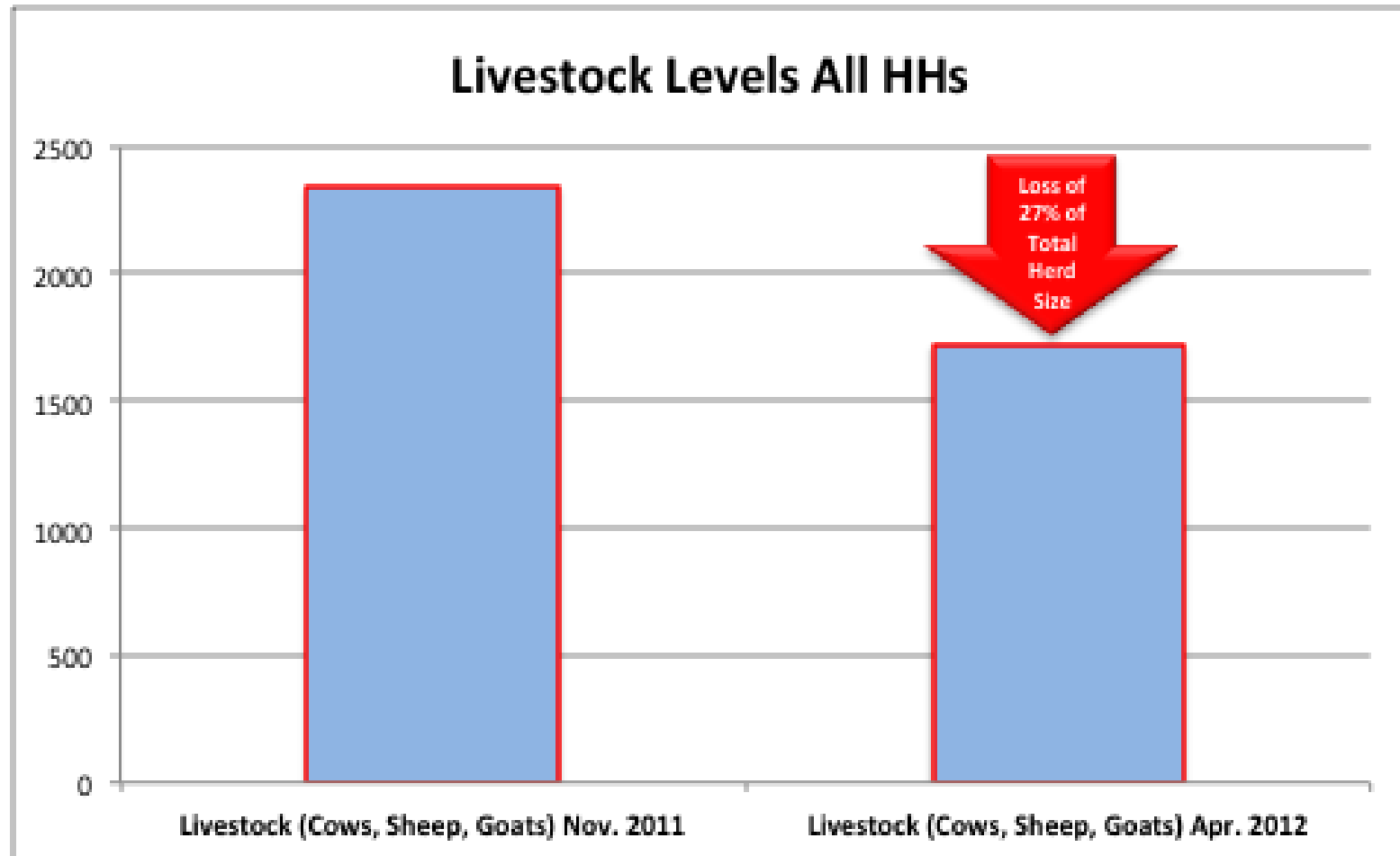


Key Findings - Potatoes

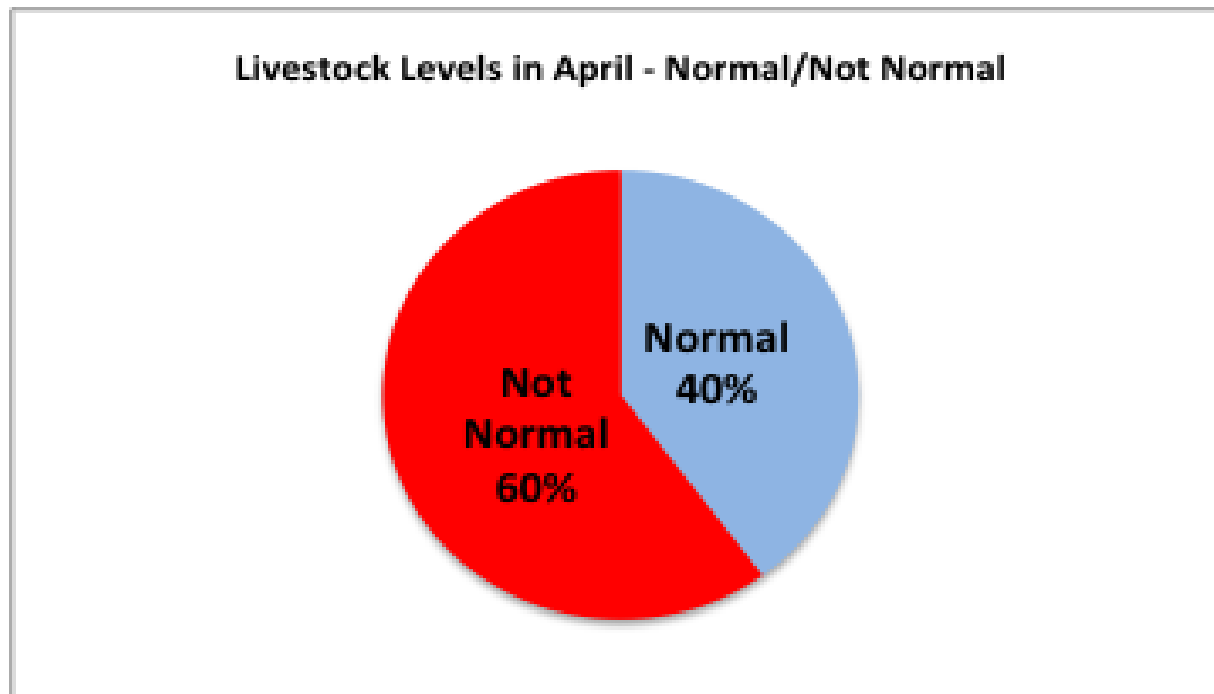
		Aggregate all Households		Average per Household		
		Total Seed Potato Stock in KGs (Nov. 2011)	Total Seed Potato Stock in KGs (Apr. 2012)	Nov. 2011	Apr. 2012	% Variance
Nr. Of HHs						
Nurobod	16	16,050	1,390	1,003	87	8.7%
Rasht	48	34,920	5,080	713	104	14.5%
Tojikobod	16	7,700	1,100	481	69	14.3%
Jirgatal	40	120,675	13,150	3,017	329	10.9%
Tavildara	16	13,400	3,650	838	228	27.2%
Total	136	192,745	24,370	1,407	178	12.6%

Reason for Reduction in Stocks	High	Medium	Low
Consumption	26%	64%	34%
Spoilage	47%	30%	48%
Sale	27%	6%	18%

Key Findings - Livestock



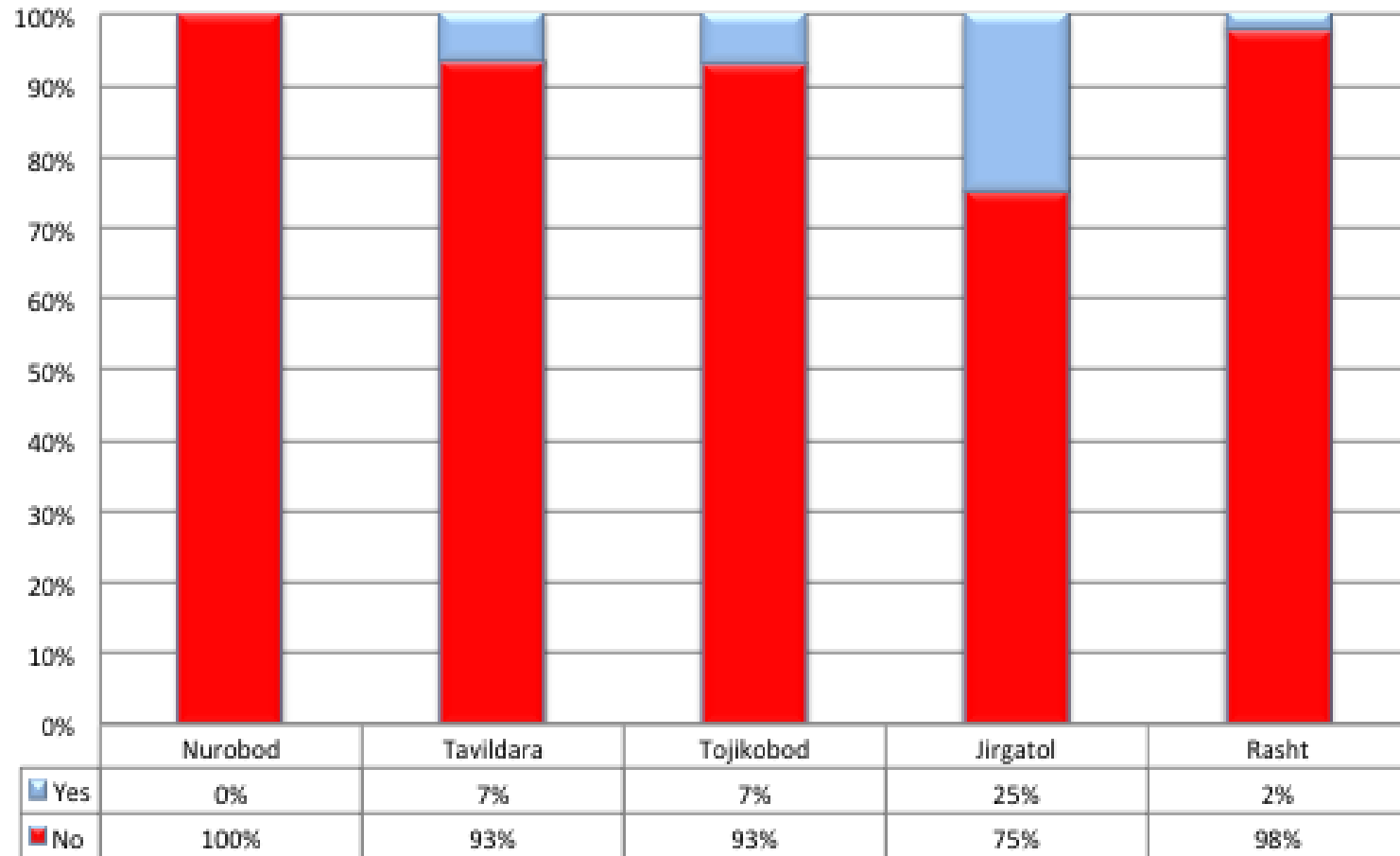
Key Findings - Livestock



Livestock losses were primarily attributed to lack of fodder, inability to send livestock to pasture on time (April/May instead of March/April), and the need to slaughter livestock to provide food for the household.

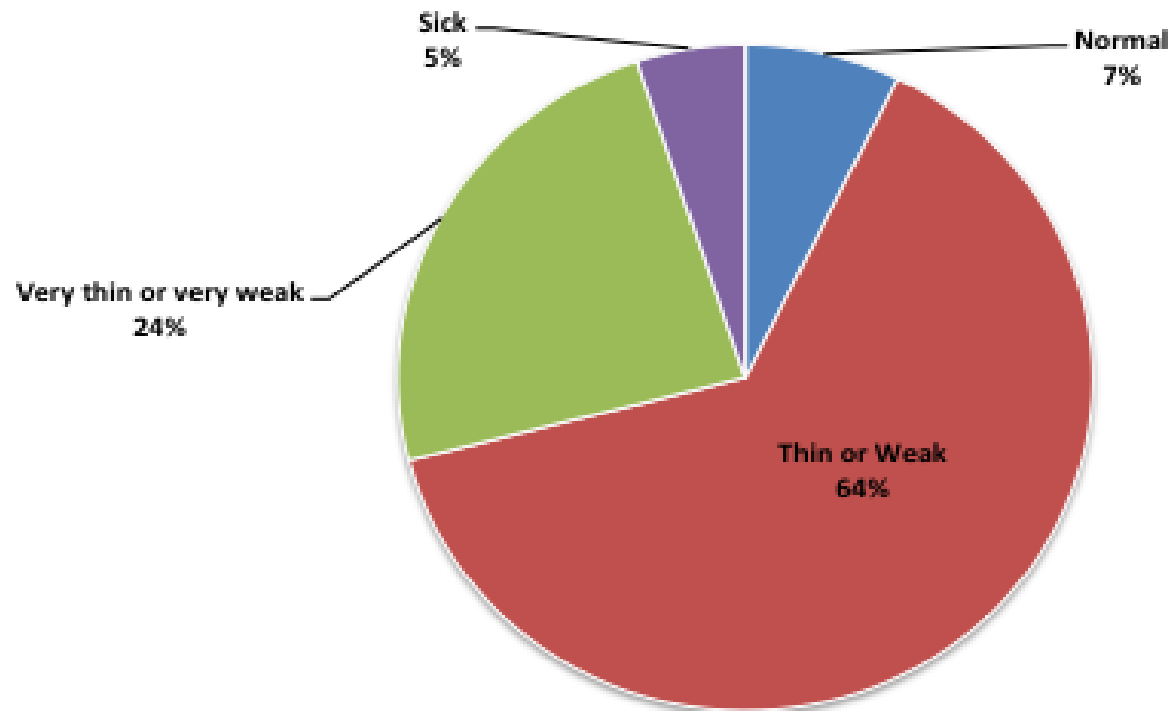
Key Findings - Livestock

Were you able to send your livestock to pasture at the usual time this year?



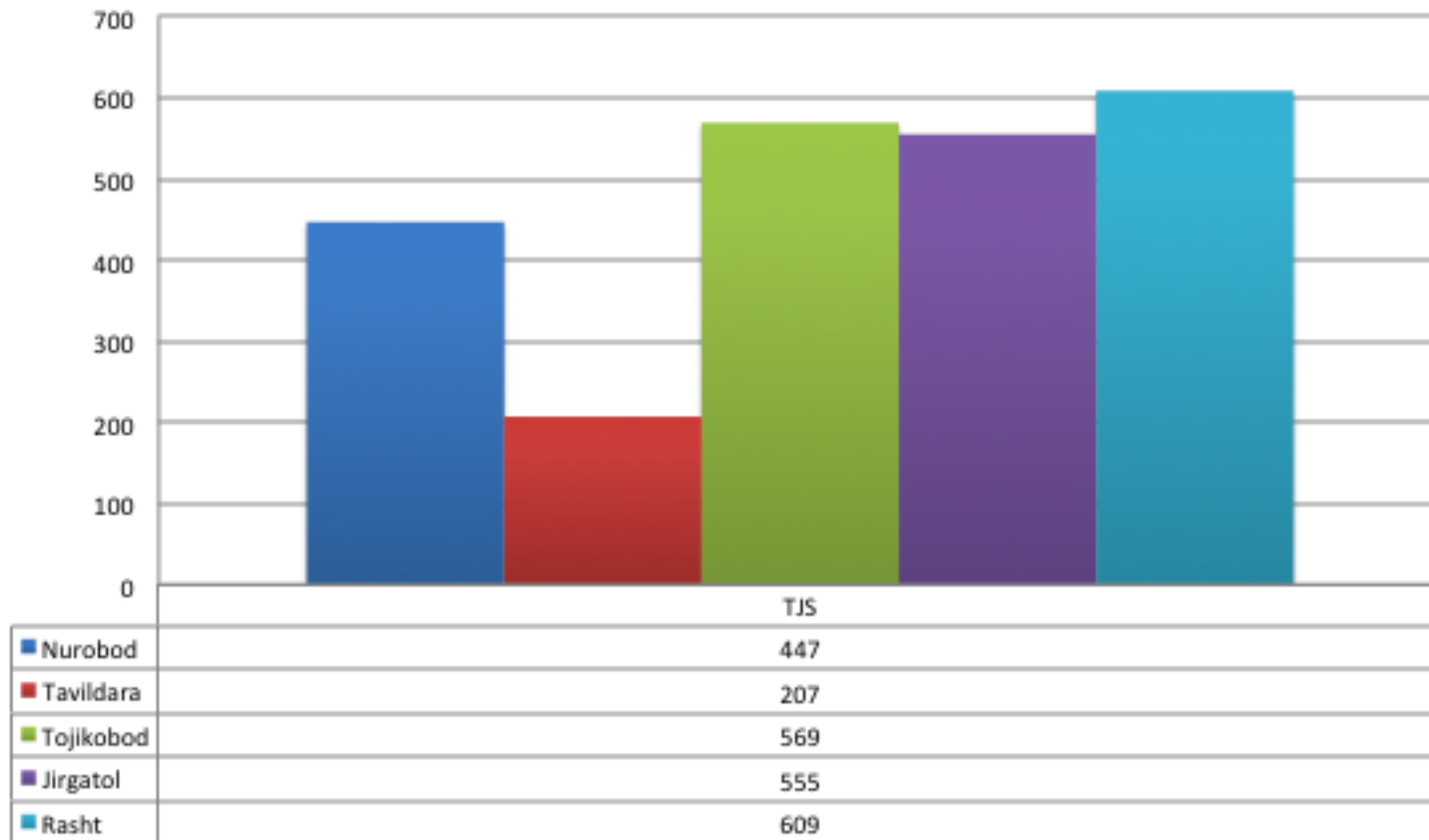
Key Findings - Livestock

**What is the general condition of your livestock now?
(Day of Interview)**



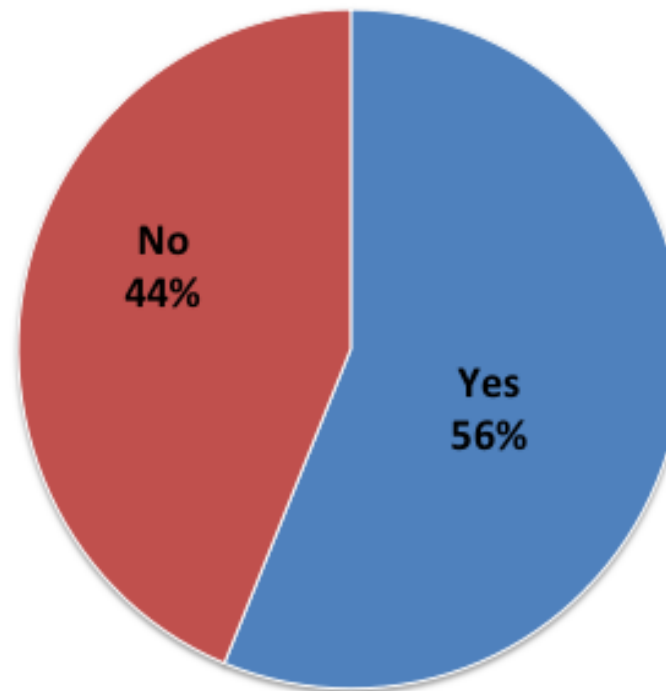
Key Findings – Prices

**Average Cooking Fuel Price Increase by District in TJS per Tonne
(Nov. 2011 - April 2012)**



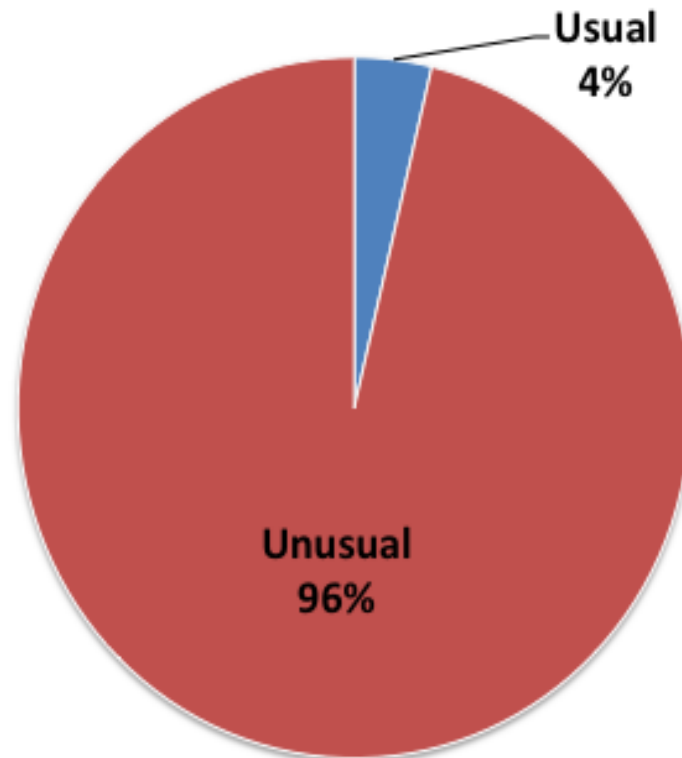
Key Findings – Debt

**In the past 3 months, have you borrowed (or borrowed money to buy)
Food, Cooking/Heating Fuel, or Petrol/Diesel?**



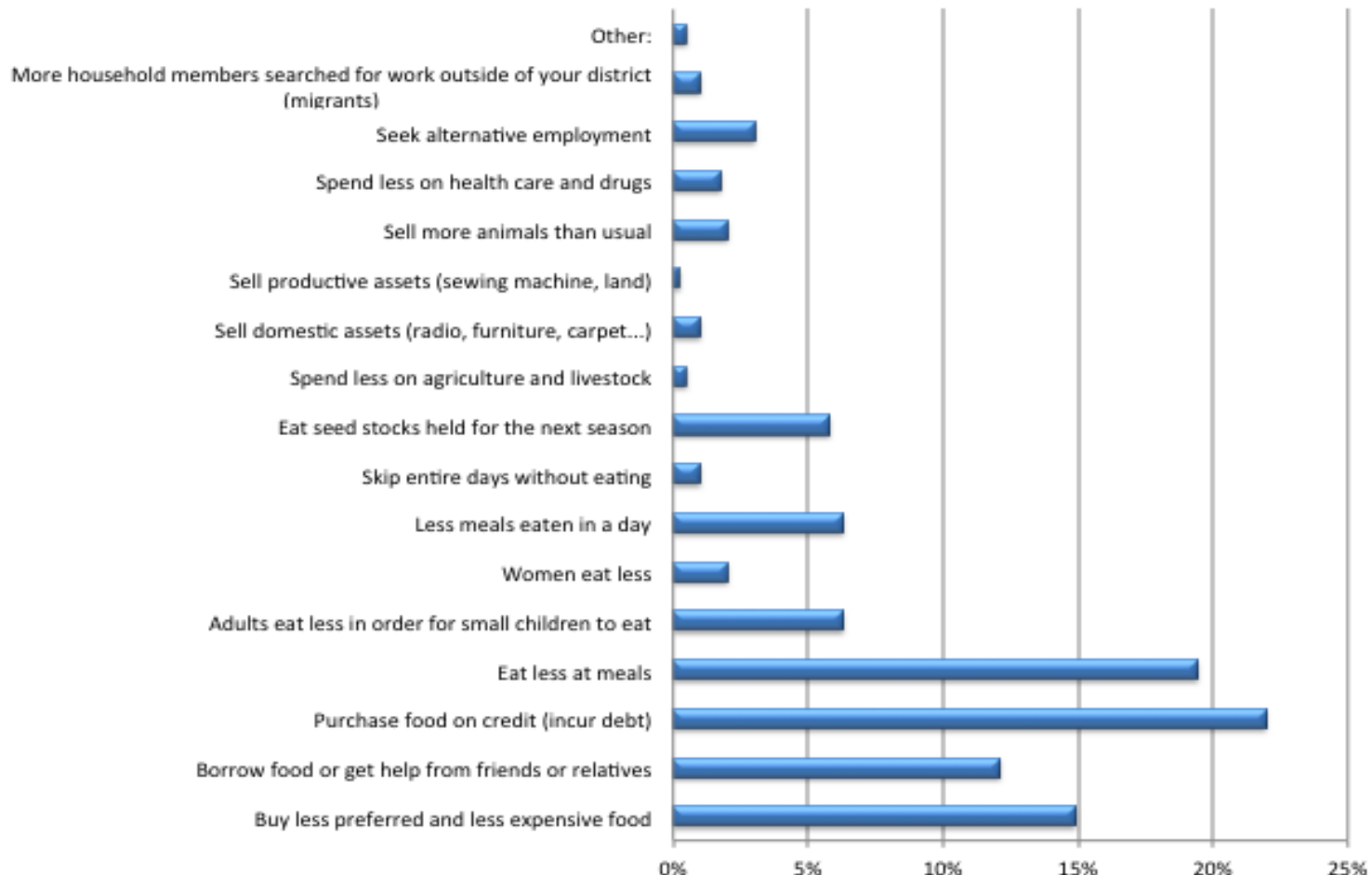
Key Findings – Debt

Was this level of Borrowing usual or unusual when compare to past winters?

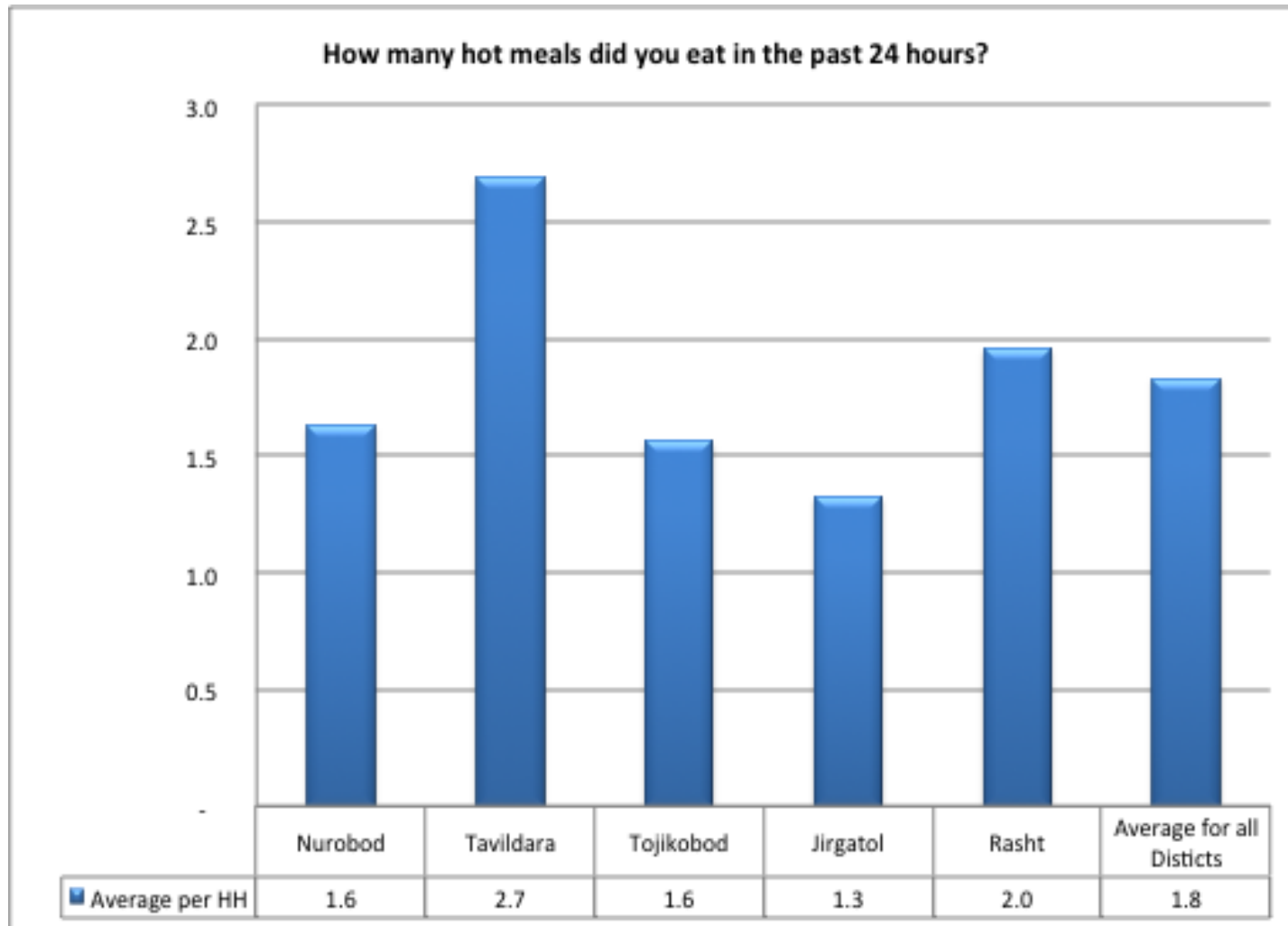


Key Findings – Food Security

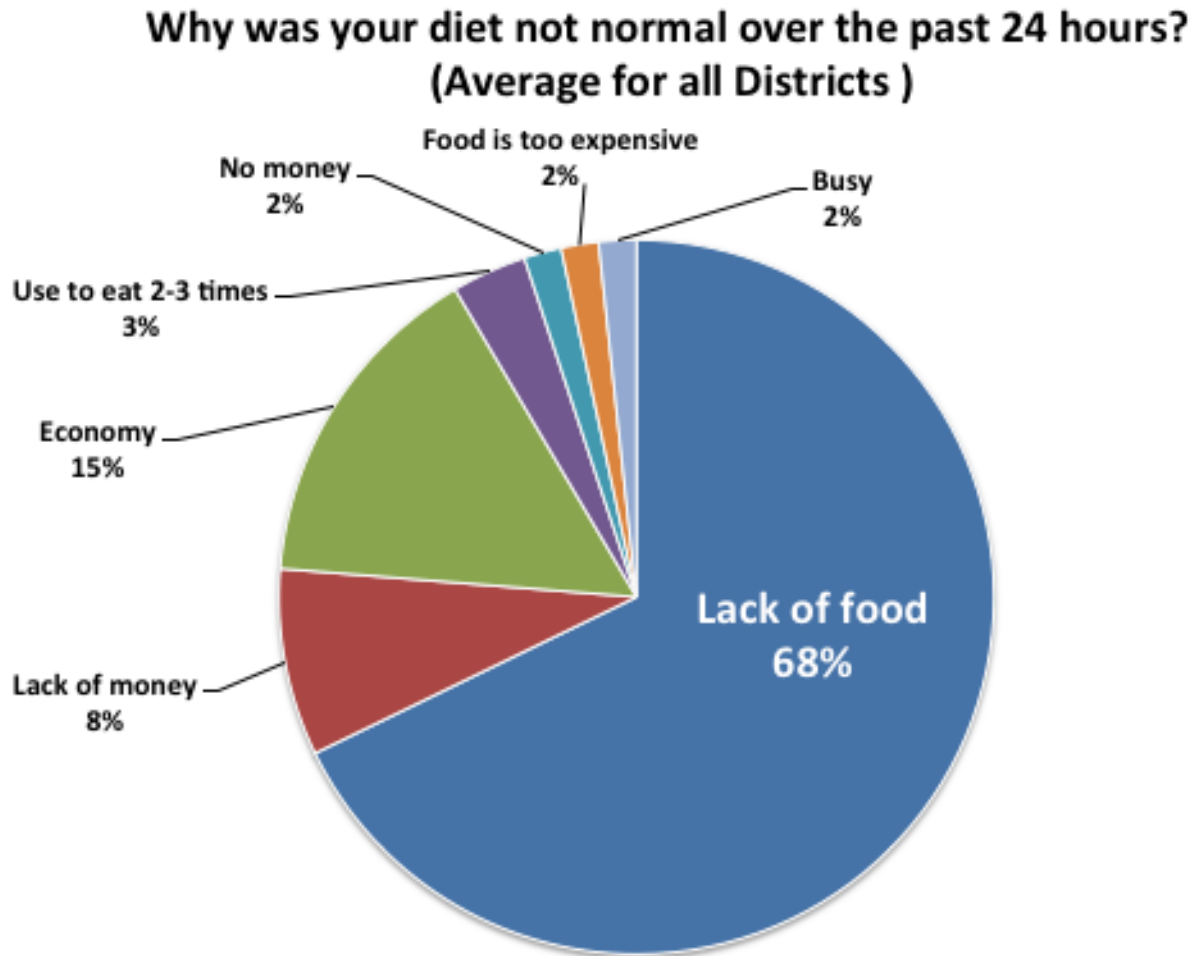
Did you family do anything different this year to cope with/address/deal with the shortage of foods or resources? (Average for all Districts)



Key Findings – Food Security



Key Findings – Food Security



Key Findings – Food Security

	Nurobod	Tavildara	Tojikobod	Jirgato	Rasht	Total
Average HDDS	5.19	8.69	4.63	5.43	5.98	5.88
HDDS 0-1	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.1%	2.2%
HDDS 2-4	43.8%	0.0%	43.8%	35.0%	22.4%	28.5%
HDDS 5-6	25.0%	6.3%	43.8%	37.5%	34.7%	32.1%
HDDS 7-9	25.0%	68.8%	12.5%	27.5%	24.5%	29.2%
HDDS 10-12	6.3%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	12.2%	8.0%

Conclusions

- Cumulative negative effect on livelihoods resiliency with seed potato losses possible;
- Lower income levels due to more money spent of purchasing fodder limits ability of households to properly prepare for planting season - in many cases more debt is taken on to cover shortfalls;
- Increased debt places further pressure on household budgets – may or may not be alleviated by increased remittances;
- Food insecurity remains a major challenge for many households in the region, and was exacerbated by the long winter (many areas are acutely food insecure);
- Chronic food insecurity will require sustained support rather than continued reliance on emergency programming.

Recommendations

- Emergency programming recommended to alleviate immediate food insecurity and support livelihoods recovery for the most vulnerable households;
- Direct cash transfers and targeted vouchers for food and asset replenishment would be most effective in allowing households to rapidly and flexibly cope with immediate food shortages and other needs;
- Targeted nutrition support activities should be implemented alongside any cash or voucher programming to ensure that increased childhood malnutrition due to acute food shortages is mitigated to the extent possible;
- Targeted livelihoods assistance should prioritize improved household potato storage support (training, voucher eligibility of materials, etc.) to help household better prepare for next winter and mitigate against further heavy losses of seed potatoes.

THANK YOU!