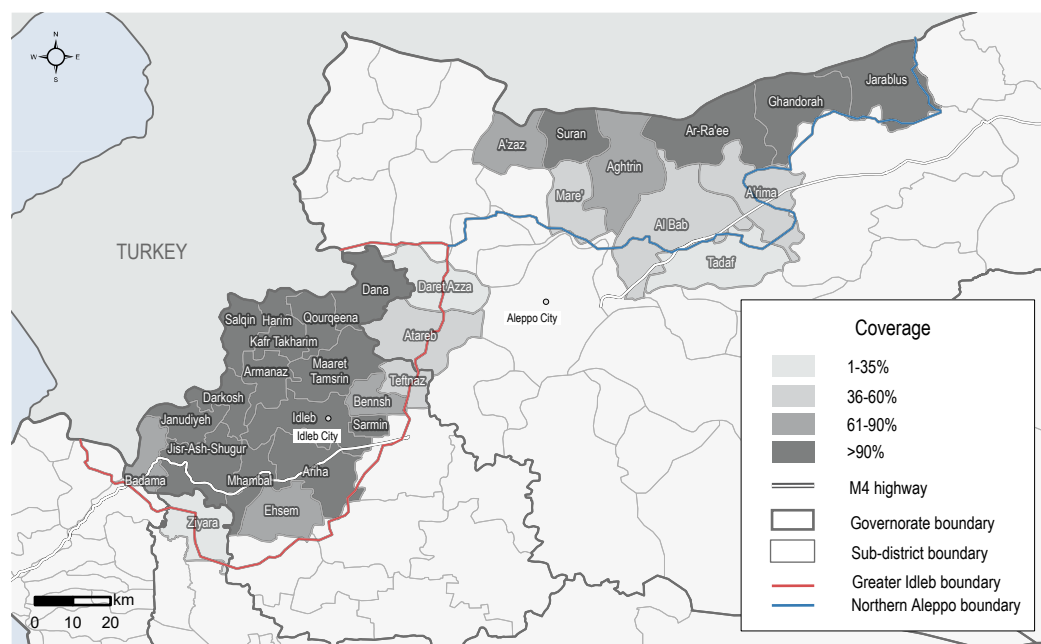


Introduction and Methodology

HSOS is a monthly assessment that provides comprehensive, multi-sectoral information about the humanitarian conditions and priority needs inside Syria. This factsheet presents a thematic review based on the HSOS assessment of the priority needs and humanitarian assistance, economic conditions, living conditions, access to basic services, COVID-19 situation, and security and protection situation in Northwest Syria. **Sector-specific indicator findings by location can be found on the [HSOS dashboard](#).**

The assessment is conducted using a key informant (KI) methodology at the community level. REACH enumerators are based inside Syria and interview three to six KIs per assessed location, either directly or remotely (via phone). KIs are chosen based on their community-level and sector-specific knowledge. This factsheet presents information gathered in **639 communities** across the greater Idlib area¹ (370 communities) and northern Aleppo area (269 communities). **Data was collected between 7-17 of February 2021 from 2,395 KIs** (18% female). Unless specified by an endnote, all indicators refer to the situation in the 30 days prior to data collection (January 2021/February 2021). Findings are indicative rather than representative, and should not be generalized across the population and region. Findings that are calculated based on a subset of the community are indicated by the following footnote ♦, with each subset specified in the endnotes.

The complete monthly HSOS dataset is available on the [REACH Resource Centre](#).



Key Highlights

Communities in Northwest Syria (NWS) were impacted by ongoing insecurity and conflict, the COVID-19 pandemic, and economic deterioration. Explosive hazards and criminal activity threatened the safety of many communities and disrupted daily life. The spread of COVID-19 challenged health and sanitation infrastructure and affected livelihoods. Finally, a seasonal increase in unemployment, fluctuating exchange rates, and low household purchasing power made winter items widely unaffordable.

- **Shelling, unexploded ordnance (UXO), and criminal activity posed protection risks to communities in Northwest Syria.** In the coverage period, shelling was reported in Idlib and northwestern Aleppo, leading to fatalities.^a On 27 January, the detonation of unexploded ordnance caused the death of a child near the community of Hayyan.^b Additionally, an increase in cases of kidnapping as well as general security issues impacted Afrin sub-district.^c In 14% of communities, shelling was selected as a protection risk for residents, with the number being slightly smaller for internally displaced persons (IDPs). In about 8% of communities, residents and IDPs were reportedly threatened by UXOs. In about 10% of communities, security concerns apparently prevented households from repairing shelters.

- **Cases of COVID-19 continued to be reported, and infrastructural issues and lack of medical supplies were key concerns.** As of 17 February, 21,072 infections had been registered in Northwest Syria.^d According to a January report from Save the Children, the number of positive tests reportedly quadrupled between 1 November and 31 December, leading to shortages of oxygen and hospital beds.^e REACH field teams confirmed that medical facilities in NWS struggled to provide sufficient masks and sterile equipment. Other sources report that communities are struggling to safely dispose of medical waste, and that sanitation workers are at risk of coming into contact with contaminated items.^f In 42% of communities, COVID-19 was perceived as a protection risk. While few communities indicated that livelihoods had been totally disrupted by the pandemic, trading was partially affected in nearly half of assessed locations.

- **Seasonal unemployment and the instability of the Syrian Pound made winterization needs unaffordable.** REACH field staff reported that high prices, unfavorable exchange rates, and a rise in unemployment among seasonal workers were obstacles to procuring basic goods and services. Staff also perceived a high unmet need for affordable electricity, heaters and fuel, and fire extinguishers. In January, a child died following a tent fire reportedly caused by unsafe heating materials.^g In a plurality of communities (36%), households could access electricity for 5-6 hours per day. Data suggested that winter items were unaffordable in more than 90% of assessed communities.

HSOS Dashboard

For a breakdown of sector-specific indicators by location, please see the [HSOS dashboard](#). The interactive HSOS dashboard provides a monthly sectoral overview of key indicators disaggregated at the sub-district and community level.



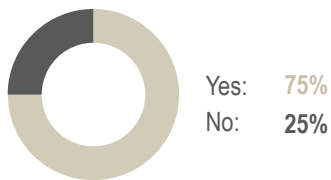
Priority Needs and Humanitarian Assistance



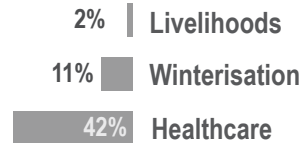
Most commonly reported **first, second, and third** and **overall** priority needs for Residents (by % of communities) ^{2,3}

	FIRST	SECOND	THIRD	OVERALL	
1	Healthcare	Winterisation	Livelihoods	Livelihoods	60%
2	Livelihoods	Food	Winterisation	Winterisation	48%
3	Food	NFIs	Infrastructure	Healthcare	39%

% of communities where any of the resident households were able to access humanitarian assistance



% of communities where KIs reported the presence of the following **types of assistance** for residents ⁴



Most commonly reported barriers that resident households faced in accessing humanitarian assistance (by % of communities) ^{4,†}

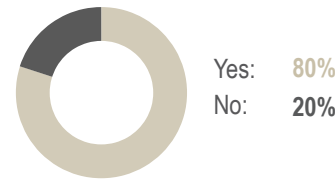
Communities reporting access to humanitarian assistance		Communities reporting no access to humanitarian assistance	
Assistance provided was insufficient to cover all people in need	72% 1	88%	No humanitarian assistance was available
Assistance provided was not relevant to all needs	61% 2	7%	Not aware if assistance was available
Quantity of assistance provided to households was insufficient	35% 3	4%	Distribution points were too far or the routes were inaccessible



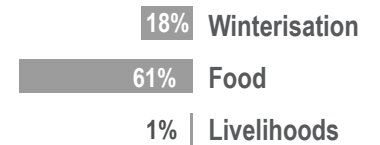
Most commonly reported **first, second, and third** and **overall** priority needs for IDPs (by % of communities) ^{2,3,g}

	FIRST	SECOND	THIRD	OVERALL	
1	Shelter	Food	Livelihoods	Winterisation	61%
2	Food	Winterisation	Winterisation	Food	56%
3	Winterisation	Livelihoods	NFIs	Livelihoods	56%

% of communities where any of the IDP households were able to access humanitarian assistance



% of communities where KIs reported the presence of the following **types of assistance** for IDPs ⁴



Most commonly reported barriers that IDP households faced in accessing humanitarian assistance (by % of communities) ^{4,†}

Communities reporting access to humanitarian assistance		Communities reporting no access to humanitarian assistance	
Assistance provided was insufficient to cover all people in need	71% 1	87%	No humanitarian assistance was available
Assistance provided was not relevant to all needs	61% 2	9%	Not aware if assistance was available
Quantity of assistance provided to households was insufficient	40% 3	4%	Distribution points were too far or the routes were inaccessible

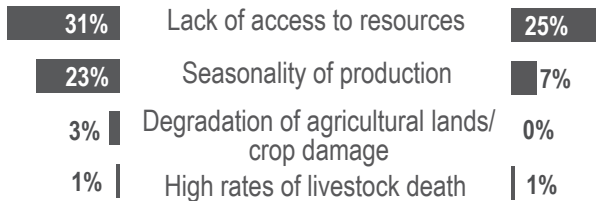


Economic Conditions

Region	Estimated median monthly household expense for water for a household of six ^{5,6}			Estimated median monthly rent price for a two bedroom apartment ^{5,6}			Estimated median daily wage for unskilled labour ^{5,7,8}		
	SYP	TRY	USD	SYP	TRY	USD	SYP	TRY	USD
Northwest Syria	16,667 SYP			41,667 SYP			5,500 SYP		
Greater Idleb area	18,750 SYP			52,083 SYP			6,250 SYP		
Northern Aleppo	15,000 SYP			30,000 SYP			5,000 SYP		
% of communities where indicator was reported in following currencies *	45%	55%	0%	37%	47%	16%	43%	57%	0%

% of communities where barriers to accessing income from agriculture to meet basic needs were reported ⁴

Residents



IDPs

90% and 95%

% of communities where KIs reported daily waged labour as a common source of income for **residents** and IDPs

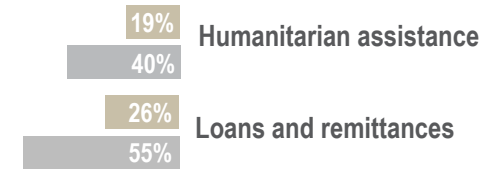
63 days

Number of days the average day labourer would need to work to earn the monthly cost of basic SMEB items ^{5,9}

93% and 53%

% of communities where KIs reported the **insufficient income of households** and general lack of employment opportunities as barriers to meeting basic needs ⁸

% of communities where KIs reported the presence of **residents** and IDP households relying on non-productive sources of livelihoods to meet their basic needs ⁴



Intersectoral findings on **unaffordability** hindering access to goods and services



KIs in **72%** of communities cited that **rent prices** were unaffordable for the majority of people



KIs in **68%** of communities cited the high cost of **fuel for generators** as a common challenge



KIs in **56%** of communities cited the high cost of **water trucking** as a common challenge



KIs in **82%** of communities cited the high cost of **food** as a common challenge ⁸



KIs in **46%** of communities cited the high cost of **health services** as a common challenge



KIs in **30%** of communities cited the high cost of a **private tutor** as a common challenge ⁸

% of communities where common livelihood sources from agriculture were reported ⁴

Livelihood source	Residents	IDPs
Food from crop production	66%	14%
Cash from crop production	59%	4%
Livestock products	64%	54%
Sale of livestock	22%	31%



Living Conditions

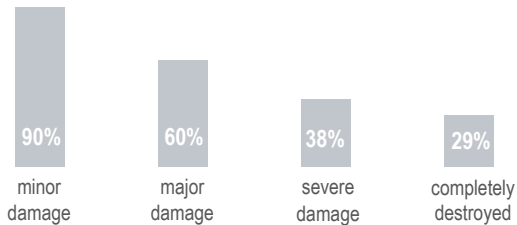


A lack of bathing facilities was reported as a shelter issue for IDPs in **14%** of communities



A lack of toilets was reported as a shelter issue for IDPs in **20%** of communities

Reported presence of occupied shelters with damage across communities where damages reported ^{5,10}



In **93%** of communities reportedly at least **80%** of the resident population owned their shelter

In **67%** of communities reportedly none of the IDP households owned their shelter

In **17%** of communities at least one fifth of the IDP population reportedly lived in unfinished or abandoned residential buildings

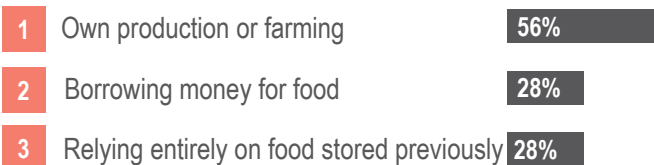
In **33%** of communities at least one fifth of the IDP population reportedly lived in tents



95% % of communities where KIs reported that households experienced barriers to accessing sufficient food ⁸

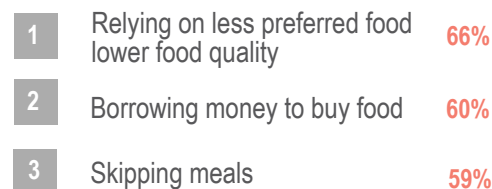
In **23%** of these communities, KIs reported that the unavailability of certain food items was a challenge to accessing sufficient food ⁸

Commonly reported **sources of food** for households other than markets (by % of communities) ⁴



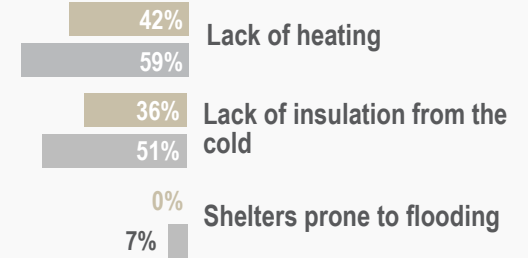
High price of suitable foods formula was the most commonly reported challenge to feeding young children (reported by KIs in **89%** of communities) ¹²

Most commonly reported coping strategies for a lack of food (by % of communities) ⁴

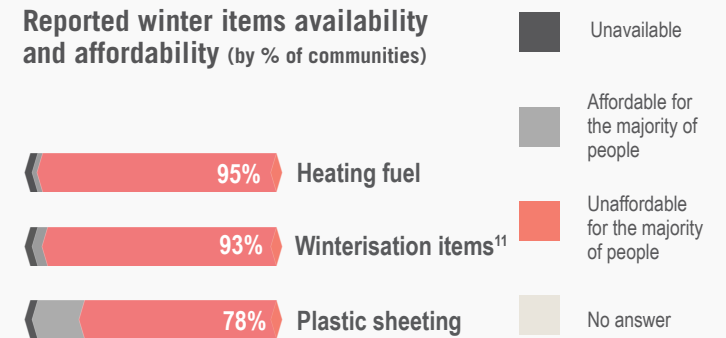


Winter-related findings

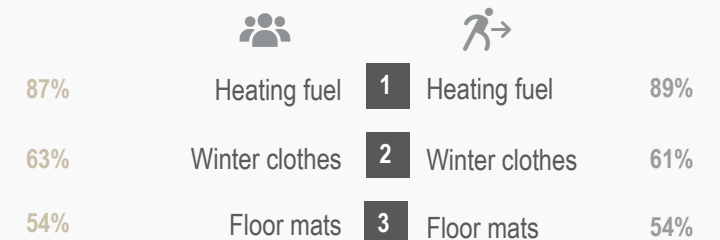
% of communities where winter-related shelter inadequacies for residents and IDPs were reported

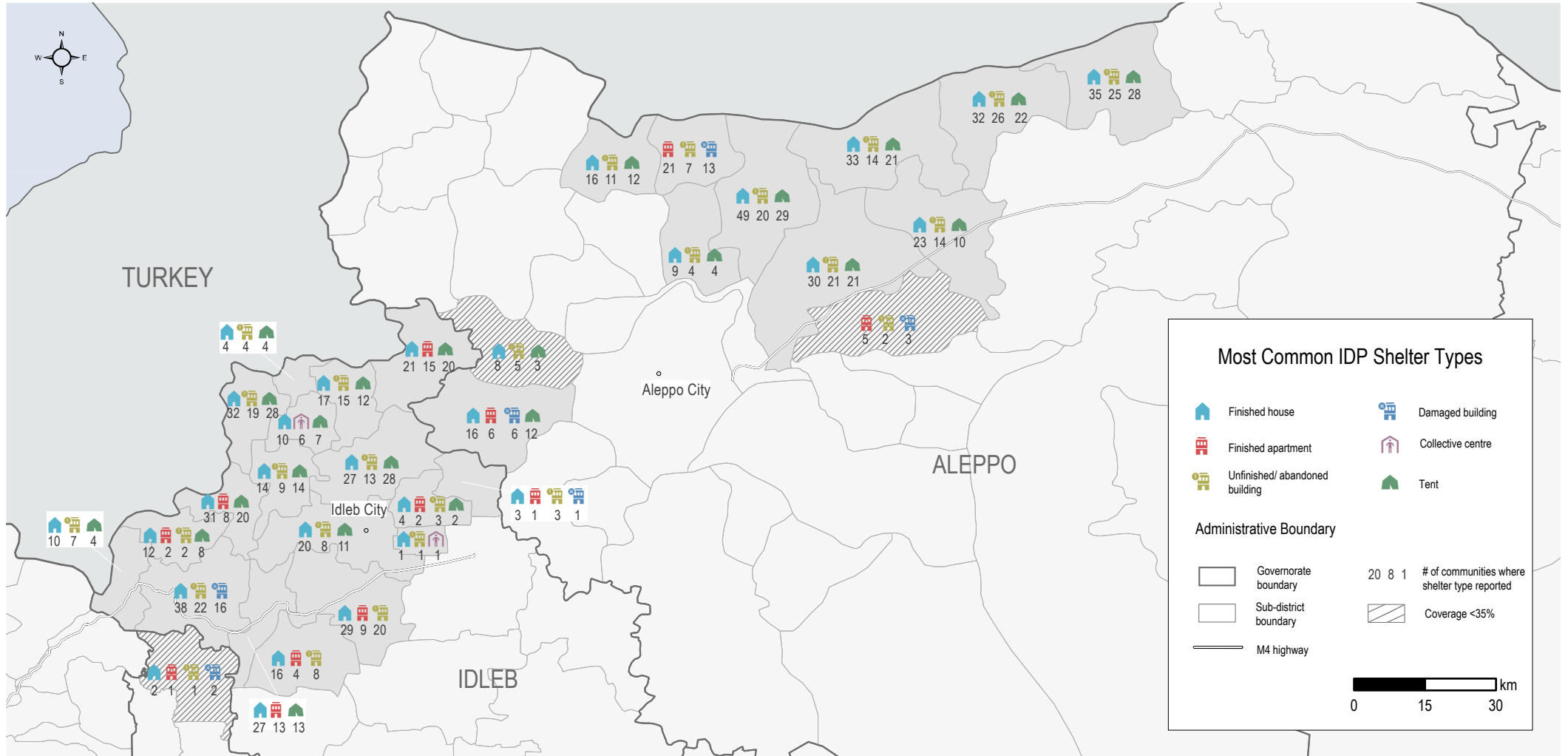


Reported winter items availability and affordability (by % of communities)



Top three most commonly reported winterisation needs for residents and IDPs (by % of communities)





Common IDP Shelter Types by Sub-District

Note on the map

This map shows the three most common shelter types for IDPs by sub-district. In cases where more than three types were equally represented, the four most common were selected. Solid finished house was the most common shelter type overall, and there was no obvious spatial pattern when comparing Idleb and Aleppo.



Access to Basic Services



Access to Electricity

5-6 hrs per day

was the most commonly reported range for hours of electricity accessible to households (reported by KIs in 36% of communities)

Solar panels

was the most commonly reported main source of electricity (reported by KIs in 43% of communities)

53%

% of communities where KIs reported the main network is partially or completely not functioning as a barrier for electricity access [†]



Access to Water

69%

% of communities where KIs reported that not all households had access to sufficient water



7 days	1%
5-6 days	3%
3-4 days	5%
1-2 days	42%
0 days	49%

Days per week water from the network was available (by % of 473 communities connected to a water network) [†]

Private water trucking

was the most commonly reported source of drinking water (reported by KIs in 39% of communities)

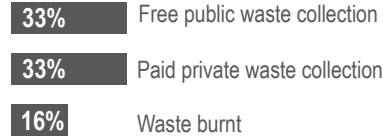


Access to Sanitation

44%

% of communities where KIs reported that no sewage system was present

Most commonly reported ways people disposed of solid waste (by % of communities)



39%

% of communities where KIs reported waste removal services as a WASH[†] priority need ⁸



Access to Markets

23%

% of communities in which households reportedly were unable to access markets in the assessed location

Not enough consumers to support markets in the assessed location

was the most commonly reported reason for why markets were not functioning (reported by KIs in 71% of communities where households were unable to access markets in their own location)

69%

% of communities where KIs reported that the lack of transportation to markets was a barrier to physically accessing food markets

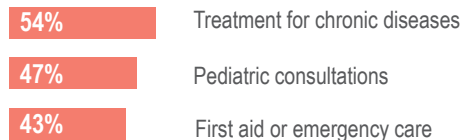


Access to Health Services

51%

% of communities where KIs reported that the households did not have access to health services in the assessed location

Most commonly reported health priority needs (by % of communities) ⁸



Going to the pharmacy instead of a clinic

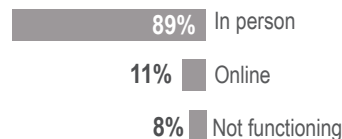
was the most commonly reported coping strategy for a lack of healthcare (reported by KIs in 89% of communities)



Access to Education Services

39%
63%

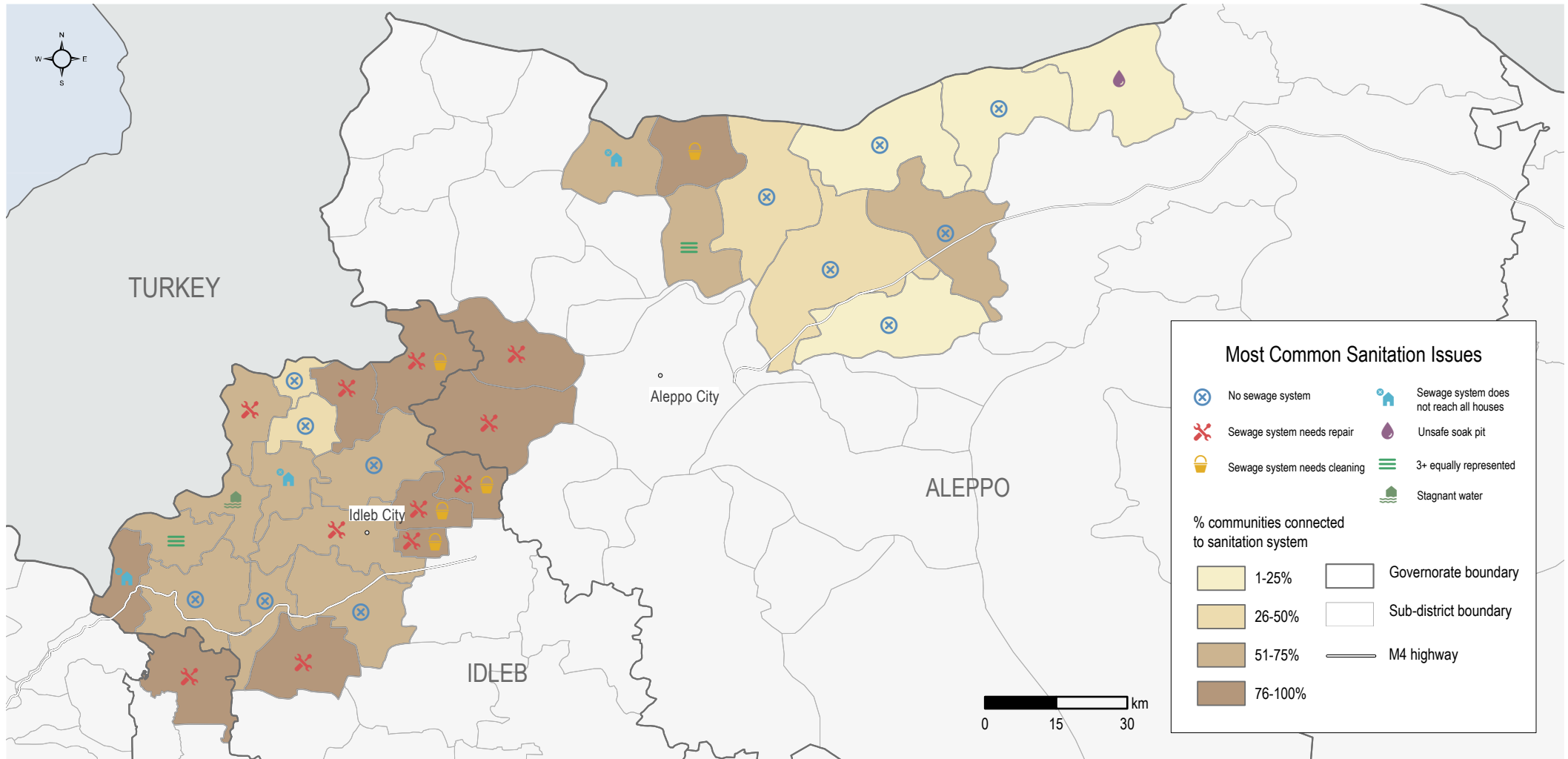
% of communities in which half or less of the school aged children accessed school in the last 30 days for residents and IDPs



% of communities where KIs reported on the functioning of education services in the assessed location ⁴

22%

% of communities where KIs reported that the lack of access to internet, electricity and/or equipment was a barrier to accessing (online) education services ⁸



Most Common Sanitation Issues

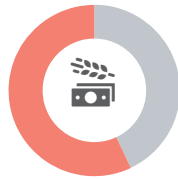
Note on the map

This map shows the most commonly reported sanitation issues by sub-district, along with connectivity to a sanitation system. In cases where the top two issues were reported by the same number of communities, both are shown. No sewage system and sewage system needs repair were the most prevalent issues.



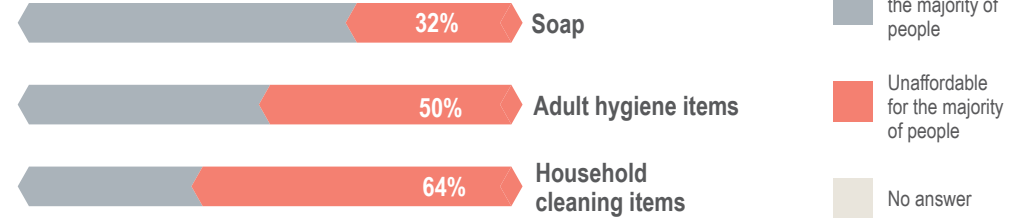
COVID-19

Effects of COVID-19 on livelihoods sectors in the community (by % of communities)

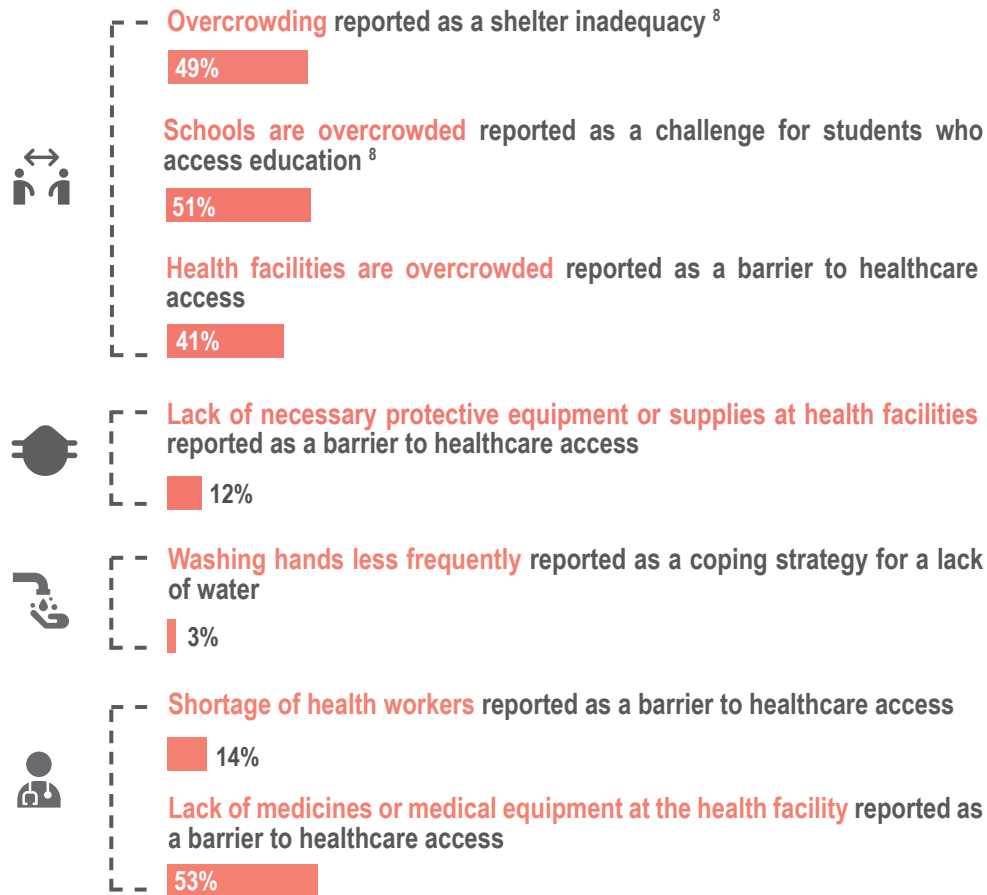


None of the available livelihood sectors were affected 43%
At least one of the available livelihood sectors was partially or totally affected 57%

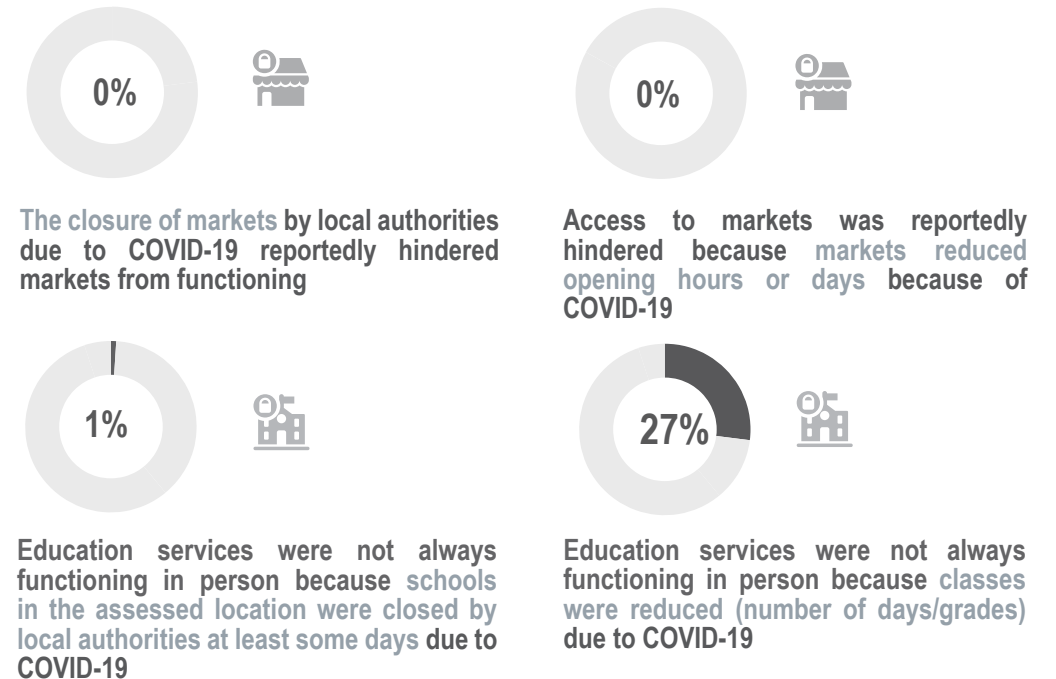
Reported hygiene item availability and affordability (by % of communities) ¹³



% of communities where COVID-19 risk indicators were reported



% of communities where COVID-19 related barriers to access to services were reported





Security and Protection

Intersectoral findings on security



General safety and security concerns restricting movement to markets was reported as barrier to market access in **7%** of communities

General safety and security concerns at markets was a reported barrier to market access in **17%** of communities

Markets not opening because of security issues was a reported barrier to markets not functioning in **3%** of communities



Threat from airstrikes was reported as a protection risk in **109 communities**⁸

Threat from shelling, sniper or gunfire was reported as a protection risk in **98 communities**⁸

Threat from improvised explosive devices (IEDs), mines or unexploded ordnances was reported as a protection risk in **94 communities**⁸

Fear from imminent conflict was reported as a protection risk in **64 communities**⁸



The inability to lock homes securely was reported as a shelter inadequacy in **40%** of communities⁸

Lack of lighting around the shelter was reported as a shelter inadequacy in **87%** of communities⁸

The security situation was reported as a barrier to shelter repairs in **11%** of communities



General safety and security concerns at the health facility was reported as a barrier to healthcare in **7%** of communities

Most commonly reported protection priority needs

(by % of communities)^{3,8}

- 1 **80%** Special assistance for vulnerable groups
- 2 **49%** Psychosocial support
- 3 **47%** Specialised child protection services



% of communities where the lack of civil documentation for residents and IDPs was reported

- 35%** Lack or loss of civil documentation as a protection risk
- 41%** Lack of personal documentation required to enrol in school as a barrier to education access
- 9%**
- 16%**

% of communities where extreme coping strategies used by residents and IDPs to meet basic needs were reported⁴

Residents

- 40%** Early marriage
- 3%** Forced marriage
- 7%** High risk work
- 1%** Sending family members to beg
- 74%** Sending children (15 or below) to work

IDPs

- 50%**
- 4%**
- 10%**
- 3%**
- 83%**

Age, Gender, and Diversity

KIs in **55%** of communities reported a lack of employment opportunities for women as a barrier to meeting basic needs⁸

KIs in **47%** of communities reported a lack of employment opportunities for persons with a disability as a barrier to meeting basic needs⁸

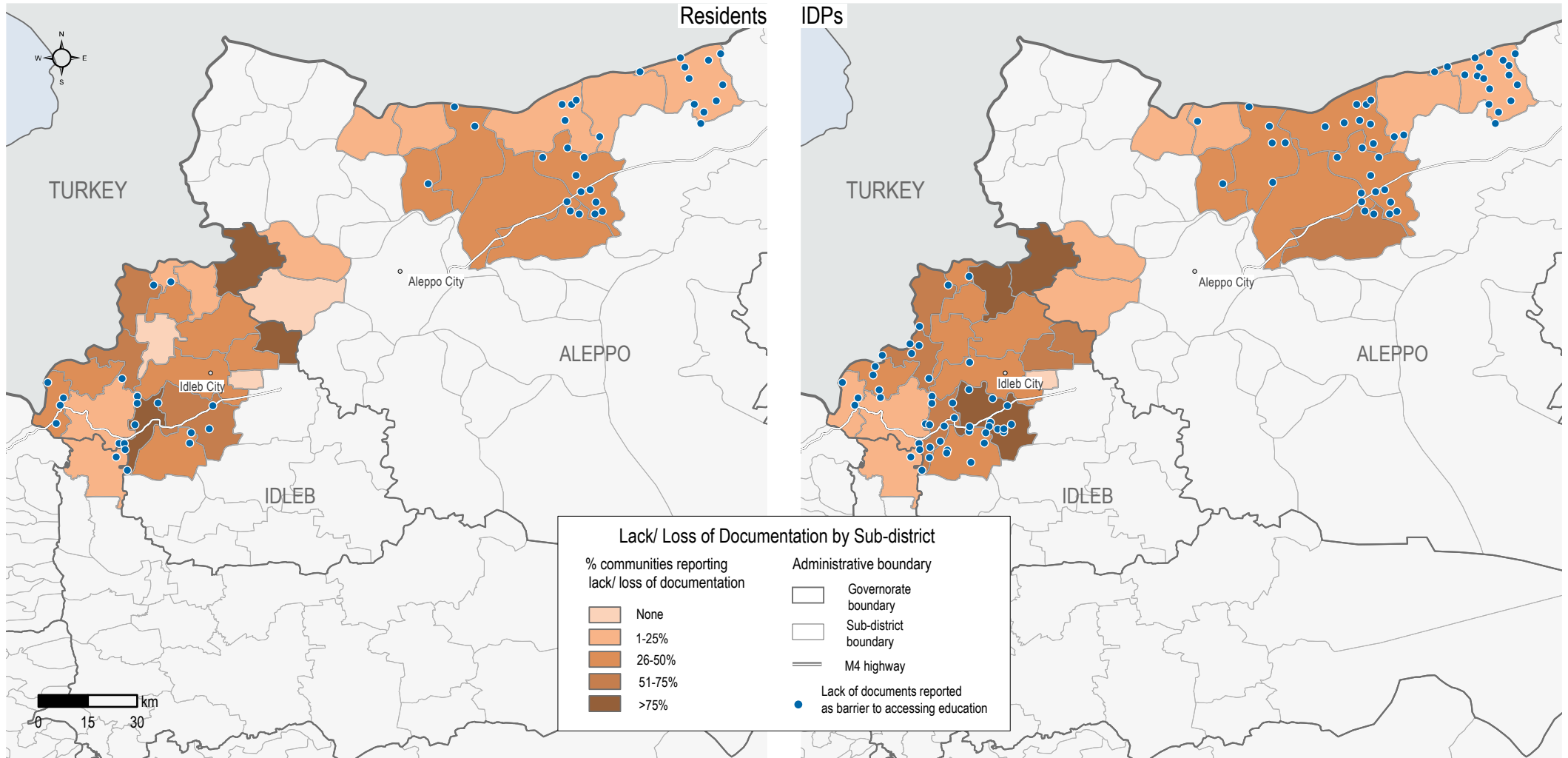
KIs in **20%** of communities reported a lack of privacy for women and girls at health facilities as a barrier to healthcare access

KIs in **45%** of communities reported a lack of market access for people with restricted mobility

Child labour and early marriage were reported to prevent children from going to school in **81%** and **45%** of communities⁸

Children below the age of 12 were reported as a group affected by child labour in **17%** of communities⁸

Hazardous child labour was reported as a protection risk in **9%** of communities⁸



Lack/ Loss of Civil Documentation and Education Access

Note on the map

These maps show the percentage of communities reporting lack/ loss of civil documentation as a protection risk. The blue dots represent communities where lack of documents was reported as a barrier to accessing education. This barrier was more often reported for IDPs.

Endnotes

1. The greater Idleb area includes Idlib governorate, parts of Aleppo western countryside, and parts of Hama northwestern countryside controlled by armed opposition groups (AOGs).
2. KIs were asked to select a first, second, and third highest priority needs in their communities. The ranking shows the sectors most frequently chosen as either first, second or third highest priority. The overall priority need refers to the frequency a sector was selected across all three categories (first, second or third highest priority).
3. KIs could select three answers, thus findings might exceed 100%.
4. KIs could select multiple answers, thus findings might exceed 100%.
5. KIs were asked about the situation currently, instead of the last 30 days.
6. KIs had the option to select the price in United States Dollars (USD), Turkish Lira (TRY), or Syrian Pounds (SYP). When the price was not reported in SYP, the NWS **REACH Market Monitoring**¹ exchange rate was used to calculate the amount in SYP. According to the NWS REACH Market Monitoring February 2021, 1 USD = 3,000 SYP; 1TRY= 420 SYP.
7. According to the NWS **REACH Market Monitoring** February 2021, 1 USD = 3,000 SYP.
8. Findings for residents and IDPs were merged. The merge was calculated as follows: (option was selected for either residents or IDPs) / (communities reporting challenges/barriers/coping strategies for either residents or IDPs).
9. According to the NWS **REACH Market Monitoring** February 2021, the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) = 348,347 SYP.
10. Minor damage (cracks in walls, leaking roof, need of new doors and window repairs, etc.); Major damage (buildings with extensive damage to window frames and doors, but no structural damage to columns, slabs, or loadbearing walls); Severe damage (buildings with significant structural damage to column slabs, or loadbearing walls, cracking, steel elements and deformations visible in concrete; the building would require extensive repairs); Completely destroyed (buildings with structural damage so significant that rehabilitation is not possible).
11. Winterisation items include: winter clothes, winter shoes, and winter blanket.
12. KIs were asked about the situation in the last two months, instead of the last 30 days.
13. Adult hygiene items include: shampoo, toothbrush, and toothpaste. Household cleaning items include: washing powder, liquid, and dish detergent.

◆ By number of communities where KIs reported the relevant indicator for the relevant population group(s)

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Subset</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Subset</i>
<i>N.o of communities reporting on:</i>		<i>N.o of communities reporting on:</i>	
Residents	632	Currency used for paying water	597
IDPs	609	Currency used for paying rent	481
Challenges to assistance access (resident)	457	Currency in which wages are paid (merge)	566
Barriers to assistance access (resident)	156	Barriers to accessing sufficient food (merge)	609
Challenges to assistance access (IDPs)	470	Days when water is available from network	473
Barriers to assistance access (IDPs)	123	Barriers to markets functioning	150

- a. Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (January 2021). Ceasefire violations. Retrieved from <https://www.syriahr.com>.
- b. Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (January 2021). Old ordnance. Retrieved from <https://www.syriahr.com>.
- c. Syrian Observer (January 2021). Security Chaos in Afrin. Retrieved from <https://syrianobserver.com>.
- d. OCHA (February 2021). Syrian Arab Republic: COVID-19 Response Update No. 15. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>.
- e. Save the Children (January 2021). North West Syria: Shortages of oxygen, water as coronavirus cases quadruple in two months. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>.
- f. Syria Direct (January 2021). Getting rid of COVID-19 waste. Retrieved from <https://syriadirect.org>.
- g. Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (January 2021). Camp fire claims the life of child. Retrieved from <https://www.syriahr.com>.

About REACH

REACH facilitates the development of information tools and products that enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery and development contexts. The methodologies used by REACH include primary data collection and in-depth analysis, and all activities are conducted through inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. REACH is a joint initiative of IMPACT Initiatives, ACTED and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research - Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNITAR-UNOSAT). For more information please visit our website: www.reach-initiative.org. You can contact us directly at: geneva@reach-initiative.org.