

Northwest Syria | Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI)

1-7 September 2024

MARKET OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

To facilitate humanitarian cash programming, the Northwest of Syria Cash Working Group (NWS CWG), in collaboration with local and international NGOs, carries out a monthly Joint Market Monitoring Initiative in Northern Syria. This initiative assesses the availability and prices of basic commodities typically sold in markets and consumed by the average Syrian household. These include food, water, and non-food items such as fuel, shelter and clothing items.

Among these, 18 components (measured by 24 items) form the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB), which signifies the minimum culturally adjusted items necessary to sustain a household of six individuals for a month.

8	Participating agencies
3	Assessed governorates
10	Assessed districts
36	Assessed sub-districts
92	Assessed communities
2632	Shops surveyed

KEY INDICATORS

Cost of SMEB

4,838 TRY +5% ▲
142 USD -0.02% ▼

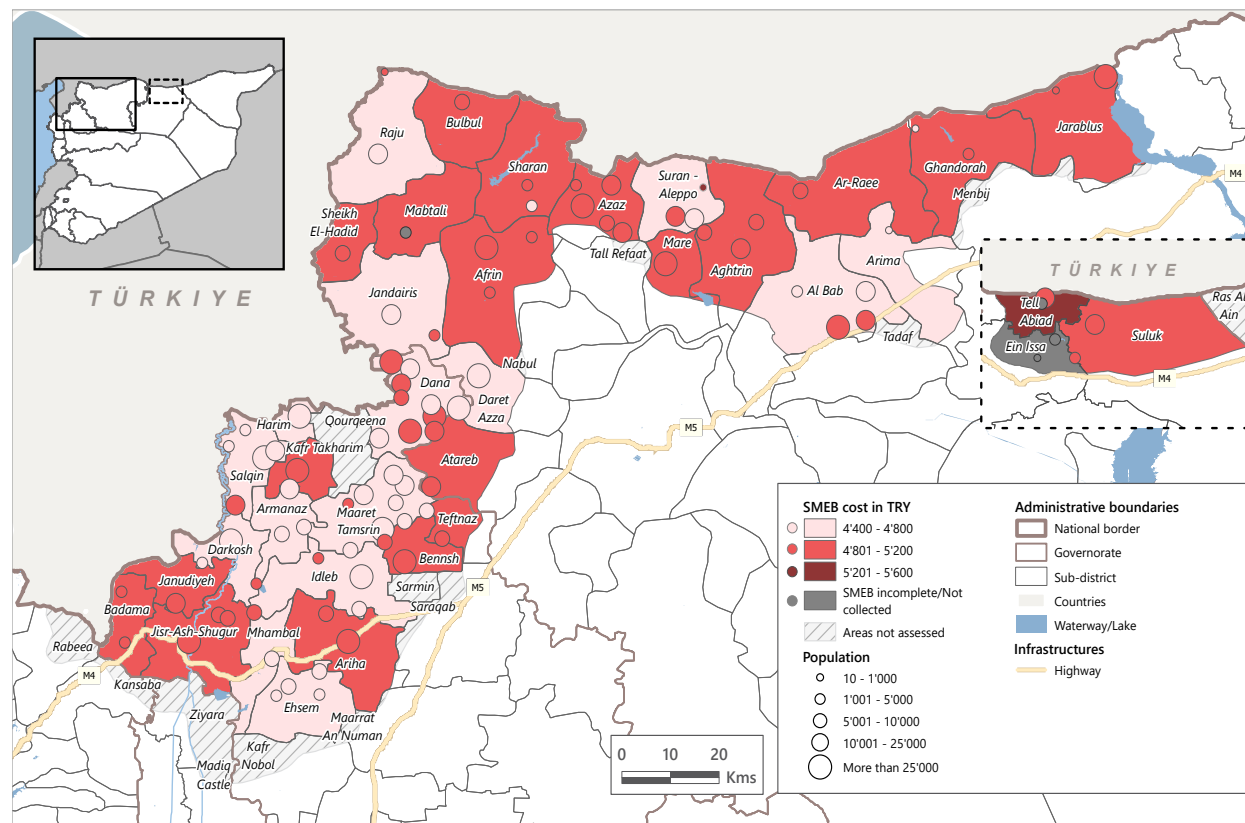
Cost of SMEB Food

3,567 TRY +6% ▲
105 USD 0%

USD/TRY

informal exchange rate
34 TRY +6% ▲

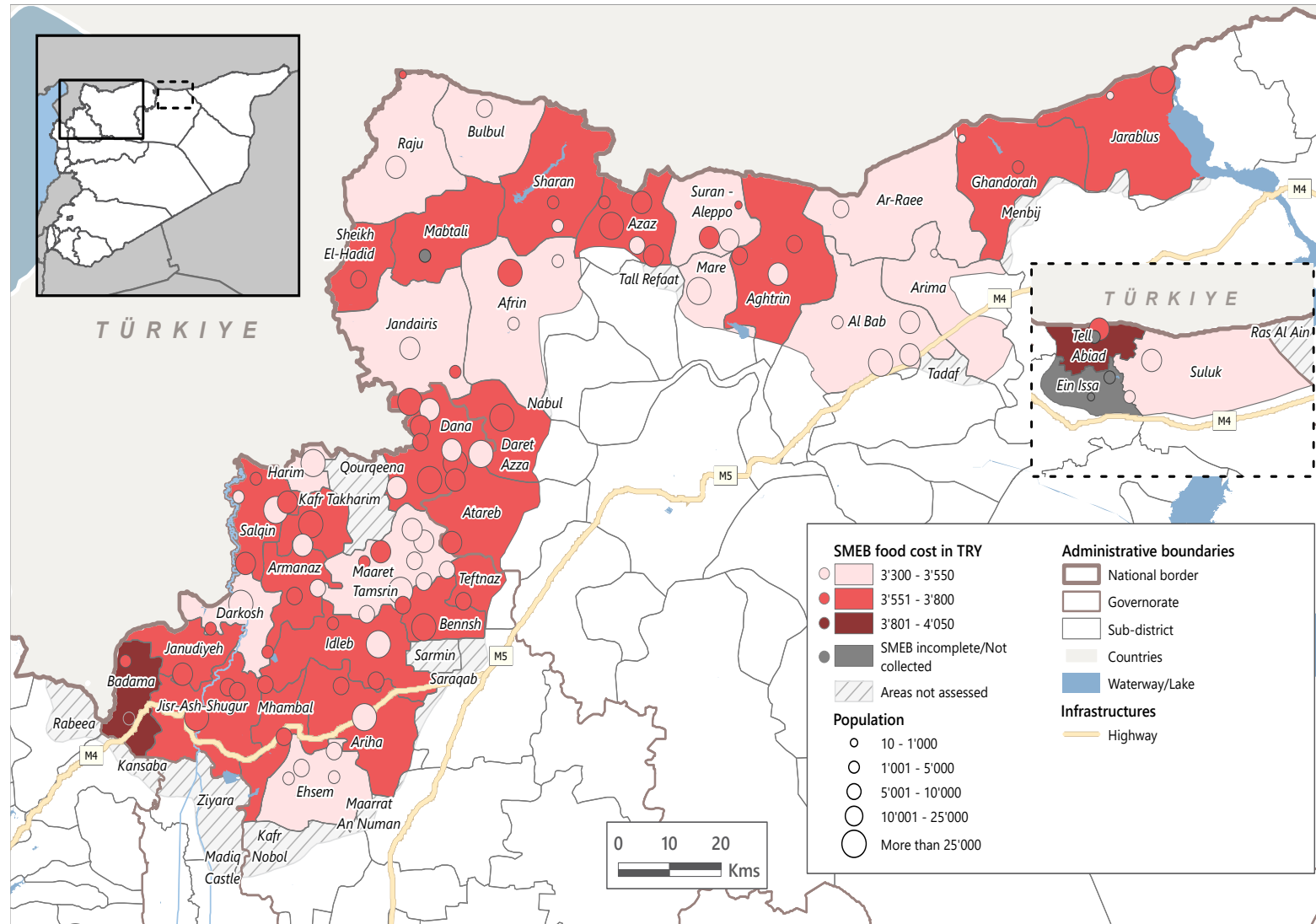
Cost of the SMEB, Sub-districts in Northwest Syria, TRY



KEY FINDINGS

- Since June, the **regional total SMEB has increased 5% to 4,828 TRY**, continuing a steady upwards trajectory that has seen the total SMEB cost **rise by nearly 30% in the past 12 months**, further challenging vulnerable households ability to meet their basic needs.
- A major driving factor behind the **rising SMEB cost**, including a **6% increase** in the SMEB food component compared to June, is the **ongoing depreciation of the TRY**, with the USD/TRY exchange rate increasing by 6% over the past three months.
- SMEB water costs were the **only SMEB category that recorded a decrease in price (-4.5%)** between June and September, however this is in the context of a **nearly 40% jump** in cost over the past year, largely driven by the ongoing fuel crisis.
- Markets remained functional, with **66% of vendors reporting no difficulties in maintaining business operations** and the vast majority of monitored good reported to be widely available in markets.

SMEB food prices, TRY



Price of SMEB Food, sub-district, TRY

Location	Median Price TRY	Change since June 2024
Aleppo governorate		
Afrin	3,526	+2% ▲
Aghtrn	3,610	+4% ▲
Al Bab	3,378	+0.1% ▲
A'rma	3,300	+6% ▲
Ar-Ra'ee	3,474	+2% ▲
Atareb	3,559	+3% ▲
A'zaz	3,583	+6% ▲
Bulbul	3,527	+6% ▲
Daret Azza	3,576	+7% ▲
Jandairis	3,471	+5% ▲
Jarablus	3,554	+7% ▲
Ma'btali	3,568	+4% ▲
Mare'	3,419	+8% ▲
Raju	3,501	+2% ▲
Sharan	3,617	+7% ▲
Suran	3,411	+5% ▲
Idleb governorate		
Armanaz	3,568	+9% ▲
Badama	3,820	+10% ▲
Bennsh	3,729	+8% ▲
Dana	3,587	+7% ▲
Darkosh	3,509	+8% ▲
Ehsem	3,522	+7% ▲
Harim	3,508	+4% ▲
Idleb	3,566	+8% ▲
Janudiyeh	3,718	+7% ▲
Jisr-Ash-Shugur	3,665	+9% ▲
Kafr Takharim	3,567	+6% ▲
Maaret Tamsrin	3,514	+6% ▲
Mhambal	3,650	+7% ▲
Qourqeena	NA	NA
Salqin	3,613	+7% ▲
Teftnaz	3,728	+9% ▲
Ar-Raqqa governorate		
Tell Abiad	4,013	+17% ▲

Price changes of monitored food items

Item	Unit	Median Price TRY	1-month change (TRY)
Bulk food items			
Bulgur	1kg	20	0%
Red lentils	1kg	31	0%
Rice	1kg	30	+9% ▲
Flour	1kg	15	+7% ▲
Salt	500g	5	-47% ▼
Sugar	1kg	26	+2% ▲
Tomato paste	1kg	47	+2% ▲
Vegetables			
Tomatoes	1kg	11	-15% ▼
Potatoes	1kg	14	+23% ▲
Cucumbers	1kg	14	+13% ▲
Onions	1kg	9	+13% ▲
Cooking oils			
Ghee	1kg	9	-82% ▼
Vegetable oil	1L	45	+13% ▲
Poultry			
Chicken	1kg	66	+2% ▲
Eggs	1kg	95	+27% ▲
Bread			
Unsubsidised bread	8pc	10	0%

+28% ▲

The value of the price change in **total SMEB** in the last 12 months (Since September 2023).

+31% ▲

The value of the price change in **Food SMEB** in the last 12 months (Since September 2023).

+39% ▲

The value of the price change in **Water SMEB** in the last 12 months (Since September 2023).

+17% ▲

The value of the price change in **NFI SMEB** in the last 12 months (Since September 2023).

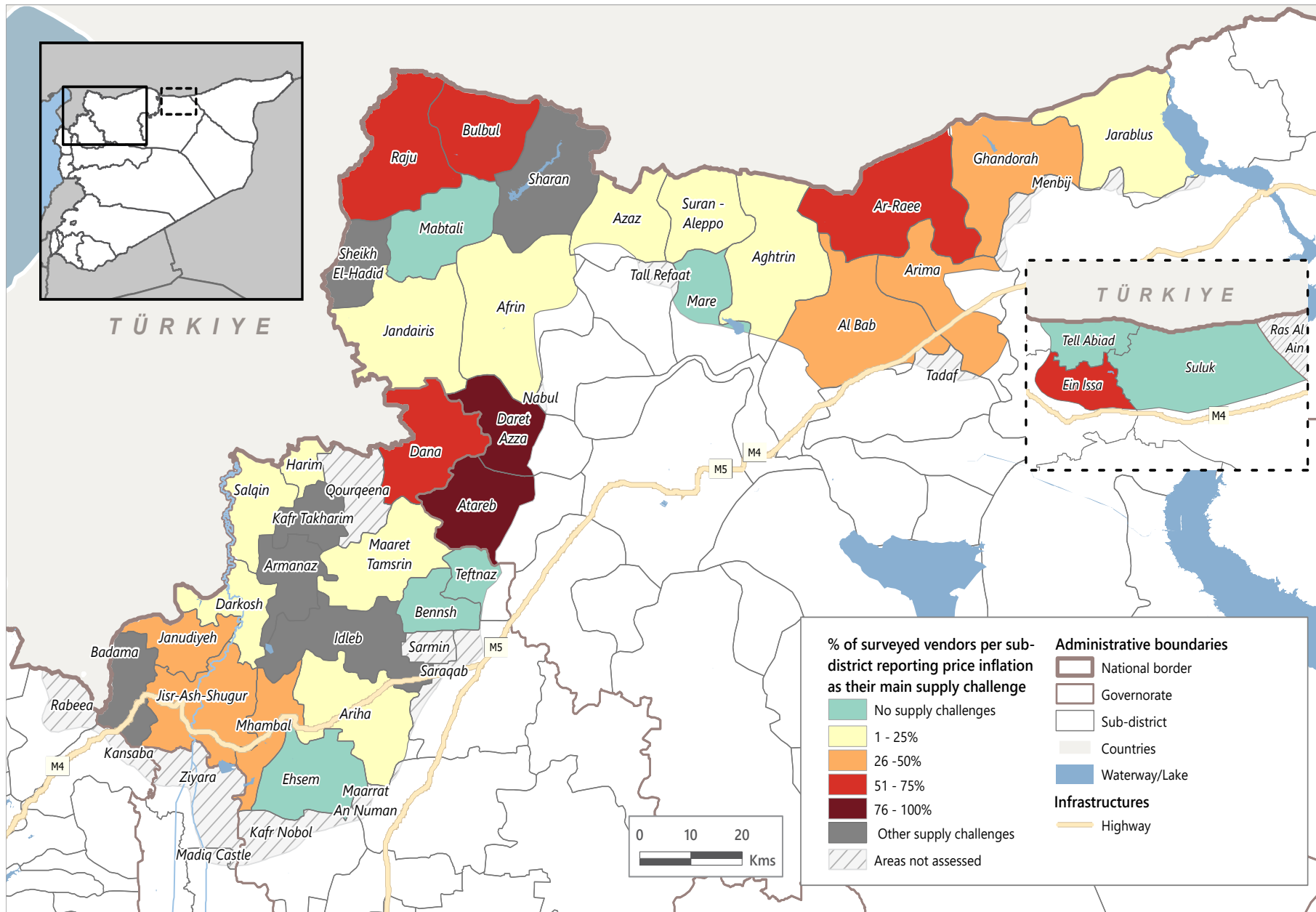
+16% ▲

The value of the price change in **Cooking Fuel SMEB** in the last 12 months (Since September 2023).

Price changes of monitored non-food items

Item	Unit	Median Price TRY	1-month change (TRY)
Non-food items			
Bathing soap	1pc	10	0%
Sanitary pads	10pc	13	0%
Toothpaste	100g	18	+1% ▲
Dish soap	1L	16	+45% ▲
Cooking fuels			
Kerosene	1L	N/A	N/A
LPG gas	1L	58	+10% ▲
Water trucking			
Water trucking	1L	0	0%
Internet			
Mobile data	1gb	42	-44% ▼
Transportation fuels			
Imported diesel	1L	36	+9% ▲
Imported petrol	1L	44	+11% ▲
Manually refined diesel	1L	23	+6% ▲
Manually refined petrol	1L	27	+6% ▲

% of surveyed vendors reporting lack of funds impacting their capacity to secure stocks



Methodology

The JMMI aims to inform market-based programming in Northern Syria.

Coverage

Coverage is determined through a combination of identifying key market hubs and partners' field capacity. Firstly, key market hubs are identified using the [Humanitarian Situation Overview in Syria](#) (HSOS), classifying all communities that 5 or more other communities report to rely on for markets as a key market hub. Secondly, these "key market hubs" are reviewed by the field teams for validity purposes. In this step, additional important markets in communities are included. These could be communities that either a) have significant markets but were not included in HSOS coverage, or b) communities that have markets that are important for people living in camps. Finally, we compare the ideal coverage with the capacity of partners and aim to ensure that key market hubs are covered. The actual coverage is, therefore, restricted to the capacity of partners.

Data Collection

In each assessed location, at least three prices (ideally 4) per food & non-food item need to be collected from different traders to ensure the quality and consistency of the collected data. In line with the purpose of the JMMI, only the prices of the cheapest, most commonly bought type of item are recorded for each product, except in cases where otherwise indicated. For example, certain NFI items specific products are monitored at the request of the shelter cluster.

SMEB Calculation:

The cost of the SMEB is determined by multiplying the median price of each item in the respective location by the quantity listed in the table on page 2.

Identification of traders

Field teams identify traders to assess based on the following criteria:

- Traders are retailers selling directly to consumers.
- Traders need to be representative of the local price level.
- Traders have knowledge of the shop operations.

To the extent possible, the same traders are revisited in every data collection round.

Enumerators and training

The data are collected by field staff familiar with local market conditions. They undergo training on the methodology and tools provided by REACH. Training sessions occur each time a new partner joins the JMMI, at partner request, and at scheduled intervals throughout the year, such as when the assessment undergoes changes. Additionally, field teams are equipped with a JMMI Standardised Operational Procedure (SOP) offering guidance on market identification, trader assessment, and pricing. The REACH JMMI team manages the integration of partner feedback on the JMMI SOP, sharing updates, and conducting re-training with the field, as needed. Data collection is carried out using the KOBO Collect mobile application.

Data cleaning and analysis

After data collection, REACH compiles and cleans all partner data, standardizing prices, cross-checking outliers, and calculating the median cost of prices in each assessed location. Follow-ups are initiated with field teams to address data queries, including outliers, missing data, and incorrect entries. The median item prices reported in this factsheet are 'location medians,' designed to mitigate the impact of outliers and variations in data quantity among assessed locations.

Aggregation

The published data is presented at the community, sub-district, district, governorate, and regional levels. At each aggregation level, the median of all prices collected within the unit of analysis is calculated. For example, at the regional level, the median of all prices collected for a specific product in the entire region is calculated, while at the governorate level, the median of all prices collected in that governorate is calculated, and so forth. All SMEB and price index calculations utilize this method.

Challenges and limitations

- Price data is only indicative for the time frame within which it was collected. Prices may vary between data collection rounds.
- The JMMI data collection tool requests the cheapest, most commonly bought type of each item to be recorded, as availability varies across regions. Therefore, price comparisons across regions may be based on slightly varying products.
- With current coverage, data is mostly collected from main markets, which may not be representative of rural areas.
- As the JMMI continues to expand and is extended to additional locations, the reported changes in the overall median prices may be driven by shifts in coverage rather than actual price changes.

JMMI data is updated monthly through the [Interactive Dashboard](#) where users can filter for SMEB components of interest, currencies, and assessed areas.

The [full dataset](#) is also available for download.

About REACH

REACH Initiative 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).

About the CWG

The JMMI exists within the framework of the Cash Working Group (CWG). In northwest Syria (NWS), the CWG was established in May 2014 to analyse the impact of the ongoing conflict on markets in Syria and guide the implementation of humanitarian cash and voucher programmes within those markets. For more information about the CWG in NWS, please contact the cash working group coordinator at cbr.twg@gmail.com.

REACH

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More details on the methodology can be found in the JMMI [terms of reference \(ToR\)](#). For more information about REACH, please contact the REACH JMMI focal point, Adna Maiteh, at adna.maiteh@reach-initiative.org or visit the REACH Syria Resource Centre.

Participating organisations

Each month, around 20 different organisations work together to collect market data. Participating organisations train their enumerators on the JMMI methodology and data collection tools using standard training materials developed by REACH, who is then responsible for processing the data.

